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The Actions Institutional Agents Take to Support First-Generation Latino College Students at A Catholic Hispanic-Serving Institution: An Embedded Case Study

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THE ACTIONS INSTITUTIONAL AGENTS TAKE TO SUPPORT FIRST-GENERATION LATINO COLLEGE STUDENTS AT A CATHOLIC HISPANIC-SERVING INSTITUTION: AN EMBEDDED CASE STUDY

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DEDICATION

En honor a mi madre, Efigenia Valero Hernández, mi padre Isabel Chavarria

Hernández, y con todo mi cariño a mi tía, Guadalupe Valero. Sin vosotros, nada

sería posible. Gracias por enseñarme que los sueños se convierten en realidad. Mis

logros son vuestros logros.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to examine the actions institutional agents took to support first-generation Latino students at a Catholic Hispanic-Serving Institution using Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework. All but one of the 14 roles in the framework were present. An in-depth examination of the framework led to the creation of a fluidity model, aligning with Stanton-Salazar (2010) and Jiménez's (2012) findings that institutional agents fulfilled simultaneous and multiple roles. In addition, the data demonstrated that institutional agents' roles worked in tandem with Rendón's (1994) validation theory. Last, context and whether St. Jude's was Hispanic-serving versus Hispanic-enrolling (Corral, Gasman, Nguyen, & Samayoa, 2015; Hurtado, González, & Calderón Galdeano, 2015; Malcom-Piqueux, 2010; D. A. Santiago, 2009) were addressed. St. Jude's was both Hispanic-serving and Hispanic-enrolling according to D. A. Santiago's (2009) definition. A conceptual model was introduced based upon all of the findings. Based upon the findings, Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework can serve researchers and practitioners alike as a roadmap to advance the academic and social needs of first-generation Latino students.

Keywords: Latino, Hispanic-Serving Institution(s), validation, first-generation

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

With the Latino population on the rise in the United States, the U.S. Census Bureau predicted that more Latino students would attend institutions of higher learning (Siebens, 2013; U.S. Census Bureau, 2011, 2012). As such, Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) have also increased in number (Excelencia in Education, 2015b, 2016b, 2017b). Although Latino scholarship and scholarship on HSIs are in a nascent stage (Hurtado & Ruiz Alvarado, 2015; Valdez, 2015), Núñez, Crisp, and Elizondo (2016) developed the first typology of HSIs. Religious institutions formed part of the cluster of "small communities" (Núñez et al., 2016, p. 71) and represented 9% of all HSIs. Although this cluster is the second smallest, it warrants attention given the rise in the Latino population and HSIs. Institutional agents (IAs) and their work to support first-generation Latino students also warrant attention because policymakers have given and will continue to give attention to the Latino student population (Sáenz, Hurtado, Barrera, Wolf, & Yeung, 2007) as it continues to grow. This study considered three areas not yet examined in combination. That is, working within the context of a Catholic HSI to examine the actions IAs took to support first-generation Latino students. Hurtado and Ruiz Alvarado (2015) called for more research on how HSIs make a difference for Latino students. The work of IAs within

HSIs is one aspect of how these institutions are making a difference for first-generation Latino students. This study aimed to meet the call for more research on HSIs within the niche of a religious institution focused on the actions of IAs.

Hispanic Serving Institutions

The Hispanic population in the United States grew from 35.3 million or 13% of the entire U.S. population in 2000 to 50.5 million or 16% in 2010 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011). The Hispanic population is projected to more than double from 53.3 million in 2012 to 128.8 million in 2060, meaning that one in every three U.S. residents will be Hispanic (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012). As the Hispanic population in the United States grows, the number of Hispanic students attending institutions of higher learning has also continued and will continue to increase (Siebens, 2013). Latinos today are the largest non-White college group in the United States (Fry, 2011; Núñez, Hurtado, González, & Calderón Galdeano, 2015). Therefore, more institutions of higher learning may seek the Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) designation. HSIs are defined by Title V of the Higher Education Act (HEA) as having a minimum of 25% full-time equivalent (FTE) total undergraduate Hispanic student enrollment of which 50% or more meet the Bureau of the Census poverty level, and are public or private, accredited, degree granting, non-profit colleges and universities (Laden, 2001, 2004; Nora & Crisp, 2009; Núñez et al., 2015). The number of HSIs in the United States grew from 280 in 2008-2009 to 472 in 2015-2016 (Excelencia in Education, 2015b, 2017b). Corral, Gasman, Nguyen, and Samayoa (2015) examined HSIs with a minimum of 60% Latino student enrollment.

However, the 472 HSIs today enroll 64% of Latino undergraduates and represent 14% of all institutions of higher learning (Excelencia in Education, 2017b). In the writing of this dissertation alone, there has been a 4% increase in HSI enrollment of Latino students.

In comparison to the growth of Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs), the number of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) remained relatively stable (Núñez et al., 2015; Núñez et al., 2016). HSIs, unlike HBCUs and TCUs, do not receive automatic federal funding and designated HSI institutional missions do not focus on targeted student populations as those of HBCUs or TCUs (Malcom-Piqueux & Lee, 2011; Núñez et al., 2016). Instead, HSIs are ad hoc (Laden, 2004) based on the increasing number of attending Hispanic students. HSIs, therefore, must apply and compete for Title V funding (Laden, 2001; Malcom-Piqueux & Lee, 2011; Núñez et al., 2015, Núñez et al., 2016). Because "HSIs have been doing more with less" (Malcom, Dowd, & Yu, 2010, p. 12), it is important to chronicle their contributions to Latino and overall student success in order for HSIs to maintain fiscal support (Núñez & Elizondo, 2015; Núñez et al., 2015). Although Hispanics, in vast majority, attend HSIs (Mercer & Stedman, 2008; Torres & Zerquera, 2012), HSIs also serve a diverse student body. Nationally, HSIs enrolled Asian Americans at 28%, Blacks at 16%, American Indians at 14%, and Whites at 10% in 2012-2013 (Núñez et al., 2015). Just as important as it is to document student success at HSIs, it is as significant to document and distinguish the

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different types of institutions that comprise the HSI designation as these continue to evolve.

Núñez et al.'s (2016) work on the typology of HSIs identified six HSI clusters, including "(1) Urban Enclave Community Colleges, (2) Rural Dispersed Community Colleges, (3) Big Systems 4-Year Institutions, (4) Small Communities 4-Year Institutions, (5) Puerto Rican Institutions, and (6) Health Science Schools" (p. 4). Religious institutions and small liberal arts institutions combined comprise (4) Small Communities 4-Year Institutions, and represent 9% of all HSIs. Cluster four sets the context for this study. The study site is both a religious and small liberal arts Catholic HSI. Núñez et al.'s (2016) study was the first to provide disaggregated data on HSIs at a time in higher education history when there is a need to "examine HSIs as developing institutions" (Núñez et al., 2015, p. 6) because of their increasing numbers. However, as timely as this typology is, it is the individuals (designated IAs) and their actions within the context of a four-year Catholic HSI that are the focus of this study. Stanton-Salazar (2010) defined these individuals as IAs.

Institutional Agents

Stanton-Salazar's (1997) seminal work defined IAs, "as those individuals who have the capacity and commitment to transmit directly, or negotiate the transmission of, institutional resources and opportunities" (p. 6). Stanton-Salazar (2010) expanded upon this formal definition by referring to an IA as, "an individual who occupies one or more hierarchical positions of relatively *high-status,* either within a society or in an institution (or an organization)" (p. 1075). Therefore, IAs can be a vital resource for

students from underserved populations at academic institutions. I focused on self-identified first-generation college Hispanic students and the actions IAs took to support their academic and social advancement at a Catholic HSI.

Stanton-Salazar (1997) likened the "network construction, negotiation, and help-seeking" (p. 4) processes to a social freeway system. This freeway system can serve as a pathway to privilege and power for those familiar with and who have access to resources to navigate this system (Stanton-Salazar, 1997). In an educational setting, navigating this social freeway system is "strategic, empowering, and network-enhancing" (Stanton-Salazar, 1997, p. 4). First-generation Hispanic college students who may be unfamiliar with navigating this educational social freeway may benefit from the actions of these IAs. Therefore, understanding the specific actions IAs took to support students as described by students and the IAs themselves is worthy of study because "the daily work of faculty, staff, and administrators, and consequently [how they] shape students' college experiences" (Núñez et al., 2015, p. 6) can inform how to better serve first-generation, low-income, racially diverse students.

First-generation College Students

First-generation college students are those whose parents have not obtained an undergraduate degree (Pascarella, Pierson, Wolniak, & Terenzini, 2004). I specifically focused on each student's self-identification as first-generation college going versus first-generation birth or immigration status. First-generation Latino students have received and will continue to receive more attention from policymakers and researchers interested in their higher education progress as a key group of

students (Sáenz et al., 2007). For example, Sáenz et al. (2007) reviewed 35 years of survey data and found that first-generation college students were not as well prepared academically as non-first-generation college students at the onset of their college experience. Many of these first-generation college students are Latino, come from a lower socio-economic status, and their primary language is not English (Warburton, Bugarin, & Núñez, 2001). These combined characteristics contribute to low student retention rates nationwide (Titus, 2006). Therefore, the roles IAs take to support first-generation Latino students to overcome academic and social barriers can influence student degree completion (Hurtado et al., 2015).

Problem Statement

Valdez (2015) wrote that Latino scholarship is not well known, and much work is yet to be completed. Although the Latino population in the U.S. and, subsequently, the number of HSIs, has been and continues to be on the rise, there is little research on HSIs in general (Baez, Gasman, & Turner, 2008). There are even fewer studies on the actions IAs take to support students' academic and social advancement. Some studies focused on the actions of IAs in general (e.g., Museus & Neville, 2012; Pendakur, 2010) while others focused on the actions IAs took to support Latino students in higher education environments or students from HSIs transferring into a four-year institution (e.g., Bensimon, 2007; Bensimon & Dowd, 2009; Carrasco-Nungaray, 2011; Dowd, Pak, & Bensimon, 2013; Jiménez, 2012). Only two studies, however, focused on the actions IAs took to support Latino students specifically at HSIs (e.g., Bensimon & Dowd, 2012; C. Santiago, 2012). However, I

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have not found a single study that focuses on the actions IAs take to support first-generation Latino college students' academic and social advancement at a Catholic HSI. Although religious institutions and small liberal arts institutions combined, represent only 9% of HSIs, as the Latino population continues to increase, and more first-generation Latino college students enroll at HSIs, it can be predicted that this institution type and other HSI types will also continue grow in number (Núñez et al., 2016).

As the first of its kind, the focus of this study is threefold. First, how do first-generation Latino college students at a Catholic HSI describe the actions IAs take to help them navigate the college experience academically and socially? Next, how do IAs, themselves, describe the actions they take to support first-generation Latino college students? Finally, how do the student and IAs descriptions compare to one another? I use Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework (see Appendix A) to address the three research questions in this study and unveil the actions IAs take to support first-generation Latino college students' academic and social advancement at a selected Catholic HSI.

Research Questions

1. How do first-generation Hispanic college students describe the specific actions institutional agents take to support their academic and social advancement at a Catholic Hispanic-Serving Institution?

   - Using Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework detailing the actions of institutional agents, and as described by first-generation Hispanic college

students, to what degree are they representative of:

    a.   direct support?

    b.   integrative support?

    c.   system developer?

    d.   system linkage & networking support?

2.   How do the identified institutional agents, themselves, describe the specific actions they take to facilitate the academic and social advancement of first-generation Hispanic college students?

- Using Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework detailing the actions of institutional agents, and as described by the identified institutional agents, to what degree are they representative of:

    a. direct support?

    b. integrative support?

    c. system developer?

    d. system linkage & networking support?

3.   What are the similarities and differences between the actions of institutional agents, as described by first-generation Hispanic college students, compared to those described by the identified institutional agents themselves?

Overview of the Theoretical Framework

Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework (see Appendix A) identified 14 actions IAs take and categorized these actions into four categories: direct support, integrative

support, system developer, and system linkage and networking support (see Appendix

A and Figure 1).

DIRECT SUPPORT	INTEGRATIVE SUPPORT	SYSTEM DEVELOPER	SYSTEM LINKAGE & NETWORKING SUPORT
Resource Agent Has personal and positional resources	**Integrative Agent** Helps students integrate and participate in professional and institutional venues	**Program Developer** Develops systematic programming	**Recruiter** Recruits students for a program or department
Knowledge Agent Knows how to navigate the system	**Cultural Guide** Guides and teaches within a cultural sphere	**Lobbyist** Lobbies resources for student recruitment and support	**Bridging Agent** Knows of and works with a strong network to connect students to other IAs
Advisor Gathers information gathering, problem solves, and guides decision making		**Political Advocate** Politically advocates for social policies and resources	**Institutional Broker** Holds resource knowledge and negotiates amongst parties
Advocate Promotes and protects students' interests			**Coordinator** Assesses needs, then identifies, provides, and ensures resources for students
Networking Coach Teaches, models, and develops			

Figure 1. Adaptation of Stanton-Salazar's (2010) Roles of Institutional Agents. This figure represents the 14 corresponding roles of institutional agents within four designated areas. Adapted from "Table 1. The roles of Institutional Agents are each manifested through a specific set of actions," by R. D. Stanton-Salazar, 2010, *Youth & Society, 43*(3), p. 1081. doi: 10.1177/0044118X10382877

I used Stanton-Salazar's (2010) 14 roles as a priori roles to identify the specific

actions IAs took to support first-generation Latino college students' academic and

social advancement at a Catholic HSI as described by students and IAs. Were some or all of these actions and roles present as described by both students and IAs and were there more actions not considered in Stanton-Salazar's framework (see Appendix A)?

The premise of Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework was that IAs are key providers of social capital with power to provide resources, moral support and motivation, particularly for students from underserved populations. In other words, IAs can provide Latino students with social capital. Stanton-Salazar's (1997) work on IAs derived, in part, from Bourdieu (1986), who defined social capital as follows:

> Social capital is the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition—or in other words, to membership in a group—which provides each of its members with the backing of the collectivity-owned capital, a credential which entitles them to credit, in the various senses of the word. (pp. 248–249)

Therefore, IAs can provide first-generation Latino college students with the social capital necessary to navigate the college experience by supporting their academic and social advancement.

Significance of the Study

Because HSIs derive their designation via a percentage scheme (Baez et al., 2008), their institutional missions do not specifically serve Latino students (Malcom-Piqueux & Lee, 2011). Without an institutional mission that focuses on the

population it serves, as with Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), HSIs are scrutinized on whether they are Hispanic-serving or merely Hispanic-enrolling (Corral et al., 2015; Hurtado & Ruiz Alvarado, 2015; Malcom-Piqueux, 2010). D. A. Santiago (2009) differentiated Hispanic-serving as focused on persistence and graduation while Hispanic-enrolling referred to access.

Malcom-Piqueux and Lee (2011) reported that, collectively, HSIs conferred 40% of bachelor's degrees to Latino students. With HSIs now educating 64% of all Latino students (Excelencia in Education, 2017b), the roles IAs play and the actions they take to support first-generation Latino college students is vital to understanding how or if they contribute to these statistics. These data could add to the conversation of HSIs as Hispanic-serving versus Hispanic-enrolling (Contreras, Malcom, & Bensimon, 2008; García, 2015). The landscape of American higher education is in the midst of change given the growing number of first-generation Latino students who are entering the doors of many college campuses in the United States (Torres, 2003). More important is that the presence of these students in colleges and universities nationwide has created an entirely new institutional designation - the HSI (García, 2015). This phenomenon, within only the last 30 years (Núñez et al., 2015; Valdez, 2015) will only continue to change the higher education landscape.

Therefore, when IAs at HSIs provide key forms of support to students, they are transmitting highly valued resources, that is, social capital (Stanton-Salazar, 2010), which can have economic, social, and political implications for society

(Hurtado, Álvarez, Guillermo-Wann, Cuellar, & Arellano, 2012; Hurtado et al., 2015).

> Given the historically marginalized status of Latinas/os in the United States, it is essential that they leave college not only with baccalaureate degrees and the requisite knowledge to excel professionally, but also with a sense of empowerment that positions them for success in American society. (Cuellar, 2015, pp. 103-104)

IAs empower their students (Pendakur, 2010; Stanton-Salazar, 1997, 2001, 2004 2010; Stanton-Salazar & Urso Spina, 2000, 2003) and learning what actions IAs take to support first-generation students matters because we can no longer dismiss the burgeoning numbers of Latino students and HSIs as insignificant, lacking power, or not having an impact upon our society.

Definition of Terms

Similar to the literature gap that exists on HSIs and IAs is the limited literature on the differentiation of terms between Hispanic and Latino. As an official federal term, Hispanic is used more often in academic work (Valdeón, 2013). Although Latino is used less often in scholarship, it is a self-identifying term adopted by members of this community (Calderón, 1992; Hayes-Bautista & Chapa, 1987; Valdeón, 2013). I use Latino as a gender-neutral term to include both masculine (Latino) and feminine (Latina) as well as the term Chicano (masculine) and Chicana (feminine). Although official and academic circles use the term Hispanic more often, as a member of this ethnic community, I self-identify as Latina and will use the terms

Latino and Hispanic interchangeably throughout. I am specifically of Mexican

heritage and self-identify as Mexican-American versus Chicana.

Hispanic Serving Institutions

HSIs are defined by Title V of the Higher Education Act (HEA), as public or

private, accredited, degree granting, non-profit colleges and universities with a

minimum of 25% full-time equivalent (FTE) total undergraduate Hispanic student

enrollment of which 50% or more meet the Bureau of the Census poverty level

(Laden, 2001, 2004; Núñez et al., 2015).

Institutional Agents

IAs are non-kin individuals who tend to hold positions of high status. These

positions provide IAs the power to deliver institutional and social support to students;

in essence, provide social capital (Stanton-Salazar, 2010).

First-generation Students

I refer to the term first-generation student specifically as college-going

students and do not reference a designated family birth generation in the U.S. or U.S.

immigration status. Pascarella et al. (2004) defined first-generation college students

are those whose parents have not obtained an undergraduate degree.

Hispanic

Hispanic is a term imposed upon the members of this community by the

United States government's census efforts in the 1970s (Valdeón, 2013). The media,

politicians, and other government agencies commonly use this term, but it is not a

term created by members of this community (Calderón, 1992).

Latino

Hayes-Bautista and Chapa (1987) defined Latinos as people who originate from Latin America or are descendants of those originally from this geographic region regardless of race, ethnicity, or language. In the 1970s, this term developed as a way of cohesively unify various groups (e.g., Puerto Ricans, Mexicans, Salvadorans, etc.) around social action (Calderón, 1992). Latino is also a self-identifying term used by members of this community (Valdeón, 2013). In other words, the term is self-identifying rather than government imposed (Calderón, 1992).

Mexican-American/Chicana

Keefe and Padilla (1987) used the terms Mexican-American and Chicana interchangeably referencing individuals of Mexican descent in the United States.

<center>**Summary**</center>

The purpose of Chapter 1 was to present the background of the study, problem statement, research questions, theoretical framework, significance of the study, and definition of terms. The purpose of Chapter 2 will be to present a review of the literature to include Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs), IAs, and first-generation college students. Chapter 3 will provide a description of the methodology.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review synthesized three areas not previously studied together: a Catholic Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI), institutional agents (IAs), and first-generation Latino college students. I examine the literature on first-generation Latino students and language. I proceed to describe the historical context of HSIs and clarify the value and meaning of this institutional designation because I bound the study by the context of a Catholic HSI. I use the term historical loosely because the HSI institutional designation is a recent phenomenon within the last 30 years (Núñez et al., 2015; Valdez, 2015). Next, I introduce Rendón's (1994) validation theory and literature surrounding this theory and posit that validation theory may inform Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework on IAs (see Appendix A). Last, I examine Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework and literature on IAs to address the following questions: 1) How do institutional agents support first-generation Latino college students' academic and social advancement as described by students, 2) How do institutional agents, themselves, describe the support they provide to first-generation Latino college students, and 3) How do these descriptions compare?

First-generation Latino Students

I considered the significance of research studies focused on the issues surrounding first-generation Latino college students, including culture, identity, and language (e.g., Boden, 2011; Burgos-Cienfuegos, Vasquez-Salgado, Ruedas-Gracia,

& Greenfield, 2015; Flores & Jiménez Morfin, 2008; Guerra, 2016; Mena, Padilla, &

Maldonado, 1987; Nora & Crisp, 2009; O. Pimentel, 2013; C. Pimentel & Pimentel,

2002; Saunders, & Serna, 2004; Torres, 2003, 2009; Torres, Reiser, LePeau, Davis, &

Ruder, 2006; Trevino & DeFreitas, 2014). Examples within this body of literature

included the experiences and challenges first-generation Latino college students faced

when traversing two cultures—that of their own Latino culture and of the dominant

culture. Rodriguez (1975) described his journey and received accolades for his work

from *The Washington Post, The New York Times, The Boston Globe, The Los Angeles

Times, and the San Francisco Chronicle*. He, however, distanced himself from his

family, Latino culture, and Spanish language in order to assimilate into mainstream

culture. Rendón (1992) opted for a path of resilience (Borrero, 2011; Contreras, 2011;

Trevino & DeFreitas, 2014) and maintained her ethnic identity, attachment to her

family, culture, and language. As an emerging scholar, "I [too] have never been

totally separate, and I never really will be or want to be" (Rendón, 1992, p. 60) from

my family, culture, and language. Whether or not we are Latino scholars, as

educators, we must take into account that "many Latino students are learning English

while trying to learn academic content in school, and are, therefore struggling to keep

up" (Borrero, 2011, p. 24). When these students reach the doors of higher education,

will we choose to be their IAs, recognize their efforts, respect their language, culture,

and identity as we encourage them to achieve?

Equally important as addressing the question of language, culture, and identity

amongst Latino college students is capturing the value of this moment in higher

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education history given the current racial climate (Mangan, 2015a; Schmidt, 2015; Supiano, 2015) at the University of Missouri (Biemiller, 2015; Chatelian, 2015; Lewis, 2015; Mangan, 2015b; Miller & Stuckey-French, 2015; Staurowsky, 2015; Thomason, 2015a, 2015b, 2015c) and other institutions across the United States, including Claremont McKenna College (Brown, 2015b), Ithaca College (Acriche, 2015; Borruto, 2015; Elletson & Denning, 2015; Open letter, 2015; Recckio, 2015; Salovey & Holloway, 2015), Yale University (Brown, 2015a; Foundation for Individual Rights in Education, 2015; Githere, 2015), The University of Oklahoma (Berrett, 2015; Stripling & Thomason, 2015), and Wesleyan University (McIntire, 2015; Stascavage, 2015; The Ankh, 2015; Vilensky, 2015) just to name a few. I challenge the traditional design of the literature review and include these current higher education incidents as data for future empirical research because another recent example reminded us all of the importance of current events.

Language

In October 2016, language became the national focus of higher education racial climate unrest. Tiffany Martínez, a Latina undergraduate student at Suffolk University and a McNair Scholar, used the word "hence" in one of her college papers. Her professor's feedback was, "This is not your word" (Jaschik, 2016). Minority status for Latino students undermines their academic confidence, which leads them to question their academic ability and is exacerbated by negative expectations of non-minority faculty (Nora & Crisp, 2009; Smedley, Myers, Harrell, 1993). Tiffany's undergraduate years are a time of student developmental growth in a college

environment (Evans, Forney, Guido, Patton, & Renn, 2010). Questioning her use of

language at a time when she might also be negotiating her ethnic identity

development (Evans et al., 2010; Torres, 1999, 2003) might potentially thwart both

her college student and ethnic identity development. Why not instead recognize

Tiffany's efforts and encourage her to achieve? Why must she or any other Latino

student, "endure humiliation, reject old values and traditions, mistrust our experience,

and disconnect with our past" (Rendón, 1992, p. 62) in order to become academic

success stories (O. Pimentel, 2013; C. Pimentel & Pimentel, 2002) when bilingualism

has been demonstrated to be a form of social capital (Stanton-Salazar, 2004; Stanton-

Salazar & Dornsbusch, 1995)? Why would Tiffany's professor choose to be anything

but an IA for her?

Guerra (2016) argued that language is essential to identity, culture, and

citizenship because the ideological perspectives entrenched in each of these inform us

of who "we are or want to become, that is, the kinds of citizens in the making we

imagine ourselves being" (p. 11). Rodriguez's (1975) choice was to renounce his

language, culture, and Latino identity while Rendón's (1992) citizenship was to

embrace hers. Furthering the value of language, Torres' (2003) study focused on the

first two years of college and found that language positively contributed to Latino

college students' ethnic identity. Students in her study "credited their parents for their

views on ethnicity and its role in their life" (Torres, 2003, p. 538). Language is,

therefore, an important component of family, culture, identity, and citizenship.

However, the invalidating action of a professor's feedback based on language, "This

is <u>not</u> your word" (Jaschik, 2016) may have a negative effect on a student's academic and social advancement (Bensimon, 2007; Rendón Linares & Muñoz, 2011; Tinto 2006) and because of this, I insist that documented recent incidents in higher education have a place in this literature review.

In 2004-2005, English-language learners (ELLs) in United States represented 10.5% or 5.1 million of the K-12 student population with Spanish speakers comprising 79% of this total (Payán & Nettles, 2008). "Unfortunately, disenfranchised children in this country today who speak a language other than English are still going through what [Guerra, 2016] experienced more than 50 years ago as linguistic colonization" (p. 26). Through language, I too become a part of this literature review because as a native Spanish speaker, language is my connection to family, culture, and identity in my Mexican-American citizenship. From this lens, I provided students and IAs the choice to conduct their interviews in Spanish or English. In so doing, and in alignment with the practices of coalition pedagogy, my intent was to exercise value in bilingualism and connect with my participants through language. I encouraged participants to share their viewpoints and identities as a means of building rapport and trust in the language they most preferred (O. Pimentel, 2013; C. Pimentel & Pimentel, 2002). Trust (*confianza*) is "the single most important mediator in social relationships" (González, Moll, & Amanti, 2005, p. 3) and "a personal investment in others" (Vélez-Ibañez, 1983). *Confianza* is a generous act of sharing "personal information of an intimate character" (Lomnitz, 1977, p. 197). Coalition pedagogy is a student-centered pedagogy that allows for instructors and

students of color to bond (C. Pimentel & Pimentel, 2002). It is the result of anti-racist

pedagogy (Blakeney, 2005), critical pedagogy (Freire, 1971, 2004), and funds of

knowledge (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & González, 1992). By simulating coalition

pedagogy through language in my interview process, I also advocated for first-

generation Latino student participants (O. Pimentel, 2013).

The recent incidents of student protests, higher education institutional

presidential resignations, and language discourse will continue to unfold. The

challenge of contextualizing the significance of these events within this moment in

higher education history may put to question the potential value of including these

incidents in this literature review. I argue otherwise. In addition, because Stanton-

Salazar's (2010) framework (see Appendix A) included a political advocate role

under the category of system developer, described as, "joins political action group that

advocates for social policies and institutional resources that would benefits [*sic*]

targeted groups of students" (p. 1081), I posit that the value of inclusion lies within

the findings of this study, making these events relevant.

As students of color, we may need to rely on our IAs to assist us in moments

of crisis for social advocacy. The focus of my study is on the actions IAs took to

support first-generation Latino college students' academic and social advancement.

Social advocacy during these critical moments on college campuses is part and parcel

of social advancement and these contemporary events inform this literature review.

While recent history events may be difficult to incorporate into a traditional literature

review, they are nonetheless vital to capture as contributors to a priori or emerging themes. Let us consider that

> academic departments that are more diverse may produce more unorthodox ideas and do more original work. In the academic world, where there is a big premium on being the first to come up with an idea, this is a major benefit. (Kets, 2015, para. 3)

As an emerging scholar, I do not yet form part of an academic department and others may consider my idea to challenge the traditional literature review an unorthodox idea. However, one day it may demonstrate to be a major benefit to the literature review.

This literature review next discusses educational policy surrounding the HSI designation and its financial implications. It is followed by Rendón's (1994) validation theory, which I posit may inform IAs' actions to assist first-generation Latino college students' academic and social advancement at a Catholic HSI. The examination of Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework concludes this literature review.

Hispanic-Serving Institutions

Dayton, González-Vasquez, Martinez, & Plum (2004) reported that many private institutions designated as HSIs had an affiliation with the Catholic Church. Núñez et al. (2016) more explicitly quantified these data in their work on the typology of HSIs, categorizing Catholic HSIs within Small Communities 4-Year Institutions, which comprised 9% of all HSIs. This percentage is relevant because never before in empirical research on HSIs has a typology existed. This typology distinguished

institutional types within the HSI designation and tabulated the percentage of HSIs

categorically. This was the first time in higher education history that scholars

presented disaggregated data for this specific institutional designation.

HSIs' History

Valdez (2015) delineated policy efforts as early as 1979 for what today has

become the HSI institutional designation. Members of the Hispanic Higher Education

Coalition (HHEC) were the first to identify federal funds under Title III of the Higher

Education Act (HEA) of 1965. Congressional documents reported that Alvin Rivera,

representative member of the HHEC, provided testimony in support of increasing

federal funds for "Hispanic Colleges" (Valdez, 2015, p. 6) during the 1979 hearing for

the reauthorization of the HEA. Members of the HHEC gave testimony in 1979,

1981, 1984, and 1985 was the last year any member of the HHEC testified at the HEA

hearings. The HHEC was established in Washington, D. C. in 1978. Several Latino

advocacy organizations, including the U.S. Catholic Conference formed part of the

HHEC.

In the history of HSIs, there was a partnership between a Catholic institution

and the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU). Calderón

Galdeano, Flores, and Moder (2012) recount the story when Sister Elizabeth Anne

Sueltenfuss of Our Lady of the Lake University (a Catholic institution located in San

Antonio, Texas) and Dr. Antonio Rigual, a faculty member at Our Lady of the Lake,

traveled east to meet with the Xerox Corporation in 1985 to seek financial support.

Our Lady of the Lake at that time had a Latino enrollment of 49%. Sister Elizabeth

Anne Sueltenfuss and Dr. Rigual were interested in obtaining funds to establish a

Center for Hispanic Higher Education. It is unknown if Xerox funded their efforts,

but Xerox did refer them to Gus Cardenas who at the time was Xerox's "national

liaison for Hispanic affairs, in San Antonio" (Calderón Galdeano et al., 2012, p. 158).

Thereafter, Sister Elizabeth Anne Sueltenfuss, Dr. Rigual, Gus Cardenas, and Alfonso

Lopez from Texas A&I University, now Texas A&M University, came together to

discuss the list published in 1985 by the Chronicle of Higher Education listing 50 to

60 institutions with a minimum of 25% Hispanic undergraduate enrollment (Calderón

Galdeano et al., 2012).

Prior to that meeting, Olivas (1982) wrote a seminal piece on HSIs. Benítez

(1998) and Laden (1999, 2001, 2004) have since provided key works on HSIs. In

1986 the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) was created in

San Antonio, Texas with the purpose of advocating for increased higher education

opportunities for Latinos (Dayton et al., 2004; Laden, 1999, 2001) with 18 institutions

as charter members of HACU (Calderón Galdeano et al., 2012). HACU also coined

the term, "Hispanic-Serving Institution" in 1986 (D. A. Santiago, 2006). A second

HACU office in Washington D. C. was strategically created for policymaking efforts

in 1991 (Calderón Galdeano et al., 2012). In 1992, HACU secured recognition of

HSIs (Laden, 2001) under President George H. W. Bush's administration (Calderón

Galdeano et al., 2012) and in 1995 HSIs received the first $12 million in appropriation

funds (Dayton et al., 2004; D. A. Santiago, 2006). This amount, however, was

significantly lower than the $45 million HSIs were eligible to receive under the law

(Mealer, 1998). It was the 1998 amendment to the HEA that granted HSIs to apply

under Title V for larger federal funding similar to Historically Black Colleges and

Universities (HBCUs) and Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) with the caveat

that HSIs would have a different status within Title V because unlike HBCUs and

TCUs, HSIs did not and do not have specific institutional missions to serve the

Hispanic population (Hurtado & Ruiz Alvarado, 2015; Laden, 2001; Malcom-Piqueux

& Lee, 2011).

In 1994, HSIs under Title III of the HEA were defined as "accredited degree-

granting, public or private, nonprofit colleges or universities with 25% or more total

undergraduate Hispanic student enrollment" (Laden, 2004, p. 186). In 1998 when

HSIs were placed under Title V of the HEA reauthorization, the definition became,

"accredited, degree-granting, public or private, non-profit colleges and universities

with 25% or more total undergraduate full-time equivalent (FTE) Hispanic student

enrollment" (Laden, 2004, p. 186). Rather than total undergraduate Hispanic student

enrollment, the designation was narrowed to total full-time equivalent (FTE) Hispanic

undergraduate student enrollment. The HSI designation also included the criterion

that 50% of Hispanic students must be within the poverty level established by the

Bureau of the Census in order to be eligible for Title V funding (Laden, 2004). "The

establishment of HSIs is confirmation that the postsecondary landscape does adapt to

changes in the environment" (García, 2015, p. 83). The continued annual increase in

HSIs and the growth in application for federal government HSI grants are proof that

this change will only persist (García, 2015).

HSIs Today

The Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) and

Excelencia in Education are the policy powerhouses for HSIs. HSIs and emerging

HSIs have been and will continue to be on the rise (D. A. Santiago, 2006).

Designated HSIs have a "percentage scheme" (Baez et al., 2008) of 25% Hispanic

undergraduate full-time student enrollment. Emerging HSIs are colleges and

universities with 15% to 24% full-time undergraduate Hispanic student enrollment

(D. A. Santiago, n.d.). Some of these emerging HSIs are on the cusp of the HSI

designation. It is important to note, however, that some institutions may one year

have the designation and the following year may not due to the percentage scheme. In

other words, if Hispanic student full-time enrollment drops from one year to another,

this will have an effect on whether an institution is a designated HSI or if it is an

emerging HSI based on enrollment percentages. Figure 2 presents a graph of

designated and emerging HSIs from 2008 to 2014.
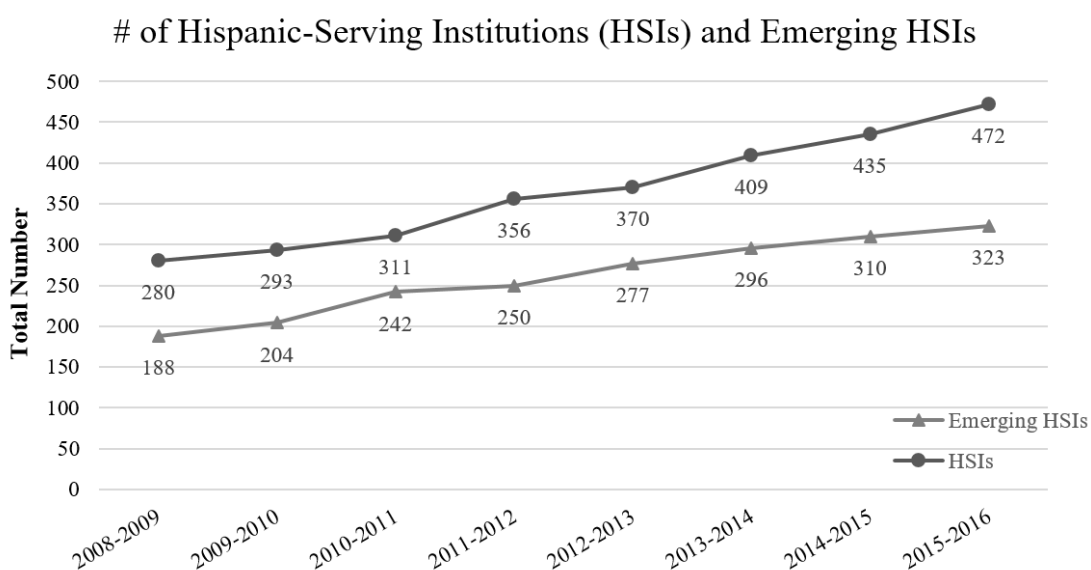
Figure 2. HSIs and Emerging HSIs 2008-2016. Data compiled from "Emerging HSIs, 1994-1995 to 2013-14," by Excelencia in Education, 2015a

(http://www.edexcelencia.org/hsi-cp2/research/emerging-hsis-1994-95-2013-14);
"Growth: HSIs 1994-95 to 2013-14," by Excelencia in Education, 2015b
(http://www.edexcelencia.org/hsi-cp2/research/growth-hsis-1994-95-2013-14);
"Emerging Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs): 2014-15," by Excelencia in
Education, 2016a (http://www.edexcelencia.org/hsi-cp2/research/emerging-hsis-2014-
15); "Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs): 2014-15," by Excelencia in Education,
2016b (http://www.edexcelencia.org/hsi-cp2/research/hsis-2014-15); "Emerging
Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs): 2015-16," by Excelencia in Education, 2017a
(http://www.edexcelencia.org/hsi-cp2/research/emerging-hsis-2015-16); and
"Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs): 2015-16," by Excelencia in Education, 2017b
(http://www.edexcelencia.org/hsi-cp2/research/hsis-2015-16).

Given that 64% of all Latino students are educated at HSIs (Excelencia in

Education, 2017b), focusing on strength-based models at HSIs (García, 2015) rather

than deficit models (Valencia & Solórzano, 1997) to educate first-generation Latino

college students is a necessary shift because of the social, political, and economic

repercussions that their numbers represent (Barnett, 2010; Barton, 2002). Given this

consideration, I next introduce Rendón's (1994) validation theory as an educational

strength-based model (García, 2015) that may inform Stanton-Salazar's (2010)

framework.

Validation Theory and First-generation Latino College Students

Students are the raison d'être (*razón de ser*) in higher education. As

educators, we must consider the choice to make a genuine commitment to first-

generation Latino college students' academic and social advancement on our college

campuses and the effect this will have in producing a diverse, highly educated

citizenry (Hurtado et al., 2012; Hurtado et al., 2015). "Latinos and Latinas currently

sitting in our high school and college classrooms represent an immense resource—and

one critical to the nation's ongoing economic growth and vitality" (Bensimon &

Dowd, 2012, p. 1). The Latino demographic shift has been well documented in our

academic literature (e.g., Benítez, 1998; Contreras et al. 2008; Laden 1999, 2001, 2004; Núñez et al., 2016). I have described the quantitative increases in HSIs and Emerging HSIs. Given these statistics, Rendón's (1994) validation theory may serve as a strength-based model (García, 2015) for scholars and practitioners to apply when working with first-generation Latino college students.

Validation Theory

Rendón (1994) spoke directly to the ushering of changing demographics back in the 1990s:

> In stark contrast with yesterday's uniform profile of college students as white males from privileged backgrounds, today's student body represents a tapestry of differentiation in social background…. This has resulted not only in the colorization of the academy, but in the proliferation of a constellation of students that challenge traditional values, assumptions, and conventions which have long been entrenched in the academy. (p. 33)

Rendón's (1994) study found that when IAs (termed external agents) validated students, students gained confidence and belief in their ability to succeed. Faculty validated students by: providing feedback, working individually with students, designing structured learning in such a way where students could witness their own learning, providing equal treatment of all students, demonstrating approachability, and having the genuine desire to teach students. Rendón's theory also distinguished between validation and student involvement.

Validation versus involvement. Rendón (1994) differentiated validation from student involvement, describing involvement as directly related to the student learning process, (i.e., time spent studying, student activity participation, or faculty and peer interaction). Validation, on the other hand, was what the student received from someone who took initiative to assist a student, (i.e., affirmation or support of academic work and assistance to adapt socially). While Rendón's study was founded on Astin (1985) as well as Pascarella and Terenzini's (1991) work on student involvement, authors since Rendón (Barnett, 2010; Bensimon, 2007; Lohfink & Paulsen, 2005; Nora, 2001; Nora & Wedham, 1991; Solórzano, Villalpando, & Oseguera, 2005; Terenzini et al., 1994) provided the academic community with empirical research on the value of validating student's abilities, including the positive effects validation has on student's academic and social integration and advancement on a college campus. Nora and Wedham's (1991) study demonstrated that improved student achievement was related to the encouragement and support students received from faculty and others—in essence, validation. However, Bensimon (2007) indicated that we must take the positive and the negative influences of practitioners into account. If instead of validating students, educational practitioners negatively label or treat students differently because of, for example, race, this may negatively affect students' academic and social advancement (Tinto, 2006). These actions may invalidate students. Latino students, for example, may experience culture shock in an academic learning environment (Gloria, Castellanos, Lopez, & Rosales, 2005; Rendón, 1994) and their perceptions of their environment affect their academic and

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social experiences (Gloria et al., 2005; Hurtado, Milem, Clayton-Pedersen, & Allen, 1998).

Two-fold attributes of Rendón's theory. Rendón's (1994, 2002) validation theory is twofold. Academic validation occurs when IAs act to assist students to trust in their own scholastic ability. Interpersonal validation occurs when IAs help students personally develop and adjust socially.

> Validation theory (Rendón, 1994) recognizes the limitations of expecting all students, regardless of backgrounds, to get involved in institutional life. In a validation model, institutional agents, not students, are expected to take the first step to promote involvement, but to affirm students as knowers and valuable members of the college learning community. Validation theory poses that college faculty, counselors, and administrative staff take a proactive role in reaching out to students to affirm them as being capable of doing academic work and to support them in their academic endeavors and social adjustment. (Rendón, 2002, p. 645)

In 2011, Rendón Linares and Muñoz reiterated validation theory's core tenents: "1) validate students as creators of knowledge and as valuable members of the college learning community and 2) foster personal development and social adjustment" (p. 12), which are particularly important for nontraditional students' academic and social advancement.

Nontraditional students are those students whose college attendance is atypical because they must consider the pros and cons of attending college versus working

full-time to assist with family responsibilities (Rendón Linares & Muñoz, 2011).

These students may question their ability to attend college because of prior

invalidation and lack of role models to assist them in the navigating the college

process. They often attend HSIs rather than more elite institutions. Validation theory

postulates, "that for many low-income, first-generation students, external validation is

initially needed to move students toward acknowledgement of their own internal self-

capableness and potentiality" (Rendón Linares & Muñoz, 2011, p. 17).

 The six elements. In addition to distinguishing between academic and

interpersonal development, Rendón Linares and Muñoz (2011) detailed validation

theory's six elements:

1. IAs hold the responsibility of reaching out to students rather than having the expectation that students will make the initial contact to ask questions. It is important to distinguish that initiating contact and supporting students is not equivalent to coddling students. It is instead, helping students "believe in their ability to learn, acquire self-worth, and increase their motivation to succeed. Validating actions should be authentic, caring, and nonpatronizing" (pp. 17-18).

2. When students feel validated, they, in turn, gain self-worth and the capacity to learn.

3. Consistent validation increases student's self-confidence thereby leading a student to become more involved, contributing to their student development.

4.   Validation can take place in and out of class.

5.   Validation is developmental. In other words, rather than being considered an end, it instead should start early in a college student's experience and develop continuously through time.

6.   Validation is important during the first few weeks of the first year experience.

Validation theory applied. Rendón Linares and Muñoz (2011) provided a review of the research studies that have used validation theory as a theoretical framework (e.g., Pérez & Ceja, 2010; Rendón, 2002), a framework to better understand student success (e.g., Nora & Crisp, 2009; Solórzano et al., 2005; Terenzini et al., 1994), improve pedagogic practice (e.g., Núñez, Marakami-Ramalho, & Cuero, 2010; Rendón, 2009), and a student development theory (Rendón Linares & Muñoz, 2011). The theoretical perspectives that support validation theory include: ABC model of creating inclusive environments (Daniel Tatum, 2007), community cultural wealth model (Yosso, 2005), funds of knowledge (Moll et al., 1992), liberatory pedagogy (e.g., Freire, 1971; Giroux, 1988), and validation theory's core, which is the ethic of care (Rendón Linares & Muñoz, 2011). I note that validation theory shares the theoretical tenents of funds of knowledge (Moll et al., 1992) and critical pedagogy (Freire, 1971) with coalition pedagogy (C. Pimentel & Pimentel, 2002).

Nora, Urick, and Quijada Cerecer (2011) examined how validation theory has been used in qualitative and quantitative studies by various scholars since it was first

introduced by Rendón in 1994. Whether validation theory was used to describe mentoring relationships (e.g., Nora, 2001; Nora & Crisp, 2009) or students' sense of belonging (e.g., Schuetz, 2008; Zhao & Kuh, 2004), the overlapping result was that of care, sensitivity, and affirmation (Nora et al., 2011). Nora et al. (2011) called for the need to operationalize the construct of validation theory by identifying specific indicators—I used Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework—and through different methodological perspectives—I used Yin's (2014) embedded case study design.

A rigorous case study approach, historical aspects, document analysis, and participant interviews (Nora et al., 2011) are included in this study's methodology, which I discuss in Chapter 3. Change over time is the only area that I did not incorporate due to this element's longitudinal nature. "These qualitative methodological approaches could extend the knowledge base on validation by illustrating more specific inquiries that better represent concepts or current issues regarding validation theory" (Nora et al., 2011, p. 48). Rendón Linares and Muñoz (2011) called for an examination of validation theory to provide additional evidence of academic and interpersonal validation. Equity-related research relevant to "student engagement, persistence, academic achievement, and degree attainment is helpful and worth exploring" (Nora et al., 2011) given the projected growth trends for Latino students. To that end, I posit that validation theory may inform the actions of IAs to assist first-generation Latino college students' academic and social advancement at a Catholic HSI.

Institutional Agents

Latinos enter HSIs with less academic capital compared to peers who enroll at non-HSIs (Cuellar, 2015). HSIs are also attracting a more diverse Latino student population while providing more postsecondary opportunities (Cuellar, 2015). Therefore,

> if, as scholars of higher education, we wish to produce knowledge to improve student success, we cannot ignore that practitioners [institutional agents] play a significant role[;]…. we have to expand the scholarship on student success and take into account the influence of practitioners—positively and negatively. (Bensimon, 2007, p. 445)

If we are not successful at accomplishing this, what we as scholars understand as student success will not be complete, and instead, flawed (Bensimon, 2007). This study is timely and significant because of the recent HSI history, higher education contemporary issues, and the value IAs' actions may have in supporting first-generation Latino college students.

Expanding upon the Definition of Institutional Agents

The literature on IAs is grounded in Stanton-Salazar's (1997, 2010) seminal work. IAs are non-kin individuals who can provide first-generation Latino college students with the social capital necessary to navigate the college experience via the actions they take to support students' academic and social advancement (Bensimon, 2007; Bensimon & Dowd, 2009, 2012; Stanton-Salazar, 1997, 2010). "It is only when these individuals use their capital to transmit high value resources—

opportunities, privileges and services—to underserved students that they become

institutional agents" (Bensimon & Dowd, 2012, p. 3). These words align with

Rendón Linares and Muñoz's (2011) first and sixth elements of validation theory,

which hold IAs accountable for establishing contact with students. Through time, the

fifth element of validation theory, the transfer of capital, leads to student validation

and involvement, which are the second and third elements. The fourth element of

validation theory was represented when IAs used their capital in or out of class,

thereby aligning validation theory with the actions of IAs. IAs hold the responsibility

of reaching out to students rather than having the expectation that students will make

the initial contact to ask questions. Therefore, specific actions, and transmitting

opportunities, privileges, and services define IAs. To understand the actions

categorized as and considered to be opportunities, privileges, and services, a detailed

examination of Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework was necessary.

Examination of Stanton-Salazar's (2010) Theoretical Framework

Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework delineates IAs' actions into four

categories: direct support, integrative support, system developer and system linkage

and networking support (see Appendix A), which are further subdivided into 14 roles

(Bensimon & Dowd, 2012).

1. Direct support includes:

- Resource agent (personal and positional resources)

- Knowledge agent (knowledge in navigating the system)

- Advisor (information gathering, problem solving, and decision making)

- Advocate (promoting and protecting students' interests)

- Networking coach (teaching, modeling, and developing)

2. Integrative support includes:

- Integrative agent (helping students integrate and participate in professional and institutional venues)

- Cultural guide (guiding and teaching within a cultural sphere)

3. System developer includes:

- Program developer (systematic program development)

- Lobbyist (resources for student recruitment and support)

- Political advocate (political action group member)

4. System Linkage & Networking Support includes:

- Recruiter (active student recruitment for program or department)

- Bridging agent (knowledgeable of and works with strong network to connect students to other IAs)

- Institutional broker (holds resource knowledge and negotiates amongst parties)

- Coordinator (assesses needs, then identifies, provides, and ensures resources for students)

This study examined if students and/or IAs described some, all, or none of these actions. In addition, I compared these actions as pairs between the student and

the identified IA. Of the studies found to date that reference Stanton-Salazar's (2010)

framework, only Jiménez (2012) found all areas of the framework within a

community college context. Jiménez's (2012) study focused on 13 IAs and did not

include students.

Institutional Agents' Literature Examined

As mentioned in Chapter 1, there is a dearth of literature on IAs . A

reasonable number of research studies on IAs exist as dissertations (Carrasco-

Nungaray, 2011; Javier, 2009; Jiménez, 2012; Pendakur, 2010; C. Santiago, 2012;

Swartout, 2015). Carrasco-Nungaray (2011) and Jiménez (2012) found that

establishing relationships in or out of the classroom with students was positive as was

sharing life histories or as Carrasco-Nungaray (2011) described it—sharing personal

educational journeys. Both of these studies were within a community college context,

but Carrasco-Nungaray (2011) focused on faculty members as IAs whereas Jiménez's

(2012) participants self-identified as faculty/counselor or counselor. Javier's (2009)

study was also within a community college context, which focused on math faculty as

IAs. Pendakur's (2010) work focused on IAs as empowerment agents at a selective,

private institution while C. Santiago's (2012) dissertation site was at a four-year

public HSI with faculty IAs and Latino students within science, technology,

engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields, and Swartout's (2015) work was also at

a community college with developmental education faculty as IAs.

Additional studies have focused on community colleges (Bensimon, 2007;

Bensimon & Dowd, 2009, 2012; Dowd, 2010; Dowd et al., 2006; Dowd et al., 2013;

Pak, Bensimon, Malcom, Márquez, & Park, 2006). Bensimon and Dowd (2009)

made connections to Dowd et al. (2006) and Pak et al. (2006) by using the term

transfer agents, referring to IAs within the community college setting. These transfer

agents provided students "with the resources to cross the 'cultural border' that divides

two- and four-year colleges, particularly community colleges and highly selective

universities" (Bensimon & Dowd, 2009, p. 651). Dowd et al. (2013) contributed to the

literature by examining the psychological support IAs provided students. An

important finding in Dowd et al.'s (2013) study demonstrated that individuals who

were in authoritative positions were vital in providing students with psychological

validation.

In summary, the common threads within the extant literature on IAs included

social capital (Carrasco-Nungaray, 2011; Jiménez, 2012; Pendakur, 2010; Swartout,

2015), funds of knowledge (Bensimon, 2007; Bensimon & Dowd, 2009; Dowd, 2010;

Javier, 2009) with the vast majority of the literature on IAs developed at the

University of Southern California (USC) where many of the scholars mentioned,

including Stanton-Salazar, develop and practice their scholarship. Bensimon and

Dowd were co-directors of the Center for Urban Education at the Rossier School of

Education at USC before Dowd accepted an appointment at Pennsylvania State

University (USC Rossier School of Education, n.d.). USC sponsored all but two of

the dissertations mentioned herewith (Javier, 2009; Jiménez, 2012; Pendakur, 2010;

C. Santiago, 2012). Although this is certainly a strong body of much-needed

literature, because it was primarily sourced in one location and focused on community

colleges, it can leave little room for scholars to challenge one another or find inconsistencies in the literature. Thus far, I have found concerted alignment with some scholarly expansion. The expansion of the literature now includes a focus on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) at two- and four-year, public HSIs (Bensimon & Dowd, 2012; C. Santiago, 2012), but these are the only two studies found conducted at HSIs.

Additional studies have contributed in other ways to the literature on IAs. For example, Museus and Neville (2012) delineated four common characteristics of social capital that IAs provided students: "(a) share common ground with those students, (b) provide holistic support for those students, (c) humanize the educational experience, and (d) provide proactive support for those students" (p. 436). Bensimon and Dowd's (2012) study differentiated between IAs serving in the roles of Deans versus faculty. Deans can better engage in program and system development, and lobby for external funding whereas faculty can provide more direct support, including advising, network coaching and student advocacy. However, no study to date has formally extended upon the four categories of Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework, challenged, re-aligned roles or categories, or contextualized a study within a private, Catholic HSI.

Summary

This literature review illustrated historical to present contextualization of HSIs. I introduced Rendón's (1994) validation theory and supporting literature positing that validation theory may inform Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework on

IAs. I also examined Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework and the literature on IAs. I

next introduce the methodology that I will use in this study.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

A case study has a distinguishing characteristic. It seeks to examine a real-life contextualized contemporary phenomenon, particularly when there is no clear evidence between the context and phenomenon (Yin, 1981). In this case study, I examined the actions institutional agents (IAs) took to support first-generation Latino college students as the real-life contemporary phenomenon within the context of a Catholic HSI. Because I did not find a previous study exacting this context and phenomenon in the literature, there is currently no clear or documented evidence between the two. In addition, a case study is distinguished by type. There are two types of case studies: single- and multiple-case study designs. Single-case studies are appropriate when the study is of "a *critical, unusual, common, revelatory, or longitudinal"* (Yin, 2014, p. 51) nature whereas multiple-case studies are appropriate when there are multiple-cases in differing contexts. Because the only context in this study is a Catholic HSI, I employed a single-case study. Yin (2014) further distinguished the single-case study design between a holistic (single-unit of analysis) and an embedded (multiple-units of analysis) approach. A holistic single-case design (Figure 3, Type 1) addresses one case within one context while an embedded case study (Figure 3, Type 2) addresses several units of analysis within one case and one context.
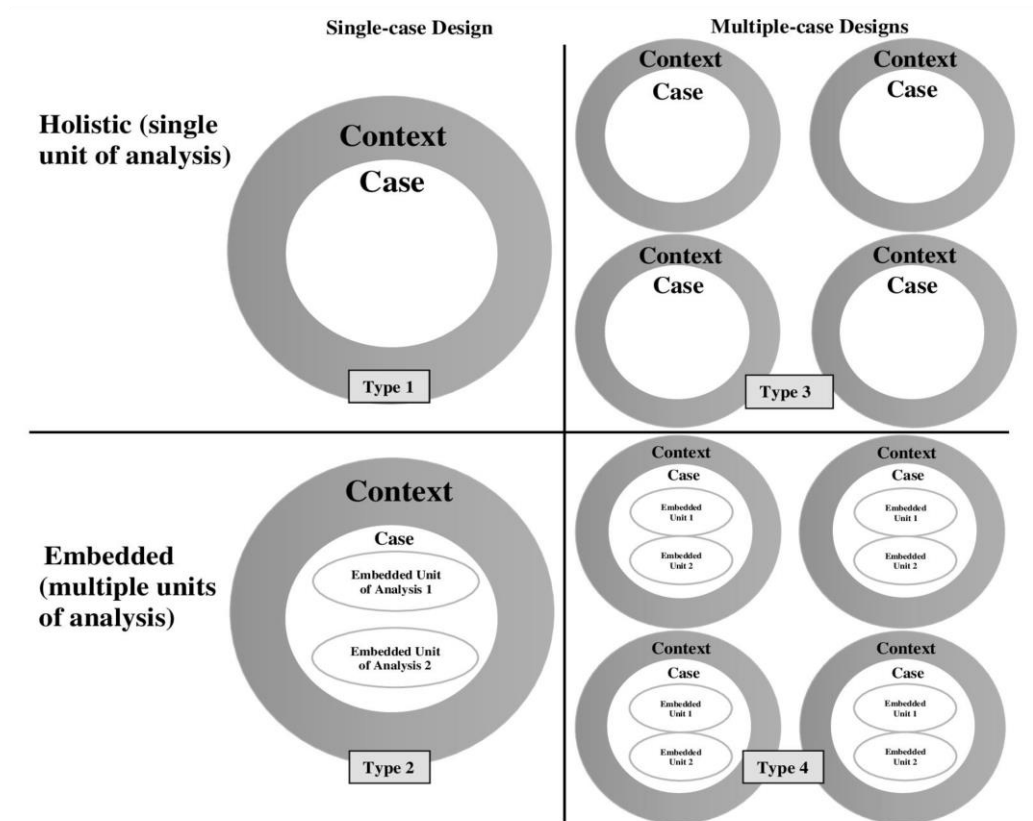
Figure 3. Adaptation of Yin's (2014) Basic Types of Designs for Case Studies. This figure represents Yin's (2014) depiction of single- and multiple-case studies. Adapted from "Basic Types of Designs for Case Studies," by R. K. Yin, 2014, *Case Study Research: Design and Methods* (5th ed.), p. 50.

I employed an embedded, single-case design (multiple-units of analysis) to explore three research questions because "an embedded design can serve as an important device for focusing on a case study inquiry" (Yin, 2014, p. 55) and "appropriate to real, complex, [and] current" issues (Scholz & Tietje, 2002). In addition, "the subunits can often add significant opportunities for extensive analysis, enhancing the insights into the single case" (Yin, 2014, p. 56). It is important to bound the case (Creswell, 2013; Yin, 2014). For this study, a Catholic Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI), an organization (Yin, 2014) served as the context, which bound the case by place (Creswell, 2013).
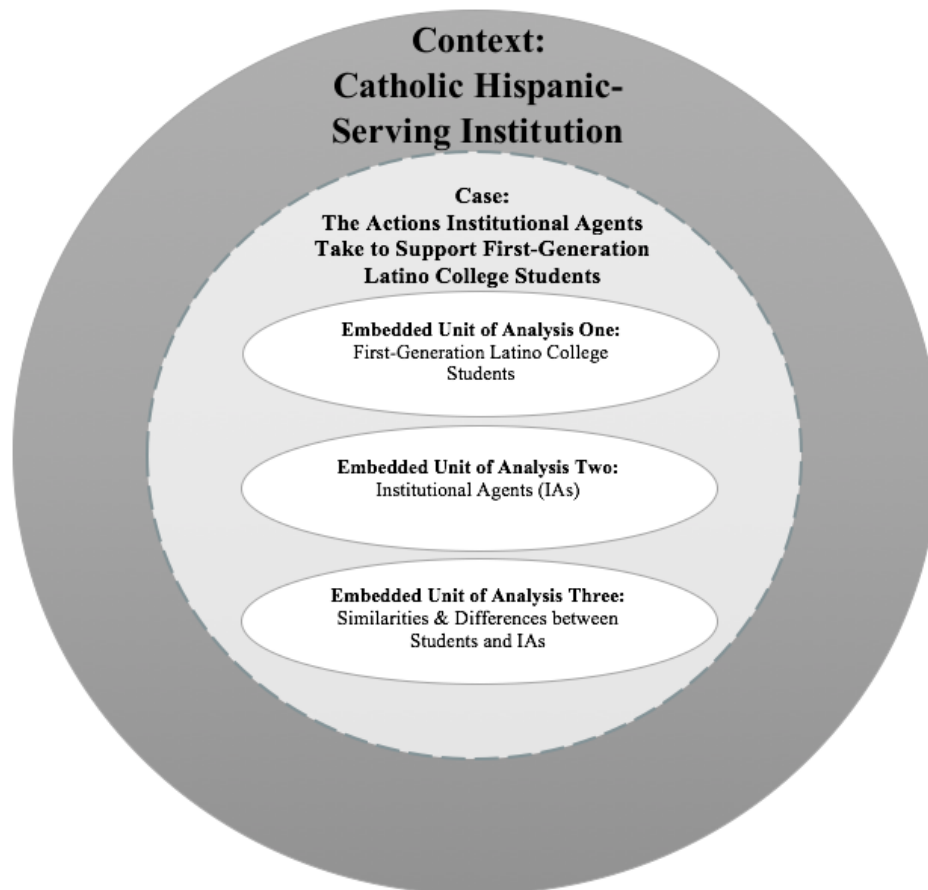
Figure 4. Adaptation of Embedded, Single Case Study Design. This figure represents an adaptation of Yin's (2014) depiction of an embedded (three multiple units of analysis) single-case study. Adapted from "Basic Types of Designs for Case Studies," by R. K. Yin, 2014, *Case Study Research: Design and Methods (*5th ed.*),* p. 50. Created by D. M. Hernández and A. Williams (2016) for purposes of this study.

Embedded units of analysis are subunits within the case. The following three

research questions correspond to the three embedded unit of analysis depicted in

Figure 4 in the same chronological order:

1.   How do first-generation Hispanic college students describe the specific actions

institutional agents take to support their academic and social advancement at a

Catholic Hispanic-Serving Institution?

- Using Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework detailing the actions of

  institutional agents, and as described by first-generation Hispanic college

  students, to what degree are they representative of:

a. direct support?

b. integrative support?

c. system developer?

d. system linkage & networking support?

2. How do the identified institutional agents, themselves, describe the specific actions they take to facilitate the academic and social advancement of first-generation Hispanic college students?

- Using Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework detailing the actions of institutional agents, and as described by the identified institutional agents, to what degree are they representative of:

a. direct support?

b. integrative support?

c. system developer?

d. system linkage & networking support?

3. What are the similarities and differences between the actions of institutional agents, as described by first-generation Hispanic college students, compared to those described by the identified institutional agents?

Of the five rationales, Yin (2014) listed for a single-case study design: "*critical, unusual, common, revelatory, or longitudinal*" (p. 51), this case study design meets the critical, unusual, and revelatory assumptions. It is *critical* because the theoretical proposition (Yin, 2014) of Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework (see Appendix A):

ha[s] specified a clear set of circumstances within which its propositions are

believed to be true. The single case then can be used to determine whether the

propositions are correct or whether some alternative set of explanations might

be more relevant. (Yin, 2014, p. 51)

The clear set of circumstances refers the actions of IAs as described in Stanton-

Salazar's (2010) framework. This single-case, embedded study design examined the

data for evidence of the 14 roles in Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework in each of the

three embedded units of analysis to examine if each of these roles—propositions—

were present or if alternative set of explanations surfaced, (i.e., emergent codes). In

other words, the study examined whether all, some, or none of the actions of IAs were

present in the framework as well as whether or not other actions were present, which

would expand upon the framework.

Second, this single-case design met the assumption of being *unusual* because

the actions of IAs within the context of a Catholic HSI have never before been

explored, "offer[ing] a distinct opportunity worth documenting and analyzing" (Yin,

2014, p. 52). This unusual case presented findings that "reveal[ed] insights about

normal processes, [and] [i]n this manner, the value of the case study can be connected

to a large number of people" (Yin, 2014, p. 52). In other words, I interpreted the IAs'

actions as normal processes and the connection to the large number of people, (i.e.,

the many Hispanic students attending an increasing number of HSIs) represent the

value of the case.

Third, this single-case study was *revelatory* because it presented an opportunity to examine and analyze a phenomenon not previously accessible. Again, it was the first time a study focused on the actions IAs took to support first-generation Latino college students' academic and social advancement at a Catholic HSI. I argue that sharing a Latino cultural background, the Spanish language, and being a first-generation college student myself may have contributed to a possible trusting relationship with first-generation Latino student participants that might not otherwise have be available or accessible to all researchers.

In summary, this case study met the distinguishing characteristic of examining a real-life contextualized contemporary phenomenon where there was no clear evidence between the context and phenomenon (Yin, 1981). It also met three of the five rationales for a single-case design. It did not meet the *common* case criterion because the intent was not to capture daily situations and it was not a *longitudinal* or long-term study. The case and embedded units of analysis were defined, selected, and analyzed based upon and in alignment with the research questions, making for a rigorous and methodologically sound case study (Yin, 2014). I employed an exploratory approach because, to date, there has not been an empirical research study conducted at a Catholic HSI demonstrating IAs' support of first-generation Latino college students' academic and social advancement. Given this single-case, embedded design, the next relevant consideration for this study is the research paradigm.

Research Paradigm

I selected the interpretivist/social constructivist paradigm for my study as the most congruent approach to answer the three research questions. I relied on students and IAs' views to understand "the world in which [they] live and work" (Creswell, 2013, p. 24) within the context of a Catholic HSI. This understanding provided me the opportunity to capture the cultural and historical setting by which this study was bound (Creswell, 2013). The interpretivist/social constructivist paradigm also allowed me to position myself within the research. I integrated my own background, knowledge, and reality as a first-generation Latina researcher as I interpreted the findings (Creswell, 2013). The interpretivist/social constructivist paradigm

is the view that *all knowledge, and therefore all meaningful reality as such, is contingent upon human practices, being constructed in and out of interaction between human beings and their world, and developed and transmitted within an essentially social context.* (Crotty, 1998, p. 42)

The claim relays that we, as human beings, construct meanings by being engaged in the world we are interpreting while we attempt to understand our human and social reality (Crotty, 1998). My position within this exploratory study was to interpret and construct meaning as I sought to understand the social reality of the participants within the study's context. Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework provided the roadmap to interpret the data and socially construct its meaning.

Research Framework

The roles identified in Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework were the actions that IAs took to support first-generation Latino college students' academic and social advancement. The 14 roles described within this framework represented a priori codes (see Appendix A and Figure 1). Stanton-Salazar (2010) categorized these a priori codes into four categories: direct support, integrative support, system developer, and system linkage and networking support. This framework provided the foundation for data interpretation based upon the 14 roles found within the four categories described. Social capital undergirds Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework. By assuming the roles within the framework and carrying out the actions associated with these 14 roles, IAs provided students with social capital and helped them navigate the undergraduate college experience (e.g., Bensimon, 2007; Bensimon & Dowd, 2012; Carrasco-Nungaray, 2011; Jiménez, 2012; Museus & Neville, 2012; Pendakur, 2010; Stanton-Salazar, 1997, 2010). I designed this exploratory, embedded, single-case study to contribute to the extant body of knowledge combining HSIs and IAs and first-generation Latino students within a specific context.

Site Selection

I selected a Catholic HSI, St. Jude's (pseudonym), which bound the study by its organizational context because it is located in a predominantly Hispanic populated geographic region of the United States. It is convenient because of this geographic location and its designation as a HSI. It is relevant because religious institutions and small liberal arts institutions combined represent 9% of all HSIs (Núñez et al., 2016).

At one time, St. Jude's was the only four-year, private university to hold this designation in this region. Today, three additional four-year, Catholic institutions hold the HIS designation (Excelencia in Education, 2017b). Recall that institutions are designated HSIs once full-time Latino student enrollment reaches 25% (Baez et al., 2008; Laden, 2001, 2004). In this region alone, the growth of designated Catholic HSIs validates the upward trend of HSIs. This growth is demonstrative of the need, value, and timeliness of this study, making it a relevant and viable contextual setting for research.

With fewer than 5,000 enrolled students, St. Jude's institutional mission includes its commitment to its Catholic tradition, diversity, and social justice. Historically, a religious order dedicated to the education of the disenfranchised founded this institution. Since its founding, St. Jude's has served varying disenfranchised populations, but I will not provide specific data to protect the study site's confidentiality. The context of the institution, with its religious affiliation, will contribute to the body of knowledge on HSIs and the combination of first-generation Latino college students and their identified IAs as study participants make this study the first of its kind.

Participant Selection

Participant selection was twofold. I began with first-generation Latino college students who identified their designated IAs. Student interviews aligned with question one of the study: How do first-generation Hispanic college students describe the specific actions institutional agents take to support their academic and social

advancement at a Catholic HSI (see Figure 4, Embedded unit of analysis one corresponding to first-generation Latino college students)? During the student interviews, students identified IAs, thereby executing the IA selection process. IA interviews aligned with question two of the study: How do the identified institutional agents, themselves, describe the specific actions they take to facilitate the academic and social advancement of first-generation Hispanic college students (see Figure 4, Embedded unit of analysis two corresponding to institutional agents)?

St. Jude's developed an institutional program supported by external funding to support first-generation college students. This program was not specific to Latino students, but inclusive of all first-generation students. To execute purposeful sampling, which was the process of selecting individuals who would best inform the research problem to understand it better (Creswell, 2013, 2014), I requested a list of first-generation Latino students who participated in this program in the 2015-2016 academic year by following St. Jude's Institutional Review Board (IRB) protocol. I specified the following parameters: last name, first name, gender, ethnicity listed as Latino or Hispanic, year of study, all e-mail addresses whether institutional or personal, and any telephone numbers listed. I was granted a list of all participating first-generation students' directory information, including students' first name, last name, mailing address, institutional e-mail address, and telephone number(s), abiding by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA; U.S. Department of Education, 2016). The list included 413 total first-generation students.

The goal of the study was to obtain between 10 to 15 student and IA paired interviews to address question three of the study: What are the similarities and differences between the actions of institutional agents, as described by first-generation Hispanic college students, compared to those described by the identified institutional agents themselves (see Figure 4, Embedded unit of analysis three corresponding to the similarities and differences between students and IAs)?

First-generation Latino College Students' Selection Criteria

To address the study's three questions, the first criterion in the student selection process was for students to self-identify as first-generation. Recall that a first-generation college student is one whose parents have not obtained an undergraduate degree (Pascarella et al., 2004). Based on Pascarella et al.'s (2004) definition presented in the introductory e-mail (see Appendix B) and confirmed during the interview (see Appendix C), each student self-identified as being the first in their family to attend a four-year college. I substantiated the data by asking each student to provide his/her mother and father's educational completion level and the corresponding country of each parent during the interview (see Appendix C). The second criterion was that students self-identify as Hispanic or Latino. The institution's website indicated that in the 2015-2016 academic year, the total undergraduate population was 67% female and 33% male. I sought a comparable gender sample. Last, I sought a mix of all class years, including freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors.

First-generation Latino College Students' Selection Process

      I requested and received the list of 413 total first-generation students in May

2016 as the 2015-2016 academic year was ending. Because the list did not include

ethnic or gender data, I introduced the study to all 413 students via e-mail (see

Appendix B). This introduction included the definition of first-generation Latino

college students as those for whom neither parent has gone beyond a high school

education (Pascarella et al., 2004). In the e-mail, I attached the consent form (see

Appendix D) and Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework (see Appendix A) to

familiarize the students with the language and concepts of the framework. The e-mail

and framework were intended to provide students an opportunity to think about

examples of IAs' actions that support first-generation Latino college students'

academic and social advancement. I received 10 responses from students indicating

that they did not meet the criteria to participate in the study, leaving 403 students. Of

these remaining 403 students, I received 11 e-mails from students who expressed

interest in participating. Of these 11 students, six were interviewed. Two additional

students walked-in while I was on-site, totaling eight first-generation Latino student

interviews. I obtained consent for all participants via e-mail or in-person and captured

consent during the recorded interview. I made Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework

available during the interview in print and referenced it via Skype or in person.

Throughout the e-mail and/or interview communication process, I asked students to

self-identify as first-generation college students as a means of verifying the accuracy

of the list provided from the institution. I also asked students to specify their

corresponding Latino heritage (e.g., Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Salvadoran, etc.).

For e-mail established communications, follow-up continued via e-mail or by

telephone as needed.

As per the student selection criteria, I noted that the first three interviews were

female participants. Although they represented a mix of class years, I wanted to

secure a representative gender ratio of 67% female and 33% male. I conducted a line-

by-line assessment of names on the list and selected 51 names that I considered male

gender dominant. When a name was what I considered gender neutral, I included it. I

conducted a U. S. Postal Service mail campaign for these 51 names as a follow-up

effort to my introductory e-mail in an effort to secure male representation. I included

a printed student introductory letter (see Appendix B), the consent form (see

Appendix D), and Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework (see Appendix A) in this

order, included my business card, and a stamped, self-addressed return envelope.

This effort yielded zero results. However, the student interview process spurred a

concurrent IA interview process.

Institutional Agents' (IAs) Selection Criteria and Process

Each interviewed student designated an IA(s) during their interview (see

Appendix C). I asked if the student had any contact information, (e.g., last name, first

name, job title, e-mail address(es), telephone number(s), and/or office location) for

the IA. If the student was unaware of the IA's contact information, I researched the

institution's website. I noticed that faculty telephone numbers were not available on

the website even though other contact information was available. To protect

participants' confidentiality and not divulge the identity of any designated IA, I asked, and the institution granted, a list of all part- and full-time faculty members and their corresponding telephone numbers from the Department of Human Resources. Staff and administrators' contact information was available on the website. I did not request contact information via word of mouth while on-site in a continued effort to protect IA confidentiality.

Eight students identified 15 IAs. I reached out to the designated IAs via an introductory e-mail (see Appendix E), attached Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework (see Appendix A) and the consent form (see Appendix D). If I did not receive a response, I contacted via telephone, but did not leave a message if the IA did not answer because I could not confirm if the IAs were the only individuals answering their voicemails. Similar to the student selection process, by attaching Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework, I provided the IAs the opportunity to review the purpose of the study and consider how their actions supported the academic and social advancement of first-generation Latino college students. If I did not obtain consent via e-mail, I obtained consent in-person prior to the start of the interview and captured it on the recording. I also printed Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework to make it available for reference during the interview if needed. I conducted all 15 IA interviews on-site and face-to-face (see Appendix F).

Data Collection

Data collection began by seeking and obtaining approval from The College of William and Mary's Institutional Review Board (IRB). Upon approval from W&M's

IRB, I sought and St. Jude's IRB granted permission to conduct my study with final

review and approval by the study site's Provost. Thereafter, the institution provided a

composite list of all 413 first-generation students and I forwarded the first

introductory e-mail.

First-generation Latino College Students

From original student list of 413 names provided by St. Jude's, I expanded

upon the excel spreadsheet to include the following information for each student

participant:

- Last name

- First name

- Other preferred name provided by the student

- Gender as self-disclosed by the student

- Ethnicity as self-disclosed by the student

- Class year during the 2015-2016 academic year

- Mailing address

- Institutional e-mail address and other e-mail address provided by the

  student

- Telephone number(s)

- Date the introductory e-mail was sent and corresponding response(s)

  content and date

- Date the student consent form was signed (see Appendix D)

- U.S. Postal Service mailing date if applicable

55

- Selected pseudonym

- Interview date

- Interview method (i.e., Skype, telephone, or in-person)

- Corresponding identified IA(s)

- Mother's highest level of education

- Corresponding country

- Father's highest level of education

- Corresponding country

- Interview summary date sent

- Interview summary date received

The purpose of gathering these data was to build a composite of each student to better understand the data each presented during their interviews. It also served as a tracking mechanism for correspondence, interview scheduling, pseudonyms, and corresponding IAs.

As part of St. Jude's IRB process, the institution designated an on-site person as a point of contact to assist me in obtaining permission to post recruitment flyers. I posted flyers in various buildings, following the institutional protocol. I posted the first set of flyers just as the spring 2016 semester ended. When I returned to St. Jude's in June and July, I noticed that flyer tabs with my name and contact information had been pulled. Overall, however, communication with students decreased throughout the summer months. E-mail and telephone conversations with students confirmed that they had returned to their homes in different geographic

regions. This and student summer work schedules complicated the scheduling of interviews even via Skype or telephone even with my offer to travel to their preferred geographic location within a 75 mile radius of St. Jude's. I refreshed the posted flyers during the fall 2016 semester and again noticed pulled tabs.

In the IRB process, I included a request for interview space at the institution because I was traveling from The College of William and Mary in Virginia to St. Jude's, which was located across the country. The institution provided a central, on-campus location with considerable student traffic. My flyers were visible and the most recent version included the interview space location on every tab with my name and contact information. This consistent on-site presence yielded two drop-in student interviews, totaling six on-site, in-person interviews and two Skype interviews for a total of eight first-generation Latino college student interviews. My goal was to secure 10-15 pairs of student and IA interviews with as many face-to-face interviews as possible. I began student data collection in May 2016 and ended in September 2016.

Institutional Agents

IAs' data collection was concurrent with the student data collection process. Students designated their IA(s) and some provided contact information during their interviews. I combined this information with my own online institutional website research and the telephone contact information provided by the Department of Human Resources. I created an excel spreadsheet with the following data points and collected any remaining information during the IA interview:

- Last name

- First name

- Degree

- Job title

- E-mail address(es)

- Introductory e-mail date

- Response to introductory e-mail

- Telephone number(s)

- Dates of telephone contact and response date(s)

- Office location

- Consent document date (see Appendix D)

- Selected pseudonym

- Interview date

- Interview method

- Length of time in position

- Designated department

- Length of time at institution

- Gender

- Race

- Ethnicity

- Comments

The purpose of gathering these data was to build a composite of each IA, understand the data each IA presented during their interview, and gain a broader perspective of the interaction between students and IAs to address question three of the study. As with the data collection for students, this information served as a tracking mechanism for correspondence, interview scheduling, office locations, pseudonyms, and a cross reference check to corresponding students.

The on-site workspace provided by the institution proved effective as a convenient location to interview for some faculty or staff members who did not have a designated on-campus office space, shared office space with colleagues, or preferred not to interview in their office. The flyers posted also made IAs aware of my research, but it was in the introductory e-mail and during the interview that I made IAs aware that participation required a student designation. Data collection for IAs began in May 2016 and concluded in October 2016.

First-generation Latino College Students and Institutional Agents' Interviews

Although data collection began prior to interviews for both students and IAs, the primary source of data was collected via open-ended, semi-structured interviews. Student interviews averaged 49 minutes and IA interviews averaged one hour and 17 minutes. I tested the IA interview protocol (see Appendix F) in a pilot study (Hernández & Sikes, 2015) and the student interview protocol (see Appendix C) with a first-generation Latina undergraduate student attending The College of William and Mary. Both of these interview protocols were adapted from Jiménez (2012), Pendakur (2010), as well as Hernández and Sikes (2015). These were developed in

tandem, designed to address all three study questions, and were reviewed by Jiménez (2012) for consistency and accuracy. I designed the interview questions in these protocols to engage students and IAs in active, detailed, and in-depth discussion about the actions IAs took to support first-generation Latino college students' academic and social advancement. To support these rich, descriptive interviews, I asked students and IAs during the interview if they would be willing to provide written examples, including e-mails, feedback from academic work, or any other forms of written communication that would provide specific details regarding some of the examples they described during their interviews to triangulate the data. Triangulation refers to data collection from various sources to determine the consistency of a finding (Yin, 2014). I also completed post-interview audio or written commentaries after all interviews to capture any additional observations during the interview or my own reflections (Creswell, 2013; Yin, 2014).

I offered students and IAs the option of conducting the interviews in either Spanish or English (see Appendices C, F, G, and H). Participants were first-generation Latino students, but their primary language might not have been English (Warburton et al., 2001) or they might have viewed language as part of maintaining their ethnic identity and culture (Borrero, 2011; Contreras, 2011; Guerra, 2016; O. Pimentel, 2013; C. Pimentel & Pimentel, 2002; Rendón, 1992; Trevino & DeFreitas, 2014). I, therefore, accommodated their preferred language and supported their cultural identity by providing the option to interview in the language each student selected. Because students designated their IAs at the time of the interview, I had no

prior knowledge of IAs' language preference, but I also wanted to provide the Spanish

language option if they chose. As a native Spanish speaker, an undergraduate Spanish

major, and having had a fully immersed cultural and language experience in a Spanish

speaking country for over seven years, I consider myself well qualified to conduct a

Spanish interview. To validate language accuracy, I had the English interview

protocols professionally translated into Spanish. I then back translated from Spanish

to English and had the student and IA interview protocols also professionally back

translated from Spanish to English to establish further trustworthiness. If, during the

interview, participants nodded or communicated with body language, I verbalized

these instances to capture in the recording to ensure that understandings did not go

unspoken. If participants used "you know" or "like," I distinguished during the

interview between the terms as a manner of speech versus the participant potentially

assuming that I understood a particular concept. I also gave dedicated attention to

these terms during the transcription reviews and the preparation of summaries. If I

had any follow-up questions, I asked in the e-mail communications, which included

the interview summaries to member check the data (Creswell, 2014; Harris, 2015b).

All interviews were audio recorded and member checking occurred throughout

the interview (Harris, 2015a). Member checking during the interview included

paraphrasing as a means to confirm that I correctly understood the meaning each

participant wanted to convey with a particular sentence, phrase, or idea. At the

conclusion of every interview, I transferred the interviews from two audio recording

devices, stored them on my personal computer, systematically catalogued, and backed

them up through a cloud-based program and backed-up on a desktop system. After receiving the professionally translated interview transcriptions, I listened to each transcribed interview and follow-up interview line-by-line at least once and created a detailed post-interview summary. I then forwarded each summary to the corresponding student and IA as another means of member checking (Creswell, 2014; Harris, 2015b) to validate the accuracy of the data and establish trustworthiness (Creswell, 2014).

My goal of securing 10-15 pairs of student and IA interviews with as many face-to-face interviews as possible was to obtain robust data to address all three questions in this study. Question one focused on student interviews (see Figure 4, Embedded unit of analysis one corresponding to first-generation Latino college students). Student interviews designated IAs, which addressed question two (see Figure 4, Embedded unit of analysis two corresponding to institutional agents) and the combination of student and IA interviews addressed question three (see Figure 4, Embedded unit of analysis three corresponding to the similarities and differences between students and IAs). The embedded case study design accommodated for results regardless of the combination of interviews. For example:

- Student (A) identified IA (A)
- Student (B) identified IA (B)
- Student (C) identified IA (A, B)
- Student (D) identified IA (B, C)

- Student (E) identified IA (A, B, C) or any possible combination and student number IA designation.

Whatever the interview results, the single-case, embedded design allowed for data analysis given any number or combination.

I employed snowball sampling to optimize a robust result of student interviews beginning with the introductory e-mail (see Appendix B), employing consistent messaging in each student interview (see Appendices C and G) and asking students to recommend or encourage other first-generation Latino college students to participate in the study without self-disclosing their own participation. Snowball sampling refers to people, in this case, Latino college students who know other Latino college students and can refer them as participants (Creswell, 2013). While the study was designed on the premise of purposeful sampling, which is the process of selecting individuals who will best inform the research problem to better understand it (Creswell, 2013, 2014), I used snowball sampling as a means of recruiting additional first-generation Latino college students (the purposeful sample). Snowball sampling was also an opportunity to capture Latino college students who might not have been included in the institutional list. The institutional list served as a primary source of reference for students and as a cross-reference tool for student referrals. Snowball sampling was included in the design in an attempt to ensure the positive outcome of reaching 10-15 pairs of matching students and IAs.

In addition to the originally estimated one-hour open-ended, semi-structured interviews, I offered an optional follow-up telephone, Skype, or in-person interview at

the end of each student and IA interview. The purpose was to allow students and IAs to communicate any additional information, experiences, or reflections they may have had after the interview. This optional follow-up interview also provided me the opportunity to address any follow-up questions. I used the same audio recording, transcription, member checking, and validation systems for any follow-up interviews as with the original interview. I also asked all participants if they would be willing to write a reflective piece about their experience as a participant, which could include any additional examples they did not share during the interview, additional actions they may have thought of that did not form part of Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework, or anything else they wanted to share as another form of triangulating the data (Yin, 2014).

I completed three student interviews in May 2016. This was the result of the first personalized e-mail effort during that time. The first two were off-site via Skype and the third was on-site and in-person. Due to Skype and/or computer technical difficulties, Skype provided the visual connection and the telephone provided the audio for a successful first recorded interview. The second student Skype was successful with both video and audio, which was also audio recorded. While on-campus for the third student interview, I completed the first IA interview and the following two IA interviews were in June and July 2016. I re-introduced the study via e-mail to students in late August 2016 and had a consistent on-site presence in September and October 2016. I completed the remaining five student interviews in September 2016 and conducted the additional 12 IA interviews in September and

October 2016. As with students, I provided IAs the opportunity to interview via

Skype, telephone, on-site or off-site at their preferred location. All IAs opted to

interview face-to-face on campus. During the 2016 summer months, St. Jude's

provided various interview locations, including a classroom and two different

computer labs. During the fall 2016 semester, St. Jude's provided an unused faculty

office space.

Summary of Data Collection

Creswell (2014) wrote that the purposeful selection of participants or sites

assists the researcher in better understanding the problem and the research question(s).

In addition, the already described institutional and participant selection processes as

well as the data collection process meet the following four criteria (Miles &

Huberman, 1994, p. 30):

1. Setting

2. Actors

3. Events

4. Process

In this study, setting refers to the Catholic HSI, actors include IAs and first-generation

Latino college students, events refer to the interviewed actors, and process refers to

"the evolving nature of events undertaken by the actors within the setting" (Creswell,

2014, p. 189). This in-depth data collection process proved effective in gathering data

for analysis and interpretation.

Data Analysis

To address question one, self-reported interview results from all first-generation Latino college students addressing how IAs support their academic and social advancement was analyzed as a unified whole to comprise embedded unit of analysis one (see Figure 4, Embedded unit of analysis one corresponding to first-generation Latino college students). To address question two, self-reported interview results from institutional agents addressing their support of students was analyzed as a unified whole to comprise embedded unit of analysis two (see Figure 4, Embedded unit of analysis two corresponding to institutional agents), and matching transcripts paired between each student and the identified IA were analyzed as a unified whole to comprise embedded unit of analysis three (see Figure 4, Embedded unit of analysis three corresponding to the similarities and differences between students and IAs).

Embedded unit of analysis three was particularly poignant because it allowed for an in depth analysis to understand IA multiplicity when students identified IAs more than once. This analysis was vital to the findings of this study. Wherever there was an identified IA more than once, I considered that grouping one match because it was only one IA identified regardless of the number of students who identified this IA. In other words, the driver for the pairings was the IA and not the student because the actions of IAs were the primary focus of this study and as such, any one IA identified multiple times warranted special attention.

Data Analysis Process

I began data analysis with the list of 413 students provided by the institution. I then expanded the list to include additional data points and concurrently created an excel spreadsheet with data points for IAs. I had interviews professionally transcribed and completed a line-by-line review for accuracy by comparing the original recording to the transcription, correcting any errors or omissions. I masked the institution name, used pseudonyms, and masked specific majors mentioned by students that might identify their designated IAs, or any other identifying information to protect the identity of my participants. I then created a detailed summary document of each interview, which included identifying information only for the participant to confirm, forwarded it to each participant for review and accuracy verification (member checking). Member checking ensured that I accurately captured the statements and perceptions of the participants to establish trustworthiness of the data (Creswell, 2014). This process confirmed the accuracy of the data and validated the interview to establish trustworthiness (Creswell, 2014). I reviewed my post-interview commentaries, journal entries, which included observational field notes, relevant ideas in the literature, emerging patterns and findings, and I memoed during the coding process (Creswell, 2013; Harris, 2015c; Yin, 2014). Memoing is the process of capturing my thoughts during the process of data analysis (Schwandt, 2007).

I uploaded each revised transcription of the original interviews and any follow-up interviews to Dedoose, which is a qualitative software application program. In the coding process, I conducted a line-by-line analysis of each interview using a

priori coding for the 14 roles (Bensimon & Dowd, 2012; Stanton-Salazar, 2010)

detailed in the framework (see Appendix A and Figure 1 in Chapter 1). The line-by-

line analysis of the data permitted me to identify any emerging codes. During data

collection, my reflective journal provided the template to initiate trend analysis and

during the coding process in Dedoose, memoing substantiated the trend identification

and analysis. For theme development I used Harris' (2015d) results chart guidelines

to identify patterns, themes, theme descriptions, relevant literature, and theme groups

(see Figure 5).

Study Results Chart (example):

Patterns (Labels)	Themes (Labels)	Theme Descriptions	Relevant Literature	Th G: (la
Data Pattern A Data Pattern B Data Pattern C (etc.)	Theme 1	Theme 1 description	Theme 1-relevant ideas with citations	The Gro Lab
Data Pattern A Data Pattern B Data Pattern C (etc.)	Theme 2	Theme 2 description	Theme 2-relevant ideas with citations	The Gro Lab

Note: "Data Pattern [Letter]" should be text that describes the essence of the data pattern. The same sho be true for "Theme [Number]" and "Theme Group [Letter]."

Theme Group Key (example):

Theme Group Names	Theme Group Descriptions (~paragraphs)	Relationship(s) to Other Then Group(s)
Group A		
Group B		

Figure 5. Study Results Chart Template. The Study Results Chart represents my theme development process from "EDUC 694B: Qualitative research design & methods II results chart guidelines" [Class handout], by J. Harris, 2015d, The School of Education, The College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, VA.

Any additional artifacts provided by participants (e.g., reflections, communications,

academic papers, etc.) were analyzed in conjunction with the interview data. This

detailed process further established trustworthiness of the data by triangulating

multiple data sources focusing on individual student and IA interview results as well as comparing student descriptions of IAs actions (Creswell, 2014).

Trustworthiness of the Data

I established trustworthiness of the data by member checking each (Creswell, 2014):

- student and IA interview (Harris, 2015a),

- summarized interview, asking students and IAs to review and confirm for accuracy,

- follow-up interview, and

- summarized follow-up interview.

Interviews were the primary data source and the embedded, single-case study design permitted data collection and analysis from different perspectives (Creswell, 2014) via the three units of analysis (see Figure 4, Embedded unit of analysis one corresponding to first-generation Latino college students, Embedded unit of analysis two corresponding to institutional agents, and Embedded unit of analysis three corresponding to the similarities and differences between students and IAs).

Triangulation refers to collecting data from various sources to determine the consistency of a finding (Yin, 2014). In other words, gathering data from different sources in order to corroborate a finding. In seeking converging evidence, multiple perspectives may prove relevant (Yin, 2014). In this study, having first-generation Latino college students describe IAs' actions as compared to the descriptions of IAs themselves, is an example of seeking divergent perspectives of the actions IAs took to

support first-generation Latino college students' academic and social advancement.

This comparative process considered "the perspectives of people from different points of view" (Patton, 2002, p. 559). Triangulation occurred by examining any physical artifacts provided by a student or IA (e.g., e-mails, academic papers, etc.). Asking participants to provide any forms of written communication to support data provided in the interview was also of form of corroborating what interviewees reported (Patton, 2002). The purpose of offering a follow-up interview was to check for consistency over time (Patton, 2002). Web content, reflective documents, interviews, informal on-site observations given that I was in the organizational environment, but not purposefully seeking interaction, and post-interview commentaries formed part of the triangulation process. I used rich, thick description (Creswell, 2014) and identified any researcher bias(es) by developing a researcher-as-instrument statement (Harris, 2014a, 2014b). I identified a content peer debriefer to review my data analysis for accuracy (Creswell, 2014). I also established trustworthiness of the data by examining any negative or discrepant information (Creswell, 2014). This includes information that counters themes. By presenting such data, any experience shared can provide a more realistic perspective thereby providing a more valid description of the account (Creswell, 2014). Last, I had an external auditor review the entire project (Creswell, 2014). Therefore, I used eight of the eight strategies recommended by Creswell (2014) to establish trustworthiness of the data: triangulation, member checking, rich-thick description, identifying researcher bias, negative or discrepant

information, prolonged time at the study site, identification of a peer debriefer for data analysis accuracy, and an external auditor review the entire project (pp. 201-202).

In addition, an international leading expert on embedded case studies validated the embedded, single-case study design after being presented with the three study questions, Figure 4, and Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework (R. W. Scholz, personal communication, March 16, 2016). Since the IA interview protocol (see Appendix F) had been tested in a pilot study (Hernández & Sikes, 2015), I interviewed one first-generation Latina undergraduate student attending The College of William and Mary to test the student interview protocol to parallel accuracy to the IA interview protocol and confirmed the estimated interview time of approximately one hour. This process took place and was audio recorded on March 16, 2016. With the exception of minor feedback from the student, this testing process validated the student interview protocol. To protect the testing student's identity no additional information will be included herewith. The pilot study (Hernández & Sikes, 2015) validated the IA interview protocol and Jiménez (2012) validated the student and IA English protocols side by side.

Saldaña (2011) described several ways to establish credibility: by citing related literature as part of the literature review, including seminal scholars, detailing the analytic methods used such as the interview transcription process and the process of coding and theming, corroborating and triangulating data. All of these areas have been included in this chapter.

Limitations, Delimitations, and Assumptions of the Study

Limitations

Limitations are factors, which are beyond my control, but may affect the outcome of the study (Stronge, 2015). Some may consider having eight total students identify 15 IAs a limitation even if the maximum goal of 15 pairs was achieved via students' mention of more than one IA. Recall that the driver for the pairings was the IA and not the student because the actions of IAs were the primary focus of this study. In addition, any IA identified by multiple students warranted special attention.

Some may consider my personal background, values, and biases, including socioeconomic status, culture, history, and gender as limitations given that these may shape my interpretations (Creswell, 2014). I acknowledge my bias as an emerging scholar, a Ph.D. Candidate, and woman of color. I also stand in solidarity with my fellow graduate students of color and our allies, to document, as I did in the literature review, the important moments in educational history currently taking place across college campuses nationwide.

Next, although "particularity rather than generalizability (Greene & Caracelli, 1997) is the hallmark of good qualitative research" (Creswell, 2014, p. 204), some may also consider the generalizability of this study a limitation because religious institutions and small liberal arts institutions combined represent 9% of all HSIs (Núñez et al., 2016). Catholic HSIs, therefore, represent a portion of the 9% total.

Although 100% interview member checking was achieved for all eight students, of the 15 IAs interviewed, 11 confirmed their interview summaries and the

remaining four did not. This equals a 73% confirmation rate for IAs. In addition, my

goal was to achieve 67% female and 33% male student representation to mimic the

gender equivalent in the 2015-2016 institutional undergraduate student population.

The outcome achieved was instead 75% female, 12.5% male, and 12.5% bi-gender.

Last, I maintained strict confidentiality to protect the identity of all of the

study's participants. However, I could not control whether or not participants shared

their participation in the study with any other members of the institutional

community. I also could not control limiting community members at-large witnessing

participants enter or depart the selected interview location(s).

Delimitations

Delimitations are factors that are within my control, but may also affect the

outcome of the study (Stronge, 2015). I purposefully selected Hispanic, first-

generation college students as the only group of student participants and their

selection of identified IAs. I also selected a geographically specific Catholic HSI to

bound this study. Finally, I selected Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework (see

Appendix A) to identify a priori actions IAs took to support first-generation Latino

college students' academic and social advancement.

Assumptions

This study assumed the use of an a priori framework (Stanton-Salazar, 2010).

I also assumed that first-generation Latino college students would identify IAs during

their interviews.

Ethical Considerations

To ensure confidentiality, I used pseudonyms chosen by the students and IAs (see Appendix D). I also used St. Jude's as the pseudonym for the Catholic HSI study site. The William and Mary Education Institutional Review Committee (EDIRC) and St. Jude's Institutional Review Board (IRB) approved this study with final review and approval by St. Jude's College Provost. Because of a prior professional working relationship at St. Jude's and as a past and current donor, I gave considerable attention to establish trustworthiness of the data. I kept a detailed journal as an audit trail, maintained open communication with my dissertation Chair, especially while on-site, identified a content peer debriefer to review my data analysis for accuracy (Creswell, 2014), and had an external auditor review the entire project.

Summary

This chapter discussed the methodology for this study using an exploratory, embedded, single-case study design (Yin, 2014) to examine Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework (see Appendix A) on IAs. Interviews of first-generation Latino college students represented one embedded unit of analysis while the interviews with identified IAs represented the second embedded unit of analysis, and the paired interviews of students and IAs represented the third embedded unit of analysis. A Catholic HSI was the selected site and its context bound this study. I discussed the research paradigm, data collection and analysis processes in addition to the trustworthiness and credibility of the data, limitations, delimitations and assumptions of the study. I next present the results from the methodology used in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Overview of the Data Analysis

I present the data in this chapter in four sections. The first section corresponds

to Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework (see Appendix A). I introduce fluidity,

representing movement, as an emerging theme from the roles and actions of the

framework. Stanton-Salazar (2001) introduced "*multistranded* relations" (p. 182) and

"multiplex relations" (p. 182), defining multistranded as "multiple roles or functions"

(p. 182) and multiplex as "multiple forms of support" (p. 182). Stanton-Salazar

(2010) referred to multistranded and multiplex relations as "multiple and

simultaneous [help-giving] roles assumed by those who provide this support" (p.

1066) and stated that multistranded and multiplex relations were conceptually related

and complementary, but independent. Jiménez's (2012) study found that

"institutional agents fulfill multiple roles" (p. 124). Fluidity, therefore, is the concept

of movement to accurately depict the actions of institutional agents (IAs). This

concept allows the reader to visualize the examples described by the participants as I

present actions, the second theme of the study. I also present validation as the third

theme and Hispanic-serving versus Hispanic-enrolling as the fourth. The second

theme, actions, corresponds to the findings that address questions one, two, and three

of the study. The data demonstrated that all areas of Stanton-Salazar's (2010)

framework except for the recruiter role were present in cases one and two. Question

three compared the findings between questions one and two. The 14 roles in Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework served as a priori codes to address questions one and two. Each of these 14 roles had associated actions (see Appendix A). Data analysis included a detailed examination of these a priori codes while concurrently examining if these actions met Rendón's (1994) criteria for validation as presented in Chapter 2.

The third theme, validation, corresponds to Rendón's (1994) validation theory, which I posited might inform the actions IAs took to assist first-generation Latino college students' academic and social advancement at a Catholic HSI. The data demonstrated that validation theory not only informed the actions of IAs, but also worked in tandem with Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework. I introduce a strength-based model (García, 2015) representing this interaction. The term strength-based can be traced back to the seminal work of Hurlock (1925) who found that praise versus criticism had a positive effect on student performance. Lopez and Louis (2009) defined a strength-based model as, "a return to basic educational principles that emphasize the positive aspects of student effort and achievement, as well as human strengths" (p. 1).

The final theme presented is Hispanic-serving versus Hispanic-enrolling, which emerged during the interviews with students and IAs. I asked all participants if they were familiar with the term HSI. Throughout the interviews as participants addressed the questions outlined in their respective protocols (see Appendices C, F, G and H), they differentiated between Hispanic-serving and Hispanic-enrolling. I discussed HSIs as Hispanic-serving versus Hispanic-enrolling in Chapter 1.

Contreras et al. (2008) as well as García (2015) questioned if the designation of

Hispanic-serving is accurate or if designated institutions are merely Hispanic-

enrolling. Recall that HSIs achieve this designation via a percentage scheme (Baez et

al., 2008) with a minimum of 25% full-time enrolled Hispanic undergraduate

population. D. A. Santiago (2009) differentiated between Hispanic-serving and

Hispanic-enrolling by stating that Hispanic-serving focused on persistence and

graduation while Hispanic-enrolling referred to access. The data in the study

demonstrated that at St. Jude's, IAs' actions focused on serving first-generation

Latino students, but as an access institution, it was also Hispanic-enrolling. I present

the data put forth by students and IAs on the matter of Hispanic-serving versus

Hispanic-enrolling. The second section of this chapter presents additional findings

and the third section concludes Chapter 4.

Open-ended, semi-structured interviews and follow-up interviews were the

primary source of data. Secondary data sources included written examples in the

form of e-mails, feedback from academic work, or any other forms of written

communication that would provide specific details regarding some of the examples

participants described during their interviews to triangulate the data (Yin, 2014). I

completed post-interview audio or written commentaries after all interviews to

document my reflections and/or to capture observations during the interview

(Creswell, 2013; Yin, 2014). A Catholic HSI bound the study and data collection

included purposeful and snowball sampling. Data analysis began after data

collection. Eight student participants designated 15 IAs. I collected all of the

demographic data for each participant as stipulated in Chapter 3. However, due to the

small number of student participants and the small size of the institution, I present the

data as an overall description of the student participants rather than a detailed table to

protect all participants' confidentiality.

The Framework

Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework drew from the literature on mentorship

and social work. "By definition, the classic role of *mentor* embodies both a multiplex

and multistranded relationship" (Stanton-Salazar, 2010, p. 1080) and when IAs carry

out various roles, their "potential to empower an individual increases considerably"

(Stanton-Salazar, 2010, p. 1079). Stanton-Salazar (2010) did not intend the

framework to be comprehensive, but rather, "to convey the depth and complexity of

institutional support" (p. 1079). During data analysis, the "multiple and simultaneous

[help-giving] roles" (Stanton-Salazar, 2010, p. 1066) of IAs' actions emerged.

Bensimon and Dowd (2012) graphically reconfigured Stanton-Salazar's

(2010) framework and I further adapted Bensimon and Dowd's (2012) design to

accommodate the specific aspects of this study (see Figure 6).
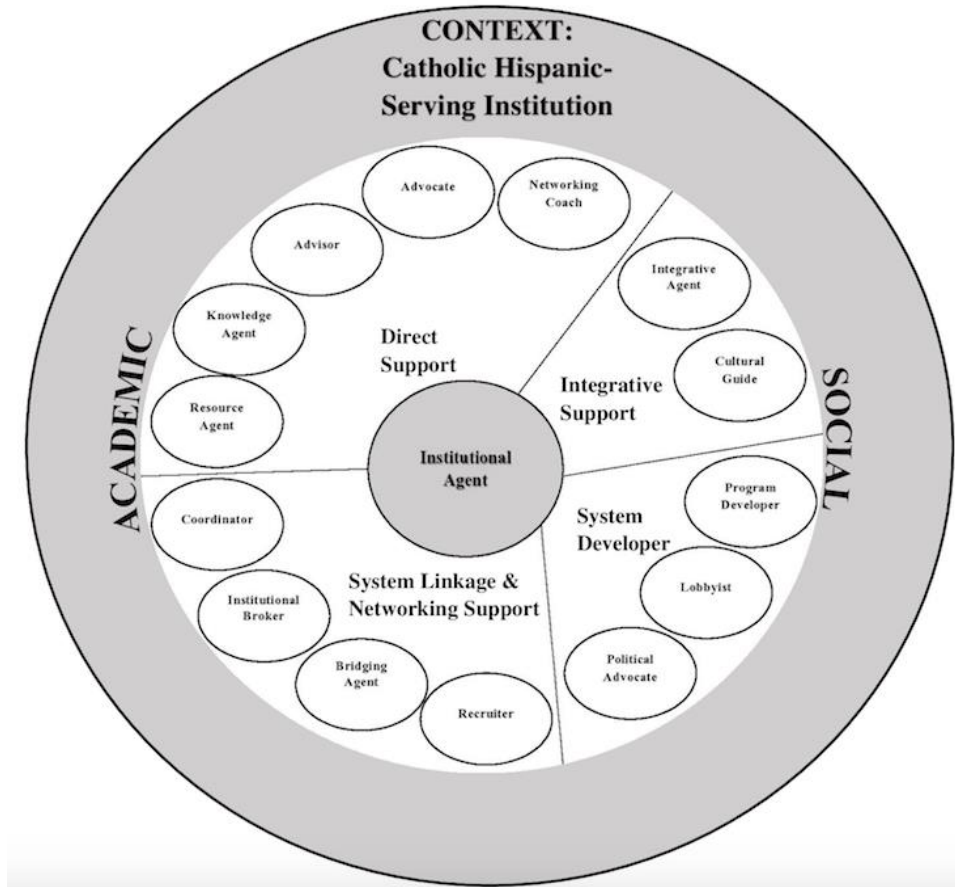
Figure 6. Institutional Agent Roles. This figure represents the 14 corresponding roles of institutional agents within four designated areas. Adapted from "Figure 1: Institutional Agent Types." by E. M. Bensimon & A. C. Dowd, 2012, *University of Southern California*, p. 4. Retrieved from https://cue.usc.edu/files/2016/01/Bensimon_Developing-IAs_NSF-Report-CUE_2012.pdf

In addition to demonstrating that all areas of Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework were present except for the recruiter role in embedded unit of analysis one (see Figure 4) and embedded unit of analysis two (see Figure 4), data from both students and IAs also demonstrated multiple and simultaneous roles; hence an overlap in action areas (Stanton-Salazar, 2010; Jiménez, 2012). As an example, Robert Anthony (IA) provided 10 supplemental documents of virtual introductions between students and experts, both internal and external, in specialized fields who were part of his personal and professional network. I analyzed these communications as a unified

whole. The data demonstrated that Robert Anthony's actions included those of a

networking coach, an integrative agent, bridging agent, and an institutional broker. In

addition, the data demonstrated that all 15 IAs were knowledge agents, bringing this

example to five total multiple and simultaneous roles. Given this example, a fluid

framework demonstrates the movement and overlap of these five areas to the center,

where the IA resides (see Figure 7).
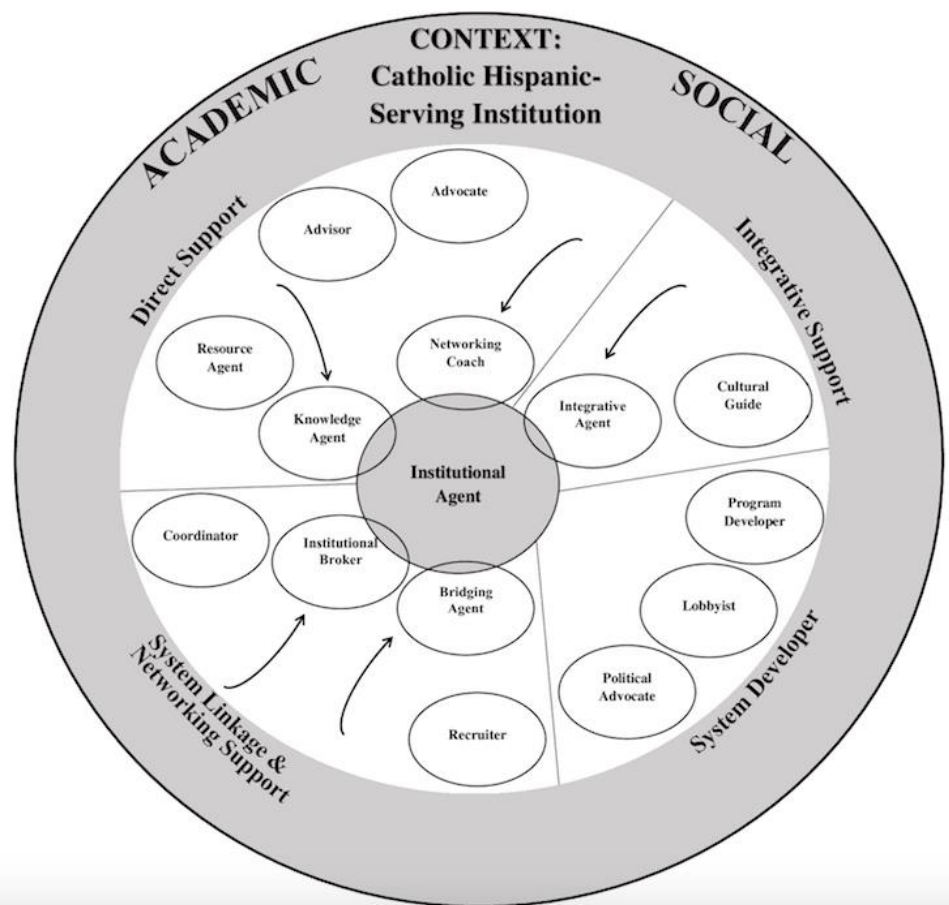
Figure 7. Fluidity Model Exemplifying Overlap of Institutional Agents' Actions. This figure represents the 14 corresponding roles of institutional agents within four designated areas in movement. Adapted from "Figure 1: Institutional Agent Types." by E. M. Bensimon & A. C. Dowd, 2012, *University of Southern California*, p. 4. Created by D. M. Hernández (2017).

By nature of their professional roles, educational preparation, and analyzed

data, all IAs were familiar with navigating the institutional system. They provided

access and knowledge to first-generation Latino students with the common goal of

supporting them academically and socially. Due to the small size of the institution, IAs were familiar with individuals who occupied pertinent on-campus professional roles, and in some instances mentioned other IAs in the study without having any knowledge if students had designated them. In Stanton-Salazar's (2010) expanded definition of a knowledge agent, he emphasized "non-subject matter knowledge" (p. 1099) and placed emphasis on, for example, financial aid and scholarships. I argue that within the context of higher education and as the findings demonstrated in embedded unit of analysis one corresponding to first-generation Latino college students (see Figure 4), there was an inherent transfer of epistemological knowledge between IAs and students in both directions. Although Stanton-Salazar (2010) emphasized "non-subject matter knowledge" (p. 1099), in this higher education context, I will present data to include subject matter knowledge where applicable.

Recall that I selected the interpretivist/social constructivist paradigm, which allowed me to rely upon the students' and IAs' views to understand "the world in which [they] live and work" (Creswell, 2013, p. 24). This research paradigm permitted me to position myself within the research. I argued in Chapter 3 that being a first-generation Latina emerging scholar who shared language and culture with my participants would possibly lead to a trusting relationship with my first-generation Latino college student participants during the interviews, which might not have been available or accessible to all researchers. When I asked Maria (IA) if there were any observations she wanted to share about her participation in the interview, she responded with a question. She asked if I was Latina, first-generation, and a Ph.D.

candidate. Maria added that it was inspiring as a first-generation female herself to see a first-generation Latina woman because she had not had much experience working with women of color. When asked the same question, Ismael (student) said, "showing others that a Latina is actually going for a higher purpose, a higher education, and not just going towards the stereotypical aspect that many people have." Participating in the interview provided Ismael with exposure and content to share with his family and encouraged him to consider pursuing his Ph.D.

Crotty (1998) asserted that as human beings, our interpretation and construction of meaning stems from our world engagement. This study allowed me to engage in the world of students and IAs at St. Jude's. Since world engagement is unique to every individual, interpretation and construction varies from person-to-person. Although I may have asked the same question of all participants, their interpretation and construction of meaning may have been different from my own. For example, what a student or IA may have interpreted and presented substantiating evidence as advocacy, I may have interpreted as more befitting to the action of a resource agent. In other words, I asked the same questions of all participants and honored their responses. In any examples where I may have had a different interpretation, I specifically noted in the examples presented for each of the three questions asked in the study. However, I maintained the participants' interpretations and responses so long as they were within the definition of the framework. Wherever there was an exception, I explained my interpretation. I sought to understand my participants' social reality within the study's context and Stanton-Salazar's (2010)

framework provided the roadmap to data analysis. As an embedded case study

design, the subunits allowed for extensive analysis of the data. As such, the

framework itself became a source of examination based on the data. In alignment

with Stanton-Salazar (2010) and Jiménez's (2012) findings, indicating that IAs

demonstrated multiple and simultaneous roles, I also found there to be overlap and

fluidity in the data presented by students and IAs. Figure 7 is just one example of

such fluidity.

Actions

Students' Demographics

Eight students participated in this study. Six self-identified as female, one as

bi-gender, and one as male. During the 2015-2016 academic year, one participant

was a freshman, three were sophomores, three were juniors, and one was a senior. Of

ethnic origin, two were Mexican, two were Mexican/Salvadoran, one was

Mexican/French, one was Salvadoran, one was Guatemalan, and one was Honduran.

The mothers' highest levels of education included: first grade, between third and fifth

grade, either fourth or fifth grade, either seventh or eighth grade, ninth grade, two

high school, and one mother completed six units in a U.S. community college. Prior

to asking about parental education, I confirmed that each student self-identified as

first generation. Pascarella et al. (2004) defined first-generation Latino college

students as students where neither parent had gone beyond a high school education.

Based upon this definition, I confirmed the student's understanding whose mother

attended a U.S. community college to which the student replied, "My mother only

completed, I think, about six units of college credits, but at a community college, and did not finish." In addition, per Robert Anthony, the institution's definition of a first-generation student is, "You're first-generation if neither of your parents has achieved a bachelor's." Maggie concurred, "First-generation students are students whose parents do not have a bachelor's degree." Given the student's response and the institution's definition of first-generation, I respected this participant's position and self-identification as a first-generation Latino student. The fathers' highest levels of education: unknown but certain not beyond high school, first grade, sixth grade, seventh grade, ninth grade, 10th grade, and two attended high school. In the 2015-2016 academic year, the institution's website indicated that that the total undergraduate population was 67% female and 33% male. The achieved gender ratio was 75% female, 12.5% male, and 12.5% bi-gender. The data presented a mix of all class years. Student member checking was confirmed at 100%. Recall in Chapter 3 that the process of member checking (Creswell, 2014; Harris, 2015b) interviews entailed listening to the audio recordings at least once to confirm the accuracy of the professional transcriptions. Thereafter I created detailed summaries of each interview, which I then forwarded to every participant for confirmation to establish trustworthiness of the data (Creswell, 2014). Of the eight student participants, one selected to interview in Spanish. Two interviewed via Skype and six interviewed in-person and on-campus. The eight participating students designated 15 IAs. Table 1 presents their matching pairs.

Students and IAs' Matching Pairs

Table 1

Students and IAs' Matching Pairs

Student	Institutional Agent
Student #1 (Terry)	IA #2 (Jacob)
	IA #3 (Helen)
	IA #4 (Maggie)
Student #2 (Laela)	IA #1 (Robert Anthony)
	IA #7 (Roland)
	Employee no longer at institution
Student #3 (Jeniffer)	IA #11 (Had)
Student #4 (Micaela)	IA #4 (Maggie)
	IA #5 (Phaedrus)
	Third party organization, staff member
Student #5 (Isabel)	IA #6 (Eliza)
	IA #8 (Soma)
	Employee no longer at institution – Sam and Ismael
	IA #7 (Roland)
Student #6 (Sam)	IA #2 (Jacob)
	IA #3 (Helen)
	IA #7 (Roland)
	IA #9 (María)
	IA #10 (Lillian)
	IA #14 (Bot)
	Employee no longer at institution – Isabel and Ismael
Student #7 (Yoyo)	IA #8 (Soma)
	IA #12 (Susan)
	IA #13 (George)
Student #8 (Ismael)	IA #1 (Robert Anthony)
	IA #2 (Jacob)
	IA #15 (Dziga)
	Employee no longer at institution – Isabel and Ismael

Note. Matching pairs list students and their designated institutional agents (IAs). Where I list student names next to employees no longer at the institution, this signifies that these students mentioned an individual by name during their interview who was no longer employed at St. Jude's at the time of the interview. The third-party organization no longer has a relationship with St. Jude's.

To address question one, following are the self-reported interview results from all first-generation Latino college students addressing how IAs supported their academic and social advancement. I analyzed these results as a unified whole to comprise embedded unit of analysis one (see Figure 4, Embedded unit of analysis one

corresponding to first-generation Latino college students). For ease of reference, I

repeat the table description of the 14 action areas of Stanton-Salazar's (2010)

framework (see Appendix A) as adapted in Figure 1, which includes the four

categories: direct support, integrative support, system developer, and system linkage

and networking support, listing the corresponding roles and actions of IAs for each

category.

DIRECT SUPPORT	INTEGRATIVE SUPPORT	SYSTEM DEVELOPER	SYSTEM LINKAGE & NETWORKING SUPORT
Resource Agent Has personal and positional resources	**Integrative Agent** Helps students integrate and participate in professional and institutional venues	**Program Developer** Develops systematic programming	**Recruiter** Recruits students for a program or department
Knowledge Agent Knows how to navigate the system	**Cultural Guide** Guides and teaches within a cultural sphere	**Lobbyist** Lobbies resources for student recruitment and support	**Bridging Agent** Knows of and works with a strong network to connect students to other IAs
Advisor Gathers information gathering, problem solves, and guides decision making		**Political Advocate** Politically advocates for social policies and resources	**Institutional Broker** Holds resource knowledge and negotiates amongst parties
Advocate Promotes and protects students' interests			**Coordinator** Assesses needs, then identifies, provides, and ensures resources for students
Networking Coach Teaches, models, and develops			

Figure 8. Adaptation of Stanton-Salazar's (2010) Roles of Institutional Agents. This figure is a repeat of Figure 1 from Chapter 1 and represents the 14 corresponding roles of institutional agents within four designated areas. Adapted from "Table 1. The

roles of Institutional Agents are each manifested through a specific set of actions," by R. D. Stanton-Salazar, 2010, *Youth & Society, 43*(3), p. 1081. doi: 10.1177/0044118X10382877

Question One: First-generation Latino Students

1.   How do first-generation Hispanic college students describe the specific actions

institutional agents take to support their academic and social advancement at a

Catholic Hispanic-Serving Institution?

- Using Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework detailing the actions of

   institutional agents, and as described by first-generation Hispanic college

   students, to what degree are they representative of:

   a. direct support?

   b. integrative support?

   c. system developer?

   d. system linkage & networking support?

Each of the four categories listed above is comprised of a varying number of

roles, which include corresponding actions. Direct support includes five roles:

resource agent, knowledge agent, advisor, advocate, and networking coach.

Integrative support includes two roles: integrative agent and cultural guide. System

developer includes three roles: program developer, lobbyist, and political advocate.

System linkage and networking support includes four roles: recruiter, bridging agent,

institutional broker, and coordinator. I provide a definition of each area below.

The results in question one represent only the self-reported interview results

from all first-generation Latino college students who addressed how IAs supported

their academic and social advancement. These results were analyzed as a unified

whole to comprise embedded unit of analysis one (see Figure 4, Embedded unit of analysis one corresponding to first-generation Latino college students). During each student interview, the participant designated a(n) IA(s). I present the results for every student, wherever applicable, for each of the 14 corresponding roles and their associated actions that correspond to any of their designated IAs. I did not include every student participant within each IA role and the corresponding actions because not all students provided an applicable example of all actions specific to any given role. However, where the data was applicable, my intent in presenting the data by student, action area, and category was for the reader to become acquainted in detail with the actions theme from the students' perspective. The composite of the roles and their corresponding actions for each of the four categories in Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework represents embedded unit of analysis one, addressing question one of the study.

Direct support. IAs have positional and personal resources. Positional resources refer to those associated to hierarchical positions within an organization, a network, an institution or a social system while personal resources are those which an individual possesses and transmits to another individual (Stanton-Salazar, 2010). Lin (2001) added that personal resources as human capital do not require authorization or are accountable to others. IAs, therefore, transmit personal, positional resources, or resources transmitted by virtue of an IAs' network. Stanton-Salazar (2010) referred to these third resources as "*alters*". Alters are other actors who IAs mobilize to assist students. In addition, personal well-being is contingent upon interpersonal feedback

and emotional support as well as institutional services (Stanton-Salazar & Spina, 2000), which Stanton-Salazar (2010) referred to as "*high-density*" networks (p. 1095). Such networks "are marked by frequent interactions, emotional investment and frequent reciprocity" (Stanton-Salazar, 2010, p. 1095). The actions of a(n) resource agent, knowledge agent, advisor, advocate, and networking coach comprise the direct support category. First-generation Latino students provided examples of IAs' actions in all of the areas under this category.

Resource agent. A resource agent, "provides personal and positional resources to students" (Stanton-Salazar, 2010, p. 1081). Terry, Laela, Jeniffer, Micaela, Isabel, Sam, Yoyo and Ismael shared the specific actions their designated IA(s) took to support their academic and social advancement.

Terry described Jacob as wanting to do "everything and anything" he could to support students. He provided scholarships and work-study as well as a physical space for Terry to study. Terry described this physical space as filled with books and DVDs. She had recently taken advantage of these resources to complete an essay. Jacob provided financial resources, exposure to professional experiences via work-study and a study space for Terry. Maggie also provided Terry with financial assistance to purchase textbooks when Terry could not purchase them herself.

Laela had a difficult year as a senior and it took some time for her to open up to Robert Anthony, but when she did, he actively listened. When she "really opened up with him about what had been going on," she felt quite supported. She said, "I just felt like I could really go to him for anything if I needed help or was stressed out or

whatever." In addition to listening, Robert Anthony encouraged Laela to put forth her ideas, which led her to create a notebook filled with many plans. She considered Robert Anthony a friend and someone she wished to keep in her personal and professional network long-term.

When Jeniffer's friend passed at age 18, Had was there to listen. She specifically pointed out the duration of time he shared with her—30 minutes. He was also available to her when another friend attempted to kill his mother then proceeded to commit suicide. Together, they discussed faith, religion, and the grieving process. This gave Jeniffer the emotional support she needed. She said, "I think he's the only one that I would want you to have a conversation with just because…. I think he gets some thing[s]."

Micaela met with Maggie weekly because Micaela required additional academic assistance. Micaela provided Maggie with the required documentation to validate the additional assistance needed. Although Micaela expressed more concern with passing her classes than she was impressed with making the Dean's list, she credited Maggie for this accomplishment and was appreciative all of the assistance she received. Every time she passed a class, Maggie was there to congratulate her. Similar to Laela's notebook, Micaela also created one for Phaedrus. The topic changed weekly, but one week Phaedrus posed the question, "Who am I?" for students to address. Questions and topics such as this helped Micaela reflect. The focus of the notebook was on content rather than style and grammar. This provided her the opportunity to freely express her thoughts and feelings. She said, "I think I

wrote more in that journal than I've ever written in my life." Phaedrus provided her positive feedback, which further encouraged her and at the end of the semester he asked to keep her notebook because "he really liked it." He was an active listener. When Micaela had something to say, she did. Phaedrus listened and provided feedback.

As with Terry, Jacob helped Isabel obtain scholarship funding. Isabel shared with Jacob the financial challenges her parents faced due to increased institutional costs. Jacob "tries to help in any way he can," she said. He suggested Isabel apply for scholarship funding, informed her to whom she should address the letter, how to appropriately address it, and suggested content to include. Just as Robert Anthony, Had, and Phaedrus actively listened, so did Roland. He helped Isabel emotionally when she struggled to tell her parents that she was changing majors for a third time. Roland shared his wife's career journey of majoring in another field, and later in life, she achieved the same career goal Isabel strived to have. Roland reassured Isabel that she was not making a bad choice. He explained that she was simply trying to figure out what she wanted to do. As with his wife, she too could achieve her career goal even if later in life.

The reason Sam continued attending this institution was due to Jacob's actions. When stressed or overwhelmed, Jacob provided emotional support because of his familiarity and understanding of Sam's family circumstances. Like Terry and Isabel, Sam received financial assistance from Jacob. Helen too was emotionally supportive of Sam when she shared a personal struggle that continued over a span of

many years. Helen "went out of her way" to give Sam a "beautiful little rock that had

a lovely message." When Sam experienced a personal tragedy and did not know how

to work through it, Lillian provided emotional support, as did Maria when Sam told

Maria something she had never shared with anyone else. Although all of the IAs

mentioned here gave Sam the needed assistance, Bot was, "a huge reason [Sam was]

still living and breathing." Sam said, "They're all just like my heroes." She received

from them what she had not received from her family. Sam described her family

situation as follows,

> I'm seeing my mom, and how her life is, and it's not exactly the American
>
> dream, and when I think about my dad, he didn't exactly have that either. It
>
> was mainly just them working in factories doing the same job over and over
>
> again, and then trying to—my dad trying to put on a smile for me, and then my
>
> mom just basically neglecting me 'cause she was just exhausted. So I
>
> understand why school is so important to them because they just would
>
> constantly tell me, "We don't want what we have to be your life and your
>
> future."

Yoyo spent many hours in Soma's office. During that time, Soma asked about

Yoyo's college adjustment, home life, and being away from home. Soma inquired

about her academic performance and financial stability. Yoyo in return asked Soma

about career options. When Yoyo had not studied in Soma's office for some time,

Soma reached out to ask, "What's going on? Why haven't you been around? You

need to be in class." To balance the academic pressures, Soma encouraged her to

socialize and take time off. Like Soma, Susan also inquired about Yoyo's physical

and mental well-being. Soma, Susan, and George helped Yoyo plan her courses to

stay on track for graduation especially because the institution only offered certain

courses certain semesters.

Ismael expressed interest in issues of diversity. He was passionate about

being Latino and wanted to break "normal stereotypical types." All three of his IAs

helped him further develop this interest. Robert Anthony taught Ismael how to think,

work, and talk. His coaching helped Ismael secure a summer internship in his

hometown at a company where his mother had worked for 25 years. Jacob shared

Ismael's passion for diversity and provided him various resources. For example, as

part of this study, I had previously reached out to Ismael to participate. Jacob,

however, presented participating as a means of having access to me as an emerging

Latina scholar whose work focused on first-generation Latino students. Ismael

interpreted this as Jacob wanting to expose him to someone who shared a similar

culture and research interest and Jacob's way of encouraging Ismael to further his

educational goals. Jacob taught Ismael to be more resourceful by understanding that

the people he meets could be potential employers or in meeting me, I could possibly

be a research resource. In the same vein, by supporting his class projects on diversity

issues, Dziga helped Ismael understand that he was a part of changing Latino

stereotypes. Dziga taught Ismael how to arrive at answers by creatively asking

questions. He taught him that strong messages could be delivered via different means

other than the verbal or written word, and rather than using a list of questions to

interview, Ismael could work with a series of themes instead. All three IAs inquired

about the stability of his home and college life. He was at a geographic distance from

home. Ismael said, "I didn't really voice out the emotional part, but yes, because they

helped me deal with it without knowing."

Knowledge agent. A knowledge agent "knows 'the system' [and] accesses or

provides knowledge pertinent to navigating the system" (Stanton-Salazar, 2010, p.

1081). As stated earlier, Stanton-Salazar's (2010) expanded definition of a

knowledge agent placed an emphasis on "non-subject matter knowledge" (p. 1099). I

argue that within a higher education context, there was an inherent transfer of

epistemological knowledge between IAs and students in both directions. For

example, Terry did not consider herself particularly knowledgeable on many subjects,

but she was open-minded. Helen exposed her to the concept of gender as non-binary.

This introduction helped Terry personally further develop, think about her gender, ask

herself how she self-identified, and consider the possibility of being gender fluid.

Stanton-Salazar (2010) presented a knowledge agent as someone who helped students

navigate the system, but given Terry's example, Helen as a subject matter knowledge

agent helped Terry navigate her self-identity, which in turn helped her navigate the

system to which she was a part. This ethnic and gender examination was vital growth

for Terry as a developing college student (Evans et al., 2010; Torres, 1999, 2003).

Laela had a similar experience.

Laela learned a great deal from Roland, believed in much of what she learned

from him, spoke of this learning, and said, "I think they have made a big impact on

my beliefs so he has definitely, definitely broadened my scope of knowledge, just in terms of social systems and the way things work in the world." Of the IAs Laela mentioned, Roland helped her the most. Like Terry, Roland helped Laela expand her own knowledge and beliefs and was knowledgeable in navigating the institutional system. As a senior, it was a challenging and a "pressing time," but Roland made sure all of her coursework was in place for her to graduate.

Jeniffer described Had as positively "pushing" his students. She differentiated a class grade from the learning experience and said, "It's what you learned or what you took from his class that really mattered to him." He brought a number of speakers to class and his teaching included real-life issues that interested students. She described him as, "a great teacher."

Because Micaela required additional academic assistance, she provided Maggie with substantiating documentation. Once received, Maggie assisted her in navigating the academic system, primarily with faculty members. Maggie was Micaela's primary point of contact. Micaela provided Maggie with her course schedule and Maggie gave Micaela all the assistance she required. Maggie facilitated all of her academic support. She also personally helped Micaela with course material.

Isabel changed majors three times and Eliza was instrumental in helping her navigate this decision-making process. She helped Isabel understand the career implications of her decision. Eliza considered Isabel's personal areas of interest and provided her with resources to assess her personal and academic interests. Although Isabel and Eliza spoke on several occasions, Roland helped Isabel make the final

academic major decision. He developed an academic plan for her, which included a

clear graduation timeline.

Sam reached out to Roland for assistance when she too considered changing

her major. She included Helen in this process because she wanted input from both.

They guided her and gave attention to Sam's career considerations. Roland and Helen

were aware that Sam was as a quiet student. As such, they encouraged her to use her

voice. Roland urged Sam and other quiet students to "step out of their comfort

zones." When Sam raised her hand in class, he was quick to point to her and asked

her to share. Sam said that Helen was interested in her thoughts and wanted her to

share in class and use her voice outside of class. Helen said, "I think it's so amazing.

You have such a bright mind and I love it when you step out and speak about what

you're thinking about." Roland and Helen were knowledge agents by virtue of

knowing how to navigate the college educational system and assist Sam in her

assessment of an academic major change coupled by knowing Sam through contact in

their classes. When Sam approached each of them, she was using her voice to

communicate her doubt about her major. Because Roland and Helen had gotten to

know Sam in their classes, that insight allowed each of them to provide pertinent, in

this case major and career information, to navigate the system. Roland and Helen

understood the value of helping students use their voices in a classroom setting. For

Sam, practicing this skill transferred into an academic-decision making process.

Imparting this skill upon Sam and helping her to use it, assisted her to access

resources that she may not have otherwise accessed. Roland and Helen helped Sam

better navigate the college system—a system that requires having and using a student voice.

When Yoyo felt insecure about her academic performance, Soma reassured her by saying, "You can do this." On the other hand, if Yoyo did not perform well on a particular exam, Soma was quick to point out the effect of a second negative result on the overall result. Yoyo took this as motivational and a reminder of the importance of good study habits. Soma connected coursework and coursework performance to various career paths. This particular knowledge helped Yoyo understand her career options. Similar to Soma, George was "very honest and very real when it [came] to grades." He was knowledgeable, proficient, and strategic at course scheduling. He kept Yoyo on target to graduate and delivered the overall good and bad academic news. Yoyo appreciated Soma and George's consistency. She could ask a question of either of them and was confident that she would receive a consistent response.

Ismael credited Dziga as an academic knowledge agent. He helped Ismael navigate the college system when Ismael's course projects entailed reaching out to members of the institutional community. When other faculty members confirmed their participation in Ismael's project, Dziga affirmed Ismael's work on diversity issues. Dziga taught Ismael very specific techniques that encouraged him to pursue this line of inquiry and expand upon it in other courses.

Advisor. An advisor, "helps students gather information[,] assesses problems and possible solutions in a collaborative manner[, and] promotes & guides effective decision making" (Stanton-Salazar, 2010, p. 1081).

Terry was a senior during the 2015-2016 academic year. She designated Maggie as an IA because Maggie had advised her since freshman year and continued to advise her well after freshman year. Terry recalled learning time management skills from her. If Terry or any other student was not passing a class, Maggie made contact mid-semester. She would have a one-on-one conversation with Terry or any student to learn how she or any professor could help address a problem. Here is an example where one could interpret Maggie as more of, or equivalent to, a knowledge agent because Maggie knew the system. However, in this particular example, Maggie assisted Terry assess a problem, that is, time management and/or not passing a class, and collaboratively Maggie guided Terry or other students toward effective decision-making. As discussed early in the chapter, this example could be considered an overlap of actions. Although Terry had first contact with Maggie, it was Jacob who Terry was most comfortable reaching out to for advice.

Laela considered both Roland and Robert Anthony advisors, but each served in a different capacity. Robert Anthony provided academic and social support. Laela met with him on a bi-weekly basis minimally. He "would go out of his way" to provide direction, help her identify problems, and find information. However, Laela most appreciated Robert Anthony because he listened rather than freely give advice. He was aware that she was capable of asking for assistance if she needed it. Laela had "a different working relationship, more professional" with Roland. She primarily consulted him for academic matters. Although she did not "delve too deep" with

Roland, when she did approach him, "he thoroughly helped" her. He was thoughtful and she could rely on him.

When Jeniffer's father was hospitalized and two friends passed at different times, Had provided solutions by accommodating late assignments. Because she was only on campus on Tuesdays and Thursdays, "missing one class or let alone both; it was like missing an entire week of school." Had was patient and allowed Jeniffer the time and space to catch up. He knew that she was capable of completing the work, but given the circumstances, "timing wasn't right." Jeniffer expressed genuine appreciation for all of his advice during those challenging times.

Isabel reached out to Soma prior to contacting Eliza about changing her major. Soma advised Isabel very specifically about a course that was key for success in a particular major. Because institutional policy stated that any course could only be repeated once, Soma as a knowledge agent and advisor helped Isabel navigate the college system by knowing institutional policy. Soma advised Isabel her during freshman year that a second chance at any given course within this particular major should be reserved for a more challenging class. Isabel had to take this course a second time. Soma helped her organize her other courses around the repeated course to optimize results. When Isabel did not perform well, Soma began the conversation about considering another major. She helped Isabel gather career information and guided her through the onset of the decision-making process to consider another major.

Sam voiced her frustration and anger at the financial problems she faced during the interview. She was distrustful of certain staff members and administration, but turned to Jacob who guided her to a solution. The institution implemented a new technology fee and tuition had increased. Both came at a time of institutional cutbacks. Sam owed "an insane amount of money." She experienced this financial stress annually because neither she nor her family had the financial resources to cover the monthly cost Sam was responsible to pay. This led her to want to say to the institutional representatives, "Do you want to come home with me? Do you want to see how I have absolutely nothing else to give you guys?" Sam's tension was palpable during the interview, but almost in the same breath, she said, "but at the same time I absolutely love college life." When she began to speak of Jacob as a financial problem-solver, her demeanor changed to one of gratitude and appreciation. Like Terry and Isabel, Sam received scholarship assistance from Jacob. For two consecutive years, this scholarship covered the remainder of her tuition. Sam said of Jacob, "If it wasn't for him, I wouldn't even have the chance to be here to get my education and he's doing this because he knows about my situation and he wants me to get my education." According to Sam, both Jacob and Bot said that they would not let her go. It was meaningful to Sam that they both cared about her and wanted her to stay.

Yoyo spent time in Soma's office studying because of Soma's open door policy. Yoyo was a bit over confident about her performance in a particular course because she had taken a similar titled one in high school. She determined that the

course would be challenging because of a strict professor, but not due to content difficulty. As a college freshman, Yoyo soon realized the difference between high school and a college curriculum. She approached Soma and acknowledged that she was possibly not preparing well enough for exams and asked Soma what she could do to pass the course. Soma replied, "Well, my office is always open. Come by. Study there and if a question pops up, then ask me." Soma's advice and open door policy yielded results for Yoyo. Soma, however, noticed that Yoyo lacked focus. This was due to Yoyo's financial challenges. Soma provided suggestions. Yoyo followed-through and the following academic year, she received more scholarships. She said, "As a person, you really have to grow in college, not just school wise, but everything else around you. You just have to learn how to become independent and rely on yourself."

Ismael credited Jacob and Dziga for helping him take the decision to pursue a career aligned with his interest in diversity issues. Dziga specifically guided him on how to take his interest from the classroom to a profession. Jacob helped Ismael improve his presentation and differentiate his passion from aggression. Ismael learned how to not provoke a person or an audience with his statements. Robert Anthony took Ismael's learning process a step further and included differentiating aggression from assertiveness while not shying away from his message, but instead, delivering a consistent one. In a student leadership role, Ismael gave instruction to other students and found creative ways to achieve a common goal.

Advocate. An advocate "promotes and protects the interests of 'their' students" (Stanton-Salazar, 2010, p. 1081).

Terry's brother experienced immigration difficulties. Jacob indirectly advocated for Terry by directly advocating for her brother. He created a donation fund to help him with food items and other needs while at an immigration detention center. Terry received legal advice because Jacob went out of his way to provide legal contacts. On an academic matter, Jacob interceded on Terry's behalf to audit a course because was registered for "too many units."

When I asked Jeniffer if her designated IA had advocated on her behalf (refer to Appendices C and G), she interpreted Had's patience and assistance as advocacy. Permitting her to submit all of her homework and not fail the course during her father's hospitalization and the passing of two friends to her was advocacy. "He knew I needed the help and the patience, and he definitely gave that to me." This action could be interpreted as that of a resource agent. Whether interpreted as an advocate or a resource agent, Had provided Jeniffer needed academic and social support.

Sam considered Bot and Jacob her advocates. She knew Bot would "vouch" for her and acknowledged all of Jacob's assistance. As busy as he was, "he is still someone who puts everything aside even though he really shouldn't and he just does whatever it takes to help out a student in need, no matter what." Because of all Jacob had already done for her, Sam felt that it was inappropriate to approach him again for more assistance. She "was too scared to speak to anyone," but she reached out to Bot

who asked if she could reach out to Jacob because she was worried for Sam and did not want finances to affect Sam's persistence. Reaching out to Bot made a significant difference in Sam's college experience.

Yoyo described Soma's advocacy as providing her and other students access to specific resources necessary for her major. These resources were "locked away," but Soma welcomed students to have hands-on time to increase their learning experience. While Soma provided access to these resources, Susan was interested in making Yoyo's academic wishes a reality. It was "always about what you want and how [Susan] can help you, like meet you halfway. Susan asked what could be done and made things happen. This was the reason Yoyo considered Susan an advocate.

Using his new assertive skill-set that Ismael learned from Robert Anthony as an advisor, Ismael issued a statement on behalf of students taking advocacy into his own hands with Jacob as his advocate. The statement was that as a HSI, the student body was diverse, but faculty members were not representative of student diversity. Ismael felt that having Latino and other diverse faculty members was vital to students as role models. Ismael said that if this message reached the institution's President that Jacob would support him because Jacob shared these concerns, adding that there was insufficient funding to attract faculty of color, and as a HSI, there should be funding for recruitment purposes. Ismael considered this support advocacy. In reference to Ismael's projects and the sensitivity sometimes surrounding issues of diversity, if another faculty member was perhaps offended and Ismael happened to have that faculty member for another class, Dziga stepped in to communicate with the faculty

member to contextualize the project and asked the faculty member not to take offense. This was advocacy to Ismael.

Networking coach. A networking coach "teaches students how to *network* with key institutional agents[,] models appropriate *networking* behavior [, and] develops relationships with important and influential people" (Stanton-Salazar, 2010, p. 1081).

Terry met and networked with internal and external individuals, including professors, keynote speakers or special round table participants when they visited *The Center* (pseudonym). Jacob modeled the introduction and provided the space for such access to and for students. Terry considered access to tutors as a networking opportunity and Maggie provided referrals to tutors.

Robert Anthony encourage Laela to "go up to people and say, 'Hi,' like kind of just be outgoing." He was there to support her as he worked with her to network. If Robert Anthony was in conversation with a student and Laela walked past, he modeled an introduction. Knowing each student's interests, he shared an academic or social project that connected Laela with the other student. Although the introduction might not have been with an administrator, Laela said, "it was still, to me, really important to talk to students and get their opinions on things." Laela genuinely cared about the institution and the students. It was important to her to give voice to students. She wanted to learn about students' thoughts and experiences. As a student leader, her job was to gather the student voice and present it to members of the institution, but she did not think she could randomly approach people. Robert

Anthony's introductions helped Laela. She was aware that networking was helpful to her, but she was out of her "comfort zone." By stepping out of it, she met many people. Stanton-Salazar (2004, 2010) included, developing supportive peer connections with those who are integrated into academic and extracurricular groups as part of the networking coach definition. By introducing Laela to other students, Robert Anthony helped her develop peer-to-peer relationships, expanding upon Laela's current academic and social circles. In the future, these relationships as alumni might also be professionally beneficial.

As part of Isabel's training for a specific leadership role, Jacob invited an internal speaker to discuss the challenges of being a student leader alongside academic pressures and other responsibilities. The speaker provided a plethora of resources, including mental health, financial, and outreach to outside organizations. In addition, with Jacob's networking assistance, he provided Isabel guidance on how to approach a specific audience for a scholarship.

Yoyo received internship opportunities, met other professors and external "important people." Soma forwarded e-mails communicating specific academic major summer work openings and scholarship information. She invited other professors offering new courses or experts in particular areas to speak in class. The "important people" Yoyo referred to were graduate students who were either applying to or had attended graduate school in her particular field of interest. Guest speakers also included members or students of a specific program at another partner institution. "Important people" were those who could help Yoyo and other students expand their

network. "Networking is important to us just because we're a small institution, so we try to reach out and take in as much as we can." Jennifer spoke of Had having a "bunch of speakers that came in to talk about social awareness for the class itself."

Ismael shared only few powerful words to describe Robert Anthony's assistance with networking. He said that he equated Robert Anthony's help to Jacob and Dziga's, "but more." These two words represented Robert Anthony's suggestion that Ismael first figure out for himself what he actually wanted before asking others how to help him.

Integrative support. The integrative support category includes an integrative agent and a cultural guide. First-generation Latino students provided examples of actions that supported all of the areas under this category as they did for direct support.

Integrative agent. An integrative agent "coordinates students' integration and participation in networks and professional venues (professional associations, department, school, etc.)" (Stanton-Salazar, 2010, p. 1081). While the networking coach role "entails knowledge and training leading to skillful networking and help-seeking behavior" (Stanton-Salazar, 2010, p. 1099), the integrative agent role "entails the process of coordinating a student or young person's *social integration* in certain high-status networks and professional venues" (Stanton-Salazar, 2010, p. 1100). Stanton-Salazar's (2010) expanded definition included bridging, brokering and cultural exposure as part of the norm of an integrative agent.

Neither Terry nor Yoyo mentioned academic or social integration into high-status networks or professional activities (Stanton-Salazar, 2010) per se. However, Jacob and Soma brought individuals to Terry and Yoyo as demonstrated in the role of networking coach. By having access to other professors, professionals, and graduate students, Terry and Yoyo had entrée into these individuals' professional networks. Jacob and Soma may not have directly coordinated their "integration and participation in networks and professional venues" (Stanton-Salazar, 2010, p. 1081) directly, but I argue that Jacob and Soma's networking efforts offer a start for Terry and Yoyo to coordinate their own integration and participation in networks and professional venues.

Laela described a school-wide day as a "big event" where all members of the institution volunteered in the wider community. Roland was a part of that day. Because of his area of expertise, he connected the classroom to wider society by actively participating in this volunteer day. Although he did not personally coordinate this hands-on activity, by participating, he coordinated an epistemological experience for Laela with the external community for her to create her own future participation in networks that aligned and combined this "big event" and a classroom experience. He led by example. She said, "I definitely learned a lot from him…. He really gets the conversation going." By being visible and participating in a wider community volunteer event, he demonstrated that he practices in action what the theoretically teaches in his classroom.

Jeniffer stayed on course because of the support she received from Had. As part of this course, she had an academic requirement that included 20 hours of community service. Jeniffer was "dreading" this because she was employed and already struggling to keep up with her homework assignments given her personal circumstances. These hours represented 40% of the grade. Had had a built-in network to help students meet the 20 hours of service and provided students with a list of charitable organizations. During her selection process, Jeniffer "stumbled upon" a Catholic organization that was not on the list. Had's list was a starting point, but Jeniffer preferred a small Catholic shelter for women and children. She first went to "test it out for [herself] to see if it was something [she] wanted to do and once [she] found interest in it," she approached Had for approval. He called the new volunteer site, expanding upon the network of choices not just for Jeniffer, but also for other future students. Jeniffer completed the required 20 hours and continued to volunteer because she enjoyed it, thought it a "good place," and "love[d]" it. Had encouraged her to continue volunteering after integrating this organization into his already built network.

As a student leader, Sam was involved with internal and external community members. Maria exemplified appropriate communication with external constituents and guided Sam on how to work with internal professional community members as well. Both Jacob and Maria encouraged professionalism, describing the student leadership role as a "job." They helped Sam network with various internal departments, giving Sam the opportunity to build relationships. She had the

opportunity to meet many professionals and said she had "connections" thanks to

Jacob and Maria. Like Laela, Sam built a relationship with an administrator whom

she considered a friend. Sam integrated internal and external networks with Maria

and Jacob's assistance.

Ismael continued to hone his thinking and communication skills after securing

his summer internship with Robert Anthony's coaching. With Jacob's networking

assistance, Ismael secured an internship during the academic year, mentoring other

Latino students in the area's elementary and high schools. This internship aligned

with Ismael's interest in diversity issues while directly helping other Latino students

and serving as a college student role model for them. Jacob helped integrate Ismael

into this professional network.

Cultural guide. A cultural guide, "guides students through new social

situations in a particular cultural sphere [and] teaches students to identify and interact

with key people in [a] cultural sphere" (Stanton-Salazar, 2010, p. 1081). Within the

context of a HSI was this institution's religious context. St. Jude's mission statement

centers upon the values of the religious order and its Catholic tradition to serve and

upholds its commitment to social justice. As part of this particular cultural sphere,

there is a religious center, *The Center*, named after one of the religious members of

the founding order. *The Center* houses a student program, *The Strummer Leadership

Program (SLP)*, a pseudonym, whose members are *Strummer Leaders (SL)*, a

pseudonym. Students must apply to become *SLs* and maintain a minimum grade point

average. *The SLP* connects students to community organizations. A cultural guide in

this religious context is specific to this institutional domain and sociocultural world (Boykin, 1986; Stanton-Salazar, 2010). IAs are insiders whose values, beliefs, expectations, emotional responses and actions are characterized by this sociocultural world (Phelan, Davidson, & Yu, 1991; Stanton-Salazar, 2010). Another area not directly associated with *The Center*, but still cultural because it is specific to Latino students, is a student cultural club, *The Club* (pseudonym). *The Club* has the potential to provide an empowered socialization process where students may learn to participate and negotiate in simultaneous, but sometimes conflicting sociocultural worlds (Boykin, 1986; Stanton-Salazar, 2010).

Terry, Laela, Isabel, Sam, and Ismael described many of the IAs actions within the context of *The SLP* and/or *The Club*. Terry found that keeping a minimum grade point average to participate in *The SLP* gave her the impetus to succeed academically. Community service, which is part of *The SLP*, provided Terry the opportunity to volunteer at various non-profit organizations, leading her to work "at an after school childcare program." She learned about social justice and has done "acts of social justice." She said, "It's been pretty great so far with that aspect of it." Of Jacob and the *Strummer Leaders* Terry said, "We basically grow together, so we kind of become like a tight knit family" and of *The Center* she said, "it's basically like my second home." As a member of *The Club*, a student led group, Laela had "really big visions" and Robert Anthony was instrumental in helping her develop these in a notebook titled, "Plans for Saving the World St. Jude Style." Although Jeniffer did not mention being a member of *The SLP* or *The Club*, she participated in a social

event that *The Club* sponsored and said, "it was really fun." *The SLP* provided Isabel

a series of social opportunities that she otherwise would not have had because the *SLs*

"are dedicated to community service and bring attention to social justice problems."

Sam "hated" her start to college, but she decided to get involved, applied to *The SLP*

and because of it, fell "in love" with the group. She built relationships, assumed

leadership roles and became so involved that "Everything's going okay right now."

Strummer Leaders are identified, asked to apply, and approximately 20 students are

accepted every year. Jacob introduced Sam to other *SLs*, various groups of people,

and organizations. Because of *The SLP*, Sam traveled to a Catholic conference out of

the area and built connections with other student leaders from other institutions. She

was grateful to Jacob for this opportunity. *The Club* is social by composition, but

Ismael stated that "new on campus," a freshman might not know "how to navigate the

social aspect of campus." Robert Anthony encouraged Ismael "just keep on striving"

and to use his voice as a member of *The Club*, which helped Ismael come out of his

shell. *The Club* provided Ismael the opportunity to become socially involved.

System developer. Program developer, lobbyist, and political advocate

comprise the system developer category. First-generation Latino students provided

examples of actions that supported all of the areas under this category as they did for

direct support and integrative support.

Program developer. A program developer, "develops program that embeds

students in a system of agents, resources, and opportunities" (Stanton-Salazar, 2010,

p. 1081).

As a student her freshman year, Terry participated in *The Mentor Program (MP)*, a pseudonym. She became a mentor her sophomore year and was "paid through work-study as well." She mentored students during their freshman year just as she had been. "Sometimes they'll like you. Sometimes they won't," she said. There were study sessions for freshmen to "meet other mentees, and so they can kind of just mingle with each other, find new friends." Maggie supervised and led *The MP*, which was how they first met her. Terry discussed Jacob's leadership of *The SLP*. One IA developed one program and each IA led a program. Both Maggie and Jacob were instrumental in helping her academically and socially via participation in these programs.

Although Jeniffer did not mention Maggie as her IA, Jeniffer mentioned *The MP*. Jeniffer, as did Terry, participated in *The MP* her freshman year and was assigned a mentor who "was really helpful." Jeniffer's mentor helped her with math since "math was not [Jeniffer's] thing." Her mentor showed her the physical location of the math tutoring center and asked about Jeniffer's professor. Her mentor was able to provide insight and made recommendations since she had had the same professor the previous year. Although Jeniffer had to re-take the math course, her mentor "was definitely a text away." Her mentor contacted her monthly and met with Jeniffer to discuss academics, but also to check-in on how she was doing, asked if she needed help, and inquired about her social activity. There was also a small scholarship "just for participating in the program itself, but that was also really helpful."

Isabel, like Terry and Jeniffer also participated in *The MP* her freshman year, but unlike Jeniffer, Isabel did not have a positive experience. "At the beginning, I felt like nothing was going to happen and I did say something," but it was not until Isabel's second semester her freshman year that she said something. Isabel's original mentor never contacted her. She was assigned a second mentor, but this mentor, "didn't do much." Isabel participated in a couple of events, which included a panel of students who shared their experiences with coursework and financial aid. She felt her mentor was too busy "because it seemed like she had a lot to do." Isabel never saw other student participants of *The MP* and she did not witness other mentors engage much with other students. Referring to the mentors, Isabel elaborated,

> I don't think that it's that they didn't want to do anything, but it was also just that they were in their junior and senior years here. So I feel that maybe they had too many things to do and so they couldn't do much with the students.

Whether a positive or not so positive student experience, once *The MP* program was developed, the IA who originally created it, made it sustainable. Lin (2001) wrote, "an occupant of a position in a hierarchical structure has the right to control and use the resources attached to that position. These ownership rights expire when the individual actor is detached from that position" (p. 43). In other words, while someone leads a program, the person controls the resources. Inversely, if the person ceases to lead the program, then the person no longer controls the resources. Therefore, the positional resources stay intact, but the personal resources change.

Stanton-Salazar (2010) presented this argument as personal and positional resources of a resource agent.

Lobbyist. A lobbyist, "lobbies for organizational resources to be directed toward recruiting and supporting students" (Stanton-Salazar, 2010, p. 1081). Stanton-Salazar (2010) added that this type of administrative or organizational resource lobbying is for the recruitment and support of "a targeted group of students/youth." (p. 1100). Given this expanded definition, no student described the actions of any designated IA as a lobbyist. However, if lobbying for resources directed toward the support of a targeted group of students refers to supporting students as a standalone aspect not inclusive of recruitment, then Soma's efforts described in the advocate role apply as a lobbyist. I argue for a minimal inclusion in the definition for support to be a standalone aspect to read, a lobbyist lobbies for organizational resources to be directed toward recruiting and/or supporting students. Adding the word or allows IAs to lobby for resources to support students without having to recruit them, providing current students with additional resources. For example, Soma provided Yoyo and other students access to specific locked away resources necessary for Yoyo's major. Although Yoyo provided this example specifically in reference to advocacy, I argue that Soma was lobbying to make these resources accessible to students to have a hands-on learning experience. The "targeted group of students/youth" in this example would refer to students of a specific academic major.

I also argue that Jacob lobbied for the financial support provided to first-generation Latino students—the "targeted group of students/youth"—but because

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students may not have access to the internal organizational infrastructure to confirm the lobbying action, their perception of his actions may be limited to seeing him as an advocate rather than a lobbyist. Sam, however, provided one concrete example of Jacob's lobbying efforts,

> The whole like [Jacob] helping me with the money thing would count as something because I know that meant he would have to do e-mailing with certain people to give me more time and he had to go to meetings to basically say, like, 'This is why I'm giving her this money.'

Considering the examples previously mentioned by Terry, Isabel and Sam of Jacob's financial support, I propose further expanding the lobbyist definition from, "lobbies for organizational resources to be directed toward recruiting and supporting students" (Stanton-Salazar, 2010, p. 1081) to include student retention and read as, lobbies for organizational resources to be directed toward recruiting, retaining, and/or supporting students. Sam indicated that without the financial support she received from Jacob, staying at St. Jude's might not have been possible. Jacob's actions contributed to Sam's retention.

Political advocate. A political advocate, "joins political action group that advocates for social policies and institutional resources that would benefits [*sic*] targeted groups of students" (Stanton-Salazar, 2010, p. 1081). I suggest expanding upon this definition to read: "joins or is a part of an internal or external political action group that advocates for social policies and institutional resources that would benefit targeted groups of students." As the definition currently reads, it does not take into

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account any existing political activity and it does not distinguish between internal or external. By expanding upon the definition, the new language enhances and aligns with Stanton-Salazar's (2010) more detailed definition,

> Just as an institutional agent may advocate for an individual student or youth, they may also join an organized group of institutional agents in advocating for social policies "aimed at providing needed resources and enhancing social justice" (Hepworth et al., p. 31, (1997) [*sic*]). (as cited on p. 1100)

As discussed in the role of cultural guide, *The Club*, a student led cultural group and *The Center*, which houses *The Strummer Leadership Program* comprise this institution's cultural sphere. Within the context of St. Jude's is its mission statement, which includes its commitment to social justice. Here is an example of a cultural guide overlap with political advocate. Terry and Isabel shared their individual experiences as *Strummer Leaders* who participated in a vigil. Isabel clarified that the vigil was not a religious event, but a "peaceful" social justice protest at a regional immigration detention center. Terry said, "We give our support or scream as loud as we can just so they can hear us and show that we're here for them." Recall that Terry's brother was held at an immigration detention center, but not at this regional one. Isabel said that participating in the vigil was, "to let [the detainees] know that we are in solidarity with them." She recalled the first time she participated, listening to a student share with the group that her mother was detained at another detention center while her sister was attending another university, "very far away and those were difficult times for them." Another student also shared that her brother was

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detained "on the other side of the country." Participating in this vigil for Terry was living the institution's commitment to social justice. Although Jeniffer did not participate in the vigil she mentioned that another group was traveling, she believed, out of state to "help with immigration problems. She came to this information via Had's class as part of the 20-hour volunteer requirement.

Jacob, as Terry and Isabel's designated IA led this vigil, but did not join a political action group. He led the effort as an internal member of St. Jude's, hence my suggestion to expand upon the definition. His institutional resources provided Terry and Isabel the opportunity to participate in the vigil. As first-generation Latina students, I argue that they are members of the "targeted group" because the activity focused on immigration, an issue that directly affected Terry's family and as Isabel mentioned, she participated in this activity as an act of solidarity. By expanding the current definition, Jacob and his actions are included as an internal member who was advancing social justice advocacy.

System linkage & networking support. The system linkage and networking support category includes the actions of a(n): recruiter, bridging agent, institutional broker and coordinator. First-generation Latino students provided examples of actions that supported all of the areas under this category except for the recruiter role.

Recruiter. A recruiter, "actively recruits students into program, department, etc." (Stanton-Salazar, 2010, p. 1081). Stanton-Salazar (2010) further expanded upon this definition by adding, "often involves interfacing with community organizations or educational institutions" (p. 1101). In comparison to this definition, Stanton-Salazar

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(2010) distinguished recruiting and supporting students in the lobbyist action area

with the caveat that a lobbyist, "lobbies for organizational resources to be directed

toward recruiting and supporting students" (p. 1081). A recruiter executes the action

of recruiting, but does not lobby for organizational resources to recruit. Given this

definition, no students indicated that they were actively recruited into a program or

department.

    Bridging agent. A bridging agent, "introduces students to institutional

agents[,] has a strong social network [, and] knows what key players do" (Stanton-

Salazar, 2010, p. 1081). Recall that as part of networking coach, Stanton-Salazar

(2004, 2010) included knowing how to develop supportive peer relationships with

those who are integrated into academic and extracurricular circles as part of the

networking coach definition. When Jacob introduced Terry to external invited guests

and internal agents at *The Center*, it could be interpreted that he bridged key players

in his social network to Terry's network although Terry considered this a networking

example. Similarly, by introducing Laela to other students, Robert Anthony helped

her develop peer-to-peer relationships. Of the student voices Laela collected, it was

her responsibility as a student leader to "give that feedback to another part of the

school." She stated that the introductions Robert Anthony made were not to

"administrators or anything, [but] it was still, to me, really important to talk to

students and get their opinions on things." Again, although Laela considered this a

networking example, because of a person-to-person introduction, it could be

interpreted as a bridging agent example.

The focus [on bridging agents] is on person to person introductions and

connections. In order to make sound connections, such 'bridging' agents must

have a well amplified social network, active connections with various key

alters, and a good knowledge of the resources that these alters possess. (see

Hepworth et al., 1997, p. 27; Stanton-Salazar, 2010, p. 1101)

Although participants had access to the definition of a bridging agent via Stanton-

Salazar's (2010) framework, there is evidence of overlap between a bridging agent

and a networking coach. Jeniffer took Had's network one step further and became a

bridging agent herself by taking his list of volunteer organizations, learning from it,

and finding her own organization of interest, then connecting him with that

organization to further expand upon his own network. As stated earlier, I honored

participants' examples of a networking coach and a bridging agent.

Like Terry, Sam mentioned *The Center's* physical space and described it as

the "headquarters hanging-out place." Recall that *The Center* houses *The SLP*, giving

Terry, Isabel, and Sam access to *The Center* as *Strummer Leaders*. Terry and Isabel

both described participating in the immigration detention center vigil, which was

sponsored by *The Center*. Isabel shared that, "she participated with them in many

events related to *The Center*." Sam said that the point of being a *Strummer Leader*

"was to work with our communities, so that means we would have to speak to others

and also just how to work with people on campus." Sam continued by saying that

Strummer Leaders were encouraged to be professional because although it was a

student leadership role, "it was still a job and we needed to be professionals." Under

the role of cultural guide, I described how Sam built relationships and had the opportunity to travel to a Catholic conference. Terry described the direct introductions Jacob made via *The Center*. Isabel detailed the social justice activities and Sam described the encouraged professionalism. Of the keynote speakers and round table events, Terry said, "at these events, a lot of professors come to them so I get to meet them at the same time, and sometimes [Jacob] will introduce them to me." Sam stated that Jacob was "definitely" a human bridge because "He's always the one who's introducing me and all the other *Strummers* to all of these different organizations or groups of people." All of these activities through *The SLP* via *The Center* provided Terry, Isabel and Sam opportunities to make contact with internal and external audiences. Not only was Jacob helping them network, but via this networking, Jacob was serving as a bridging agent by extending his internal and external social network to Terry, Isabel and Sam.

Terry considered Maggie's tutor referrals as a networking opportunity, but considered Maggie a bridging agent for her referrals to a resource center and the nurse. Isabel mentioned that Jacob also referred her to a resource center and she considered him a bridging agent for this. In another bridging example, Isabel said that Jacob provided her with necessary information, contact details of those she needed to communicate with and said, "Oh, you can talk to this person if you're interested in this." Isabel differentiated networking from bridging as, "I think networking skills is just like making connections I guess. Human bridge I think is getting more, not a personal level, but like maybe closer than just having a connection." When I asked

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Isabel if she considered having referrals to the resource center or the financial aid office or other areas as bridging, she answered affirmatively.

Yoyo's example of having access to "important people," whether for internship or scholarship opportunities, and meeting other professors and external professionals exemplified Soma extension her social network. In particular, access to graduate students who were either applying to or attending graduate school in Yoyo's particular field of interest amplified her academic network. Micaela spoke of Maggie as a human bridge when Maggie communicated with faculty members so they could understand Micaela's particular academic circumstances.

Ismael considered Jacob a bridging agent because he helped him secure an internship during the academic year, mentoring Latino elementary and high schools students. With Jacob's support through another campus activity, Ismael attended a leadership seminar with other universities. Here, Ismael learned how to connect with other student leaders at other institutions and "bring whatever you learn into your own leadership roles." Ismael learned bridging through Jacob's shared passion for diversity issues. Dziga was involved in the full- and part-time faculty effort to unionize and Ismael considered him a bridging agent because of this. By actively engaging in unionizing, Dziga served as an example for Ismael because he bridged students and faculty. "[Dziga] actually helped us as students help the faculty." In addition, when Ismael began his project on diversity issues, many faculty members were unresponsive and Dziga communicated with faculty members in support of his project. Robert Anthony also participated in the unionization effort, but his bridging

example came by way of *The Club's* needs and bridging these with institutional resources. Robert Anthony provided examples of large institutional resources versus small institutional resources and how to access these resources for *The Club* and its members. Robert Anthony also helped Ismael bridge these needs by demonstrating that these needs continue regardless if Robert Anthony or anyone else resides in a particular position at the institution. On the day of Ismael's interview, he informed me that Robert Anthony was no longer employed at the institution, but before leaving, he helped *The Club* members connect with faculty to meet *The Club's* leadership needs.

Just as Figure 7 depicted the fluidity of actions, it is relevant to consider that even within the definitions provided by Stanton-Salazar (2010), there were aspects of some roles that sometimes integrated aspects of another. For example, an integrative agent includes bridging, brokering, and cultural exposure (Stanton-Salazar, 2010). A networking coach and an integrative agent were merely distinguished by teaching (networking coach) versus coordinating (integrative agent). A bridging agent relied on a person-to-person connection while an institutional broker took that person-to-person connection which entailed, "assuming an *activist* role as an intermediary between *two or more parties*" (Stanton-Salazar, 2010, p. 1101). An institutional broker and coordinator both relied on referrals. The many examples provided by the 23 participants in the study were layered and sometimes had aspects of one or more roles. In addition, participants did not have access to the fine distinguishing factors defining each role, which can also overlap.

Institutional broker. An institutional broker "negotiates introductions and agreements between two or more parties [and] knows what resources are available and who controls or possesses them" (Stanton-Salazar, 2010, p. 1081). In addition,

this form of support entails assuming an *activist* role as an intermediary between *two or more parties* in negotiating agreements, and in accessing valued institutional resources on behalf of individual/client…. This agent also steers people toward existing social services and academic programs that may be of service to them, usually through referrals or through direct introductions to organizational personnel (see Heffernan [*sic*] et al., 1997, pp. 27-28). (as cited in Stanton-Salazar, 2010, p. 1101)

When Jacob interceded on Terry's behalf to audit a course, he served as an intermediary to negotiate her access to valued resources. Otherwise, she would not have been able to add to this course because she was registered for a high number of units. "[Jacob] talked to the professor who was teaching the class and she said it was fine." A linking effect occurred with Maggie's tutor referrals, which Terry considered as a networking opportunity, leading to Maggie's actions as a bridging agent for referring Terry to a resource center and the nurse. Although Maggie referred Terry to these two resources, Maggie did not act as a coordinator because there was no evidence to support that Maggie had worked directly with the beneficiary (Terry) and service providers (a resource center and the nurse) "to ensure that the support or resources [were] tailored to [Terry's] needs" (Stanton-Salazar, 2010, p. 1101). Therefore, given Stanton-Salazar's (2010) expanded definition of an

institutional broker, Maggie's referrals were more applicable to the actions of an institutional broker where she assumed "an intermediary role between *two or more parties*… in accessing valued institutional resources on behalf of the individual/client/student" (p. 1101). When Laela collected student voices and felt she could not randomly approach people, she said, "You kind of have to have that person who knows them and then come on the side, so [Robert Anthony] did that a few times for me and it really helped me." Just as Jacob did for Terry, so did Robert Anthony for Laela.

It can also be interpreted that Maggie, by being Micaela's primary point person for her additional academic support not only formed a bridge between Micaela and faculty members, but also brokered on her behalf. Maggie's access to valuable institutional resources in the form of academic resources began with Maggie herself when she personally assisted Micaela with academic content in addition to meeting with her on a weekly basis. Maggie served as an intermediary with other faculty members who Maggie spoke to on behalf of Micaela. Maggie steered Micaela's additional academic support by helping faculty members understand Micaela's special circumstances. Micaela said that Maggie helped, "teachers understand what I'm going through."

When Jacob referred Isabel to a resource center and she considered him a bridging agent for this, the same linking effect as with Terry can be said for Isabel. By responding affirmatively when I asked if she considered having referrals to the resource center or the financial aid office or other areas as bridging, this is essence

can also be considered actions of an institutional broker based upon Stanton-Salazar's (2010) expanded definition.

When Bot asked for Sam's permission to reach out to Jacob because she did not want to see Sam leave the institution due to financial difficulties, Bot wanted to access resources for Sam since Jacob had previously provided them. She was negotiating for Sam because Sam did not feel she could reach out to Jacob again. By vouching for Sam, Bot

> was just saying that if the school wasn't gonna give me enough time to be able to pay off what I had left, she's like, "Don't worry, me and [Jacob] would go and speak to them and tell them that you need more time. We're gonna make sure you are able to get the resources that you need."

Yoyo was steered toward existing services when Soma inquired about her needs, both personal and academic. By asking the following questions, Soma was assuming an activist role. Soma asked Yoyo,

> What are you taking now? What are you gonna take next? How do you feel about it? Do you think you need help with anything? Have you gone to the tutoring center? Have you gone to your professor's office hours or have you talked to them about it?

This example could also be seen as advising if the questions were interpreted as a means of assessing problems to arrive at possible solutions and guiding to effective decision making. When Soma gave Yoyo and other students hands-on access to academic resources that were locked and welcomed them to study with these items,

Soma was granting institutional resources to Yoyo and other students that had previously been negotiated by Soma for them to have access. In reference to the time Yoyo was lacking focus and Soma took note, Yoyo said, "I don't think they're at all the type of people that will just leave you hanging with your own problem. They always find a way to just get you the right person that will help you." Soma's approach as Yoyo described it was, "There's a problem. Maybe I don't know the answer to it, but this person does so I'm gonna…let them help you, as well."

Ismael's academic projects required support. Dziga provided activist support when he communicated on Ismael's behalf with faculty members who were perhaps hesitant to participate in Ismael's project because of the sensitivity surrounding issues of diversity. Jacob's support went a step further to actively participate in Ismael's class project. Recall that Jacob shared Ismael's passion for diversity.

Coordinator. A coordinator, "assesses student's needs [,] identifies resources to address need [,] provides or accesses institutional resources on behalf of student [, and] ensures student utilizes resources" (Stanton-Salazar, 2010, p. 1081). Stanton-Salazar (2010) considered coordinating, "as an extension of *brokering*" (p. 1101). The emphasis was to secure resources tailored to the needs of the person receiving the support and for the IA to seek expert knowledge from others who had expertise with particular types of problems. Financial aid was an example of an area of expertise. This area alone would include a number of examples already provided.

The best example of tailoring was Micaela. Given Micaela's special circumstances, Maggie provided tailored support to meet Micaela's specific academic

needs. Sam mentioned six IAs and when Bot sought Jacob's expert assistance to keep

Sam enrolled, she secured tailored resources for Sam. On the other hand, Jacob also

sought expert assistance from Bot for Terry, Isabel and Sam. Yoyo experienced a

similar circumstance with George, Soma and Susan coming together to coordinate

Yoyo's academic schedule and Ismael's course projects brought Dziga and Jacob's

areas of expertise together.

Because of the small size of this institution, the data demonstrated that IAs had

knowledge about the resources available and who the gatekeepers to these resources

were. The IAs commitment to student service guided them to facilitate these

resources for students. The results demonstrated that all areas within the four

categories of Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework were present except for the

recruiter role, which could be debated. I described the specific actions IAs took to

support first-generation Hispanic college students' academic and social advancement

at a Catholic HSI. Following is the evidence from the IAs' perspective to address

question two.

Institutional Agents' Demographics

Fifteen IAs participated in this study. Eight self-identified as female and

seven as male. Eight IAs had earned doctoral degrees and seven held master's

degrees. Six served in academic roles and seven served in non-academic roles.

However, there was some overlap. Some participants in academic roles had

administrative roles and some with administrative responsibilities had teaching roles.

IAs approximate average length of time at the institution was nine years. Nine self-

identified as White or Caucasian and six were non-White. Four spoke Spanish; six

did not; four said they spoke "a little" Spanish; and one was unknown. No IA opted

to interview in Spanish. All 15 interviews were in-person and on-campus. Seven IAs

self-identified as first-generation students themselves with no prompting during the

interview. In one interview, the data demonstrated the IA was not first-generation.

As a follow-up question in an e-mail while member checking IA interview

summaries, three IAs replied that they were not first-generation and four were

unknown. Of the 15 IAs, 11 confirmed their interview summaries and four did not,

equaling a 73% member checking confirmation rate. Table 2 represents the matching

pairs listing IAs as designated by students.

IAs and Students' Matching Pairs

Table 2

IAs and Students' Matching Pairs

Institutional Agent	Student
IA #1 (Robert Anthony)	Student #2 (Laela)
	Student #8 (Ismael)
IA #2 (Jacob)	Student #1 (Terry)
	Student #5 (Isabel)
	Student #6 (Sam)
	Student #8 (Ismael)
IA #3 (Helen)	Student #1 (Terry)
	Student #6 (Sam)
IA #4 (Maggie)	Student #1 (Terry)
	Student #4 (Micaela)
IA #5 (Phaedrus)	Student #4 (Micaela)
IA #6 (Eliza)	Student #5 (Isabel)
IA #7 (Roland)	Student #2 (Laela)
	Student #5 (Isabel)
	Student #6 (Sam)
IA #8 (Soma)	Student #5 (Isabel)
	Student #7 (Yoyo)
IA #9 (Maria)	Student #6 (Sam)
IA #10 (Lillian)	Student #6 (Sam)
IA #11 (Had)	Student #3 (Jeniffer)
IA #12 (Susan)	Student #7 (Yoyo)
IA #13 (George)	Student #7 (Yoyo)
IA #14 (Bot)	Student #6 (Sam)
IA #15 (Dziga)	Student #8 (Ismael)

Note. Matching pairs listing institutional agents (IAs) as designated by students.

To address question two, following are the self-reported interview results from all IAs addressing how they supported first-generation Latino students' academic and social advancement at a Catholic HSI. I analyzed these results as a unified whole to comprise embedded unit of analysis two (see Figure 4, Embedded unit of analysis two corresponding to institutional agents). Similar to question one, I am referencing the 14 action areas of Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework (see Appendix A and/or

Figure 1) delineated by the four categories of the framework: direct support, integrative support, system developer, and system linkage and networking support.

Question Two: Institutional Agents (IAs)

2.   How do the identified institutional agents, themselves, describe the specific

actions they take to facilitate the academic and social advancement of first-

generation Hispanic college students?

- Using Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework detailing the actions of

    institutional agents, and as described by the identified institutional agents,

    to what degree are they representative of:

    a. direct support?

    b. integrative support?

    c. system developer?

    d. system linkage & networking support?

As a reminder, the four categories above listed include various action areas.

Direct support includes five: resource agent, knowledge agent, advisor, advocate and

networking coach. Integrative support includes two: integrative agent and cultural

guide. System developer includes three: program developer, lobbyist and political

advocate and system linkage and networking support includes four: recruiter,

bridging agent, institutional broker and coordinator. I also include the definitions of

all areas within their corresponding category.

The results of question two include data representative of only the IAs' one-

on-one in-person interviews and any supplementary data they provided. I present the

amalgamated responses for each area within the four categories. Recall that eight

students designated 15 IAs as detailed in Table 2. Unlike question one where I

presented data by individual students for each area within each category, in question

two I present the data as a synthesis of IAs' actions. The intent in presenting the data

in this manner is to protect the confidentiality of IAs given the small institution size.

It also provides the reader the opportunity to focus on the actions of IAs as a

composite, drawing attention to how IAs described their support of first-generation

Latino students' academic and social advancement.

For example, Eliza, Soma, Had, Susan, and George thought the category of

direct support best described their actions, but some of their actions were also part of

other areas and categories. Eliza referred to being a resource agent, a knowledge

agent, an advisor, an advocate, a networking coach, and a bridging agent as an offset

to a program developer. Program developer is an area under system developer and

bridging agent is an area related to system linkage and networking support. Soma

thought her strongest area was direct support and considered herself a resource agent,

an advisor, an advocate, and a knowledge agent. She did not see herself as a lobbyist.

However, she provided examples indicative of her lobbying efforts. Had also

described his strongest area of support as direct support. He considered himself a

resource agent, a knowledge agent, and an advisor as more closely related to his

professional role. He also considered himself a cultural guide, corresponding to the

category of integrative support, "in the sense [of] pushing people to speak their own

voice," as well as a strong political advocate, under the category of system developer.

Susan considered herself a knowledge agent, advisor, a limited advocate, a strong

cultural guide, which is under integrative support, a program developer under system

developer, as well as a bridging agent and a coordinator, both under system linkage

and networking support. George placed himself well within the category of direct

support. He described himself as a resource agent, advisor, knowledge agent,

advocate, but less of a networking coach and a little of a cultural guide. Cultural

guide is one of the two areas of integrative support.

Following are examples of each of the areas of the four categories. Again, the

focus is on the actions of the roles. Some may include examples of all 15 IAs while

others may include only a few. If data points provided in the examples increased the

possibility of identification, I did not include these examples.

Direct support. Direct support includes the areas of: resource agent,

knowledge agent, advisor, advocate, and networking coach. A resource agent

"provides personal and positional resources to students" (Stanton-Salazar, 2010, p.

1081). A knowledge agent "knows 'the system' [and] accesses or provides

knowledge pertinent to navigating the system" (Stanton-Salazar, 2010, p. 1081). An

advisor, "helps students gather information[,] assesses problems and possible

solutions in a collaborative manner[, and] promotes & guides effective decision

making" (Stanton-Salazar, 2010, p. 1081). An advocate, "promotes and protects the

interests of 'their' students" (Stanton-Salazar, 2010, p. 1081) and a networking coach,

"teaches students how to *network* with key institutional agents[,] models appropriate

networking behavior [, and] develops relationships with important and influential

people" (Stanton-Salazar, 2010, p. 1081). IAs provided examples of actions that supported all of the areas under this category.

Resource agent. Robert Anthony and Lillian preferred St. Jude's as their place of employment, but for different reasons. Robert Anthony wanted to work at St. Jude's because of its small size whereas Lillian selected it because of its student population. Lillian said, "In coming here, I met the students and I just knew they were like me and I could be that person for them who said, 'You can do it and you can be an agent for change yourself.'" Robert Anthony was flattered to have been designated an IA. It was an opportunity to connect with students and be "a resource for them…. to keep more students in school and help them graduate." He said,

> I am an office where you can come, and whatever your problem is, whatever
> your issue is, let's talk about it, and again, we'll try to figure out how to fix it,
> where we get better or find a resolution.

He was there to help Latino students seek resources and guide them through the college-going process.

Jacob, Lillian, and Phaedrus discussed the financial support they provided students. Jacob and Lillian did so primarily thorough their positions, with scholarships, both large and small, internships, and work-study. Jacob said that small costs "can be burdensome" and you simply help students get through that because "they have enough barriers to jump over. If it's something the institution can help them with, we need to be ready to do that." Phaedrus personally paid for social activities, including a movie and pizza on one occasion as well as the entrance fee to a

local museum for several students. The movie related to a course topic. Phaedrus described having pizza after the movie as preparing students "at worst" for a future professional cocktail party. In other words, his intent was to prepare students for the social aspect of a career. After the movie, they engaged in a "more scholarly, intelligent" exchange, which was part of the college experience. "It's about sitting and having intelligent conversations about your interests." He said that students had the opportunity to "experience what a lot of privileged [students] get to do." He broke down the cost of each of the activities and continued, "I think it's elitist to have that high a price" in reference to the museum experience. Students had the opportunity to partake in hands-on experiences that few individuals have the opportunity to do. Phaedrus gave students, "experiences that are usually reserved to a protected, elitist class" because most students working multiple jobs would not be able to access these types of social experiences.

When Phaedrus and Helen could not offer their expertise as knowledge agents, they sought assistance to provide students with resources. The focus was not on networking or bridging, but on obtaining resources for students via their positions. For instance, Phaedrus provided mythical examples about Bigfoot or the Loch Ness monster, but found that these did not necessarily resonate with some Latino students. Recognizing this differential he added, "Hispanic students have their own superstitions and myths from their countries." He consulted and brought in a personal resource to enhance the subject matter with Spanish folklore, La Llorona, which resulted in, "Wow! Phaedrus, that was great! [The guest speaker] was great!" Helen

also reached out to her personal network to access information for a Latino student because the student needed assistance to overcome a college-related social challenge. Helen, in this instance, was also a bridging agent when she asked the student if she was familiar with another IA on-campus who might be able to assist her. Helen was unaware that the person she was referring to had also been designated an IA.

Helen described going into her "classroom honestly thinking [students] are all a genius in something." However, she soon realized that approximately 70% of her class had difficulty with the concept of critical thinking. She assumed that at college level, students would all be familiar with the use of critical thinking skills. From her belief of genius in students, she reached out to her personal network of high school teachers and asked, "How do you teach critical thinking, critical analysis?" She knew that if her personal resources were not able to assist her that they could refer her to someone who could help. Helen received the help she needed and said, "High school teachers are so much better prepared than college teachers" to teach. What Helen found was that once she broke down the actions associated with the term critical thinking, students reacted with, "Oh! Great! Got it!" She continued, "and then their ability to do it is incredible, especially when they have the experience. I mean you link experience, lived experience to the topics we're talking about and you just get incredible theory." Helen was able to acknowledge her own limitations and sought the resources necessary to bring knowledge into the classroom so that she could then provide service students, including first-generation Latino students.

Soma compared the education her students received to a personal circumstance and said,

> and yet my students, when they tell me that all they did for [a particular
> course] was watch YouTube videos—it's just not acceptable and so they are
> trying to overcome the sixteen years of non-education that they have had—not
> to the fault of theirs, right? It's a challenge.

To support her students, Soma provided the positional resource of allowing a student to bring his/her children to class. She also provided parents with her personal telephone number and received a call "in the middle of the night."

Maggie was rather succinct about the needs of first-generation Latino students and the resources necessary to support them.

> We have to have an understanding of first-generation Latino students and we
> have to have that understanding of their needs coming into college. They
> don't all have the same needs, but a lot of them have similar needs where their
> families do not understand the college process. It's brand new to them. Most
> of them want their students in college. They want them… or their children in
> college. They want them to succeed, but a lot of our students are working,
> sending money home. Our students come in not understanding how a large
> academic load and working full-time will impact them. They don't know the
> resources that are available so we need to provide a lot of support for students.

When students carried a heavy academic course load while working full-time, Maggie was a resource agent by helping them find on-campus employment to eliminate travel time to work. She said, "It makes a huge difference."

Dziga had a professionally employed student who had taken almost all of his courses over a two-year period. The student was perpetually late, but, "a really strong student." He was familiar with her situation. She completed her assignments, had "a really strong voice… [and was] a bridge for other students." Dziga wanted her in class for presentations because of her strong voice and worked with her to her tardiness. Phaedrus used technology to help his students when in need. For example, rather than missing class when a transportation issue arose and the student was concerned with being "thrown out of class," Phaedrus said, "No, just jump on your phone. We'll put it up." He connected technologically with the student so he would not miss class. While "not ideal," Phaedrus adapted to help meet the student's need. "Teachers struggle to adapt to that sometimes because there's a sense of, 'The rule says this.' Well, the rule says this, but it doesn't say appearing virtually doesn't count, so, it's finding the gray areas."

With the student's permission, Had stayed in touch with one student over the summer because he wanted the student to persist. "I think he's got the intellect to stay in college, so I call[ed] him." Had asked the students if he had registered to return the following fall. The student did so and was in Had's class at the time of the interview. Had was cognizant of being too paternalistic "because they have to stand on their own…. but I definitely feel like I should watch over this one student because he's that

person who just will not push himself sometimes." Had wanted this student to graduate, thought highly of this student's intellect, but also thought that the student might simply be lacking self-confidence and that is where he thought he could help.

Eliza and Maria mentioned students' high anxiety in trying to achieve work-life balance and fear over next steps after graduation. Eliza reassured students, "You're going to be fine" and provided positional resources to help students breakdown deficiency barriers, increase their knowledge about their options, and build their network internally and externally. Maria also provided positional resources to help a student who wanted to step into a leadership role, but was doubtful about her abilities to execute. Maria said to the student, "Yes, you can. I'll guide you and I'll prep. you for it." Another student who had also been unsure of her capacity to lead shared with Maria how involved she had become on campus, even becoming a resident advisor. "Just seeing her grow and flourish has been great and being able to somewhat work with her too."

When students were intimidated by the subject matter and felt they were unable to do the work, Dziga encouraged them to "develop a sense of ownership" and gain a sense of agency by saying, "I can do that." That was his aim and primary contribution. He too often heard about students' "deep personal crises," as they tried to manage their work, family, and school responsibilities. Together they talked through these issues within a course context. He made sure they received what they needed. He wanted his students to be frank with him. Dziga designed his class with introductory lectures at the beginning of the course that concluded with presentations

at the end of the course. During presentations, the entire class convened, but in-between there were one-on-one conversations about course projects, which included reflection where "a lot of learning happen[ed]." Dziga described a recursive learning process where he implemented previous in-class examples and re-examined them; introduced new material and made sure that if students missed any concepts that these were discussed again; provided students with feedback on their work; and answered their questions. He did not want his students to feel that they were "operating in a vacuum." He wanted them to have direction and know their aims. Because he anticipated students missing class, he presented material on several occasions in an effort to give students, "a truncated version that's just enough," to get them where they needed to be. Similar to Eliza, Maria, and Dziga, Susan helped many Latino students achieve self-confidence. Like Maggie, Susan helped students improve their time management skills.

Roland worked with a student to overcome her self-criticism and embarrassment when she felt her world was "falling apart" over social actions that had significant ramifications. He told her, "This is yet another challenge that you can conquer." The student assumed responsibility for her actions, overcame the challenges, and continued with her education. Roland helped her understand all of the implications in an effort to prevent her from "spiraling," provided her with needed support, and encouraged her. "You're the same person. You can do it!"

Bot who was "very much about social justice" worked with an undocumented Latina student who was also struggling. Now a student at another institution, Bot

continued to work with her. Two years after graduating from St. Jude's, she was "thriving." "I'm proud of the work that she's been doing." The student made changes; all of which made Bot "feel good." This effort was a commitment of time as well as personal and positional resources.

   Knowledge agent. Soma intentionally taught a particular first-year course and final year course because she was interested in seeing students' academic growth. She was also quite involved with her students' career paths. As a knowledge agent in her particular field, she wanted to witness the connection between the classroom and either graduate work or a direct career option. She sought out her students and tracked where they were going and what they were doing as a way to confirm she had "addressed most of their concerns or at least leave them with an awareness" of what their options were upon graduation. Helen taught students that knowledge acquisition was continuous regardless of setting. She shared with them that she was participating in a training program and was going to be a student again. She also included herself in some of the most challenging in-class exercises. "There's nothing in the class that I expect [students] to do that I wouldn't do." Helen realized how much she asked of them after being a student again and said, "I think you cannot ask [students] to be vulnerable if you're not willing to be vulnerable," within boundaries. By sharing with students her own training program student experience, Helen demonstrated that being a knowledge agent and knowing how to navigate an educational system is not constrained to a specific period of time or place. As part of this learning process, Helen taught her students how to navigate her class in combination with other classes

by scheduling her assignment due dates with other course deadlines. Organizing course assignments may seem trivial to some, but recall that time management was a skill that Susan and Maggie taught students along with helping them improve their self-confidence as two primary aspects of a resource agent. Susan and Helen, as knowledge agents, taught students how to navigate the day-to-day system of academic life. Dziga encouraged his students to bring their voice to their academic projects. He wanted them "to bring their particular vantage point on the world to bear in the work that they [were] doing." His transfer of knowledge was to help students gain their own "personal sense of authorship." Dziga engaged in a reciprocal exchange of knowledge. He taught students how to navigate within a particular field, but students in turn used their own interests and lived experiences for their projects, which then provided Dziga the opportunity to learn about them and their areas of interest. Had pointed out that some voices were louder than others. "The dominant voices are louder. The dominant culture is louder. The dominant paradigms are louder." He taught "self-empowerment and political consciousness" in the hopes of helping Latino students have their voices be heard. Recall that he considered this knowledge agency as a cultural guide when helping Latino students use their voices. Helping students use their voices is an example of "*implicit and explicit socialization into institutional discourses*" (Stanton-Salazar, 2010, p. 1099).

In learning to use their voices, students did so not only in the institutional setting, but learned to take their voices into their family environment. A continual topic of discussion for IAs was their exposure to the family pressures first-generation

Latino students experience relative to their academic major decisions. Helen

described a first-generation Latino student as the "first to do it…. but then you also

have the family that holds on to these hopes." Whilst navigating the decision-making

process of selecting a major, Helen, Phaedrus, Eliza, Roland, Soma, Maria, Susan and

George described their experiences with students. Some examples were more

complicated and layered than others. Some IAs were more involved than others, but

all IAs were committed to assisting students make the most appropriate decision for

themselves. For some IAs this action fell within their advising roles. For others, it

was far from their professional responsibilities. However, whether it was providing

direct support or filling the role of bridging agent to help students arrive at the

appropriate resource, all IAs proved capable of being a knowledge agent in helping

students navigate the academic major decision. Examples of support included helping

students double major, providing assessment tools to help students identify their

"natural gifts and talents," as Eliza stated, preparing a detailed academic plan

including a timetable to graduation, guiding students out of a major and into another

because of academic performance or simply having informal conversations when

students were first considering changing their majors.

Lillian described having pertinent knowledge about available institutional

resources as necessary to help students navigate the process to access these resources.

She said that students needed to hear which resources were available to them "over

and over." This support might be purely academic support, but Lillian's self-

awareness was to know where a professional role started and ended, and where

another must begin in order to provide specific support as might be mental health. In this case scenario, it might be "just talking to them about that and making it a non-stigmatized space for them." In other cases, the need might be to access mental health support immediately. For example, four students approached Helen about suicide within a very short time. Within her classroom context, she recognized that working within a "holistic understanding of the student," some class topics might incite a trigger for students. Helen might not have the specific knowledge to work through this trigger with a student, but as a knowledge and bridging agent, she helped the student navigate the system considering the delicate nature of this situation and the privacy involved. She was dismayed to learn of the number of students who shared they suffered from anxiety. Helen and Phaedrus discussed knowing their own limitations while working with students with high needs who might or might not be accessing the assistance needed. They discussed providing student support and helping students navigate the college system while balancing their own home and work responsibilities given the myriad of circumstances many first-generation Latino students faced. Helen shared how she attempted to manage balance. Phaedrus said, "You still have to balance your home life and make sure your family's happy and everyone's feeling loved and cared for… and make sure you're healthy and safe." Just as IAs shared self-care skills with students, they too were attempting to practice the knowledge they imparted.

In addition to the financial and mental health support some students needed, Bot and Jacob discussed homelessness and food insecurities. Bot said, "Some of

them are only subsisting on one meal a day, which is not okay. In my mind, that's almost criminal." Students in this situation cannot study. "I mean, clearly they don't have enough fuel in their body to even focus." Jacob said, "If someone's facing homelessness, you have to find them a solution to that problem." All 15 IAs knew the system and accessed or provided knowledge related to navigating the system (Stanton-Salazar, 2010). They were versed and knew how to navigate an internal and sometimes external system by way of their professional roles, educational preparation, personal and positional resources and/or social network. This example is consistent with Stanton-Salazar's (2010) extended definition of non-subject matter knowledge. He wrote,

> Emphasis is on those funds of knowledge (*resources*) most associated with navigating through, and ascension within, the educational system; such support includes the process of *implicit and explicit socialization into institutional discourses* – those which regulate communication, interaction, and resource access in the education system and other middle-class and high-status institutional spheres (Gee, 1989; Stanton-Salazar, 1997; Stanton-Salazar, Vasquez, & Mehan, 2000). (as cited in Stanton-Salazar, 2010, p. 1099)

All IAs served as knowledge agents because they supported students not just from navigating the college-going system, but navigating life at a critical developmental stage.

Advisor. As mentioned, some IAs had advising roles built-in to their professional roles while others advised informally. As a continued discussion of the academic major, Phaedrus said, "[students have] worked so hard just to get here, that they don't know where they actually want to go so even when they have majors, they sometimes, they just say business." Soma and Eliza said students wanted to become doctors or teachers because that is what they and their family members knew. Phaedrus stated that the challenge some family members had was to learn that the student they wanted to see become a lawyer was instead interested in becoming a writer or poet. Soma, Eliza, Phaedrus, and Roland shared that some students did not have wide exposure to other professional options with certain majors, and in some instances students and their families believed that certain degrees would yield higher salaries. Roland found that students with lower financial resources wanted to finish their degrees quickly. He made it as his job to, "see if it's feasible for them to meet their own timeline." He presented students the argument to students that taking a high number of units might produce lower grades and asked, "Is that what you're contemplating or are you really in a position, do you think, and do your transcripts demonstrate that you can actually be successful on such an accelerated path?" He shared that students often acknowledged that they might need more time to complete their degrees.

Just as Roland prepared meticulous academic plans to help his students gain a better understanding of their completion time, George shared supplemental data demonstrating how he worked with students to help them better understand their

academic course load and timeline. George also had conversations with students about changing their majors. Students often approached him asking, "Should I change majors? What should I do? I don't think I like this major." He said he was "definitely not biased" toward the majors in his particular department, especially if students shared that they were not passionate about their major. "I'm more than happy to explore other majors. Sometimes I sit down with a catalog and I walk through the other majors." George enjoyed talking to students about their interests and, "seeing the students when they're excited [about] their degree, helping them choose what classes and helping them." Susan detailed advising students on how to complete a double major or a major no longer officially offered. She used the language in the institutional catalog to help students achieve either of these goals. In order to work with a student whose parent was adamant about the selected major, Phaedrus also advised a student to complete a double major to soften the family pressure. Advising, therefore, included everything from detailed scheduling to coordinating a double major to educating students on other career options.

Aware that students sometimes entered college not well prepared, as evidenced by Soma's example of learning a subject via YouTube, she worked with another student who had difficulty adapting to college level coursework. Soma also saw part of her work as identifying students with natural ability in her area of expertise to help "push them through." On occasion, she advised students to enroll at a community college to complete pre-requisite and basic coursework to ease the financial burden, then return to earn their four-year degree. One student did just that

and when she returned, she performed much better academically. She had acquired a stronger skill set and focus. The student's academic transcript reflected her improved performance.

Part of Lillian's job was to make sure that students received the necessary resources to be correctly advised academically. Her lens was the students' lens. She made every effort to do this at every step and asked, "How is this gonna affect the students, whether negatively or positively? How's it gonna affect their education and their experience here?" If there were changes, she asked, "So what does this mean for our students? What does this mean for their experience?" All of her questions related to students' academic and social advancement. For example, a student was in her office and she could feel that the student was dealing with something. The student shared that she and her family were experiencing financial hardships. Lillian's approach was to ask questions rather than to "fix" matters. She asked the student to share as much as the student was comfortable sharing. Lillian said of herself, "I'm a kind of what they call a safe person to talk to because I listen and I give advice or I'll ask questions that will help them give themselves advice." She asked the student if she had spoken to anyone else about the matter and the student replied that she had not. Lillian also said of herself,

> I am not one to force a student to tell someone their life, but I did want to make sure that they're doing well for themselves because it was bringing them into a space where they were feeling very depressed about their situation and about their family situation.

Lillian advised the student of the various resources available. Eventually, the student completed the required classes and graduated. At graduation when Lillian saw the student she said, "I'm happier than you are."

Maria too approached students with questions and guidance. Although academic advising was not part of her professional role, a student approached her for advice. Initially the conversation was about employment, but soon Maria learned that the need was about career. The student wanted to be a doctor and she had a strong grade point average, but she was doubtful about applying to medical school. Maria asked why. The student shared that the pertinent coursework was challenging for her and she required additional support from faculty, staff, and the tutoring center. Maria inquired about an internship, mentoring, and external resources that could serve as additional support. They also discussed taking time to prepare to apply to medical school and possibly taking a year off.

Academic advising was not a formal part of Robert Anthony's role, but he advised students in an organized social environment. On one occasion, he spent a lengthy period with a group of students to learn about their social concerns, which ranged from student conduct to housing to public safety. Stanton-Salazar (2010) did not differentiate between academic or social support. His expanded advisor definition read, "This type of support involves the agent in the process of gathering information, co-assessing problems and helping the individual [student] make appropriate and effective decisions related to ascension within the education system" (Stanton-Salazar, 2010, p. 1099). Robert Anthony captured the results of this meeting in a

summary report, which he presented to the corresponding administrator who was not part of his reporting line. The reaction was not positive primarily due to the length of time Robert Anthony spent with students. He understood the reaction and said to the administrator, "Regardless of [the time spent], one of my key takeaways from this is students talk[ed] that long because I let them, but a clear message from them was that no one ever sits down and listens to them." He thought this a relevant consideration and continued, "They also feel like they're never heard. There's some disconnect there." This brought Robert Anthony to examine his own approach. "Clearly students want to be heard, so let's hear them and see where it goes." He gathered information from students, helped them assess their concerns, and presented the student voice to the corresponding person and administrative areas.

Advocate. "Advocates can also intercede when students commit minor infractions" (Stanton-Salazar, 2010, p. 1099). Lillian described this exact circumstance. When a student approached her to discuss an alleged infraction with significant associated fees, Lillian said, "There's absolutely no way that this person would have done what they said had happened." Although she was willing to write a letter on the student's behalf, she believed it best for the student write the letter and granted the student permission to carbon copy her. "You can cc me and I will back you up 100% because I just know that you wouldn't have done this." The student was angry. Lillian wanted "to find a way to take that anger and turn it into something productive." She said to the student, "You can be angry. Always. It's your right to be angry. What you do with that anger is gonna show your character." As a result, once

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the appropriate department reviewed the evidence, they confirmed that the student was not at fault. Overall, Lillian believed that helping students convert their anger into a more productive approach helped them "broach a problem" and prepared them for possible professional difficult circumstances. She wanted to teach this student that with respect, logic, and reason, "it's much harder for them to argue than if you come [at] them with big words and yelling and being upset…. Soften your voice and strengthen your argument." With conduct scenarios, she asked students about their approach. If they responded angrily, she then asked how they could have approached the situation differently and how they could have possibly garnished a more positive reaction. She told students they were smart and helped them arrive at alternative solutions rather than being angry, upset, yelling, and possibly making others feel unsafe. She said of herself, "I'm a person who asks questions more than anything else and let [students] come up with their own—their own end result."

For Robert Anthony First Amendment issues, "are really important for me in terms of student rights and responsibilities and a pet peeve of mine is that institutions can sort of squash those, and so I've done a lot of reading on that." He stated that student protests did not occur much on-campus and shared his theory on why. "We're a Catholic institution, Catholic-based institution, not really an organization known for wanting subjugates to question authority." First-generation students may not necessarily have a, "background, an understanding of how to question authority or that that's acceptable." In reference to and in his experience with Latino families, Robert Anthony said that it was not a culture,

where you push back and question parents and the authority figures much and

so there's just this whole world of students who, you just take things as they

are because the authorities told them to do so, and go be quiet over there and

when they have things they want to complain about, like, the system isn't set

up for them to do that.

He advocated by agitating students, reminding them that they "pay the bills" and that

they could ask questions. He provided information on who to approach to ask

questions, how they could ask questions, and told students, "If you want to think

about how to do that, let's talk about it."

Soma described her advocacy by participating in an institutional effort to

review the academic support students received. "That is one of the key things that we

will have to do better at and so I think, we were instrumental in completely revamping

it, changing it." Bot discussed first-generation Latino students' financial challenges

to purchase books. She advocated by collaborating with Jacob and together finding

"ways to make that more affordable or other options that, maybe, professors haven't

thought about in terms of being able to make that more accessible." Communicating

the needs of students to various departments was Maria's means of advocacy. She

also offered to lead a student group. Maggie believed that it was an advocate's

responsibility, "to get to the bottom" of an issue and ask if students were, "seeing

things as they [were] really happening" or if anxiety, sadness or unhappiness might be

interfering. "The students need to know that you're there for them and that you

believe in them." Dziga indicated that his advocacy was specifically,

in the context of the union because we're advocating for all kinds of changes at the university, and you know, we, a lot of people, a lot of faculty, I think, would like to see [St. Jude's] more actively embrace the responsibilities it might have as a Hispanic-Serving Institution. Even to just do some workshops. We could all use more training and more education. I advocate for that.

Helen expressed discomfort with the "tag" advocate and preferred to use the term facilitator. She said,

I'll tell you why I think I dislike it; because there's already an assumption that I need to do something for them and I think that's patronizing and kind of one of the things I don't like about the discourse of first-gen. students because they are the ones that need to let me know what it is they need of me…. I don't determine what those needs are.

She also felt that advocacy was rather prescriptive and what she learned was that there was

an unpredictability to the relationship, to the circumstances usually, and so if I'm really facilitating then I'm present in the moment and eliciting what is being communicated to me without coming to the table already thinking, 'These are the prescribed things that a first-gen. Latino student needs because I've read such and such and such and such.'

Like Helen, Phaedrus provided an alternative term champion rather than advocate. Phaedrus served in several professional roles, but in one particular one, he said he did not advocate for students, but instead helped them find their voices by

following a process where they felt justice took place. He preferred to use the term champion because it

> means that you're looking for it. I see advocating as someone brings you an issue and you advocate as you do so, but championing is actually to me even that next step from advocating. You're looking to find areas that maybe people don't even know they should be advocated for…. But if you're a champion for kids and you're a champion for students, then you're looking for, 'What are they missing?'

Susan believed she approached advocacy differently from others at the institution. St. Jude's had previously instituted a course requirement for first-generation students. Susan said, "Some of those students were furious because they were some of the brightest." Others did need the course to help increase or support their skills, but those who did not require it, "took it as an insult." She also felt that the academic level was lowered by terminating many programs with no departmental consultation, "saying that it's for the first-generation and Hispanic. I call this discrimination because it's saying, 'Oh, those students will not be capable of carrying that.'" She thought all programs should be kept

> because [students] deserve it…. I really think, yes they need the support, yes they need the help, but let's not put everybody in a package and lower the whole complete academic level, standard, of this university, with the excuse that it's for the first-generation and the Hispanic students. To me, it's an insult. It's discrimination.

Roland advocated for curriculum changes to meet the needs of Latino students. "Many Latinos are upset or disappointed in the kinds of course offerings and program offerings." He also advocated for diversity hiring and building infrastructure to support the academic needs of first-generation Latino students. Helen shared that one of her students indicated that the institutions' current curriculum was not meeting students' needs and pointed to the lack of Latino professors. Helen referred back to the advocate "tag" and said that a, well-intentioned, but predominantly White professor body might exhibit an arrogance "or an unaddressed privilege" that was uncomfortable for her. Helen's discomfort stemmed from hearing her White counterparts discuss their advocacy "without recognizing from where you stand." She referred to the concept of helping "the pobrecito" (the poor or disadvantaged one), which meant using "power and privilege to try to facilitate more opportunities for someone." Helen described well-intended efforts, but the presentation of first-generation Latino students was, "a much more colonial way of looking at it," making it fit the "pobrecito" stereotype. In an effort to synthesize Helen's high-level thought process, I asked if I was correct to say that there was an assumption made of first-generation Latino students as underprivileged rather than underserved. Her response was, "Yes! Great way of putting it!" Stanton-Salazar's (2010) expanded definition of an advocate was,

> An "advocate" fulfills the role of "institutional agent" by actively advocating
> on behalf of a student or young person, sometimes helping them navigate
> school procedures leading to achievement-oriented resources and

opportunities. The advocate acts to intercede or defend the right of the student

to have access to such resources; they can also intercede when students

commit minor infractions, and where sanctions or penalties may interfere with

academic progress. (p. 1099)

In the examples provided, IAs described individual and institutional advocacy,

aligning with Stanton-Salazar's (2010) expanded definition.

Networking coach. IAs provided examples of internal and external

networking opportunities for first-generation Latino students formally and informally,

academically and socially, personally and professionally. The expanded definition of

a networking coach included help-seeking behavior, meaning negotiating with and

accessing resources from gatekeepers inside and outside of the institution as well as

developing ties with peers in academic and social circles (Baker, 2000; Stanton-

Salazar, 2004, 2010).

Robert Anthony worked with a first-generation Latina student who was no

longer at the institution, but hoped she would return. Their conversations centered on

financial aid, scholarships, and navigating the college system. He considered this an

example of a networking coach because he guided her to seek help for herself. He

posed the following questions to guide their discussions: "How do you ask for more

money? How do you promote yourself to the school while asking for more

institutional support? Do you tell your story? Do you talk about what you fear?" If

the conversation revolved around academic performance, he asked the student, "What

do you do with that? Who do you talk to for help? Can you talk to a professor about

that?" He also helped students network externally and provided supplemental communications to support these virtual introductions where he extended his personal and professional network. These high-status introductions could more accurately be considered the actions of an integrative agent based upon Stanton-Salazar's (2010) expanded definition. However, Robert Anthony considered these examples as that of a networking coach.

Panel speakers were an example Eliza and Jacob provided as networking opportunities. One Latina speaker received excellent reviews while another Latino speaker did not. In addition, Jacob was attentive to internship placements with community partners as networking opportunities. For example, a first-generation Latina student did not have transportation and needed a location within walking distance. Jacob found an internship for this student, which then helped the student decide upon her major. The organization hired the student on staff by the end of her first year. Jacob said the student was, "the conduit for bringing other people into work-study based community partnerships and hopefully those people will do well and be hired." This student lost her father and was facing "extraordinary barriers to continue here, but we're gonna make sure that she does." Maria structured work for a student with three internal departments as a networking opportunity to ask questions and prepare for the job market prior to graduation. If students had academic challenges Maggie, Lillian, Dziga, and George helped students network internally to access the individual(s) to gain the support needed. Lillian provided funding for students to attend a national conference to expand their network. Upon their return,

they presented what they had learned to other students, providing internal network

opportunities. Phaedrus had an in-class activity where students "knock[ed] on the

door" of the religious community members who lived on campus to introduce

themselves and hold conversations. This activity included speaking with on-campus

cafeteria staff. To prepare students for future career opportunities Phaedrus had a

body language expert come to his class and with their permission the expert observed

them and provided feedback on their body language. This activity was a favorite

amongst students who requested a return visit from the expert. Soma recognized that

networking had not been entirely successful and what she wanted was to take

students, "out in the real world and teach them real networking." This would include

attending conferences and preparing students to "talk about themselves" in a research

arena, which she was building into the program. Helen and Roland discussed the

value of students meeting library staff as a form of networking to conduct research

and use new technology. Helen and Bot helped students network within the construct

of *The Center*. A number of IAs mentioned the importance of networking with the

counseling center, financial aid office, and business office as pertinent on-campus

offices. IAs helped students role-play conversations with the representatives of those

offices and scenarios with faculty members if students needed academic assistance.

In some cases, IAs asked students to provide feedback after meeting with department

representatives or faculty members. Lillian said, "That's something that brings me

joy when they come back and they say, 'I talked to them.'"

Integrative support. The integrative support category includes the roles of an integrative agent and a cultural guide. An integrative agent "coordinates students' integration and participation in networks and professional venues (professional associations, department, school, etc.)" (Stanton-Salazar, 2010, p. 1081). A cultural guide, "guides students through new social situations in a particular cultural sphere [and] teaches students to identify and interact with key people in [a] cultural sphere" (Stanton-Salazar, 2010, p. 1081). As previously mentioned, due to the religious context, *The Center* was a central aspect of the institution's cultural sphere. *The Center* housed *The Strummer Leadership Program (SLP)*, which provided students access to community organizations. Recall too that *The Club* was a student cultural club. *The Center* and *The Club* were integral parts of what Boykin (1986) and Stanton-Salazar (2010) considered to be an empowered socialization process. IAs provided examples of actions that supported all of the areas under this category as they did for direct support.

Integrative agent. Stanton-Salazar's (2010) expanded definition included bridging, brokering and cultural exposure. When Robert Anthony extended his personal and professional network to students via virtual introductions, he executed the actions of an integrative agent. In one instance, he introduced a student who was interested in immigration issues to a personal friend who worked with the Department of Homeland Security. He introduced two students who were also interested in immigration matters, but wanted to attend law school to a colleague he had previously worked with who was law practice focused on immigration reform. These

introductions included telephone numbers, e-mails, Skype and Facebook contact

information. Additional examples included a virtual introduction to a representative

of a HSI national program. The program provided internship opportunities with

federal organizations. He introduced students to other students who were interested in

Latino social cultural activities and students to internal administrators and staff

members who were leading formal outreach opportunities specific to the Latino

community. Robert Anthony provided ten examples in total.

Maria, Lillian, Eliza, and Jacob provided internal examples of integrating

students into various networks and professional venues. Maria worked to help

students apply to a national Latino conference just as Lillian helped first-generation

Latino students apply to an education focused national conference. The only

difference between the conferences was that one had a specific cultural element

providing students the opportunity to network with other Latino students and

professionals. That year, students made the first round review, but not the second

and, therefore, did not attend. There were collaborative efforts with alumni and

between departments, offering students the opportunity to lunch while listening to a

panel of professionals in particular fields. Professionals who worked with specific

cultural internship programs were invited on-campus to provide workshops. These

internship programs created opportunities on a national scale for students. IAs as

networking coaches who taught and modeled networking also provided integrative

support, bridged and brokered these organizational activities, and provided cultural

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exposure—another example of action overlap. George encouraged students to participate in these events.

Eliza, Susan, and Soma discussed the value of study abroad. After our interview concluded, Eliza asked if she could add-on to our interview. During that time, she detailed the conversation with two first-generation Latina students who visited her office to share their study abroad experiences. Eliza described the exchange as "a transformational experience for them." They had changed on "so many levels," including their self-confidence and worldviews. Eliza did not carry out any actions other than listening to the students about their experiences, but she found it noteworthy to mention and requested additional interview time. She said, "I think that's just something we need to be thinking about more too" because of the positive effect a study abroad experience can have professionally. Eliza understood the financial implications of such an opportunity, but found it to be, "an amazing, incredible experience just to see something transform a student's life in such a way." Several IAs shared their personal experiences with international students as well as living and studying abroad. First-generation Latino students in some cases were foreign born, and therefore, international. Susan provided examples of cultural learning exchanges with students and their parents. She mentioned one student who had secured a professional position abroad. Susan was aware that the student was Hispanic, but she was unsure if she was first-generation.

Integrative support is the process of coordinating the social integration "in certain high-status networks and professional venues…. Such integrative experiences

serve to expose the student [young individual] to knowledge funds and career

opportunities that may not be available elsewhere" (Stanton-Salazar, 2010, p. 1100).

A study abroad experience certainly meets these criteria. In Soma's description of

study abroad, students not only had integrative support, but they also had access to her

as an expert in her field throughout the duration of the trip because she traveled with

them. This trip included first-generation Latino students, non-Latino first-generation,

and students who were neither. She said traveling abroad was nice for them because

for once, "they were treated as Americans." They lived in the foreign community and

visited several schools.

> They were all Americans. For the first time they felt that they were all a part
>
> of a nation and so that, to me, was very enlightening, to see how they felt—
>
> very proud and for many of them—it was not a reminder of how differently
>
> people lived, but for many of them it was showing their peers who were not
>
> from a first-gen. or not from a socio-economic challenged class - to show how
>
> people lived their lives. We lived in communities. We lived in people's homes,
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> and yet with the warmth that people treated and the happiness that people had.
>
> I think that was a big eye-opener to many of my students who were not first-
>
> gen. and the first-gen. students already knew that—living there—so to share
>
> that with their friends, I think that, for all of us, was very rewarding.

> In addition to this integrative experience, Soma provided additional insight.

She was well aware of the financial implications and said that the trip could not be

repeated because of the expense, but to travel without worry of any sort was good for

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students. Study abroad and an internship were the two things that Soma saw as most beneficial for students. However, this trip also had a "cruel reminder" of stereotypes and, "how people deal with stereotypes."

  Cultural guide. Stanton-Salazar's (2010) expanded definition indicated that this type of support entailed, "exposure and introduction to *institutional domains* and *sociocultural worlds*, their key functions, identification of key agents, sanctioned conventions of communication, etc." (p. 1100). In the case of the study abroad program, not only was Soma an integrative agent, but also a cultural guide. The institutional domain and sociocultural worlds extended beyond a nationalistic perspective by exposing students to an international cultural realm. On the return from the study abroad trip, there was an incident with a first-generation Latino student—the "cruel reminder" of stereotypes. Soma described the student as having the "mildest" temperament. The plane landed in a southern state and the group was in the Customs and Immigration line. Soma was granted permission to re-enter the United States and when she looked back, she did not see this student. Authorities refused to provide any information on his whereabouts. She refused to leave without him and half-an-hour later the student returned. Authorities believed the student was traveling with a false passport. The student was born in the United States, but he was "taken into a room, and he was questioned, interrogated… It was my reality check at that time. It was disturbing, but it was, for me, living the life through their lives for a brief minute, very brief minute."

The Club was on on-campus student cultural group. Phaedrus, Robert Anthony and Maria all mentioned the departure of *The Club's* advisor. Phaedrus found it frustrating that as a HSI there was no Hispanic student committee to bring the student voice forth to discuss their needs. He referred to *The Club* and said that when he first joined the institution a number of years ago a well-credentialed Latina was the advisor. He considered her a role model. Since then, *The Club* had not had a Latino advisor. Since then, student members went from a "vibrant club" of approximately 40-50 members to approximately "20 at the most" and of those members, not all were active participants. This group was not a focus group. Phaedrus said, "I find it difficult to be able to say yes we understand what today's, this year's Hispanic students need." He mentioned the unknown outcome of the United States presidential election and what that would mean for students and their families, particularly with deportation issues. "A lot of things are on the horizon and there's no conversation about that currently."

As a religious institution, *The Center* was active in matters of social justice. Whilst in conversation about advocacy, George provided his perspective on education. He was passionate about education and believed it was the "ultimate pathway to world peace and understanding." He believed that individuals who have an understanding of the world have a better understanding of one another. Education provided individuals with this understanding, which ultimately "lead[s] to less violence and more compassion." This philosophy aligned with the institution's mission, which is at the core of *The Center*. Jacob said, "advocacy is actually a

religious term" and referred to it as "the name of the Holy Spirit." He explained that to be an advocate was a theological calling with the divine—the Holy Spirit. In this same conversation, he referenced legal work and said, "We're called to be that kind of advocate."

Recall that according to Boykin (1986) and Stanton-Salazar (2010), a cultural guide guides exposure to institutional domains and sociocultural worlds, which "is an essential part of an *empowered socialization process*" (Stanton-Salazar, 2010, p. 1100). These "values, beliefs, expectations, actions, and emotional responses [are] familiar to insiders" (Phelan et al., 1991, p. 225). IAs are insiders and part of the institutional domain to which they belong. *The Center* was at the core of St. Jude's cultural domain as a religious institution. For example, *The Center* commemorated the martyrdom of an indigenous woman from Latin America. This woman was killed for her environmental justice work just as the religious member whose name honors *The Center* was murdered for her commitment to human rights and the environment. One of *The Center's* goal was to bring forth the narratives of Latinos within the Catholic community. One narrative in particular received attention because of the parallels to the gospels. In speaking of these narratives Jacob bridged the Catholic context to Latino students and said that they had to "find ways to affirm all these different narratives and the identities of our students." Had believed being a cultural guide was, "pushing people to speak their own voice" and framed it, "in terms of God and in terms of the things which are ultimate."

Dziga considered himself a cultural guide within his specific area of expertise and said,

> I coach people to do their own research based on the ideas that they've generated in response to the frameworks that I've put out, but a lot of times I encourage them to go out and look for more information and help them figure out where they might look and what things they might look for.

Soma spoke to being a cultural guide within her field while being sensitive to gender and culture. She believed in gender bias and in some cultures, including Latino culture,

> to be humble is a virtue, but definitely in the professional world it's not a virtue because people who are interviewing you just don't know who you are. So if you don't tell them who you are or how good you are, there is a disconnect and so I think many of my students will need coaching and they have never been coached in that.

Soma said that some students might link speaking highly of themselves with being aggressive. Helping students distinguish these concepts culturally was, "a slow training process of changing that mindset." Susan believed that being culturally exposed provided, "a broader vision on the world." It gave another, "perspective on society, on the culture." She found that to be "a privilege, a great privilege." In reference to self-esteem, she said, "this is what you have to make those students understand, that it's a privilege and not a handicap."

Helen contextualized culture within the current union efforts at St. Jude's and said,

> The perceived understanding for many teachers is that every year they're getting more and more students who need much more support, but they're not taking that into consideration so they're taking in many more vulnerable students. Vulnerable meaning maybe not as prepared. Vulnerable meaning maybe they don't have the systems in place.

They are referred to St. Jude's administration. Because of her particular area of expertise, Helen was able to "see it from all angles… I see what neo-liberalism has done to education in the U.S. and I know it is very difficult to stay afloat so I don't demonize the administration or their decisions," but she was aware of the effect the unionization effort was having on-campus.

> The students are very aware of it…. I noticed that the students know that the teachers are stressed and that is not good for anybody and if they are picking up on this dynamic, this energy; you can do anything you want, but that becomes part of a culture.

Perhaps she was "idealistic" she said, but "you would have a very different environment if all of the teachers were happy and not pushing back against the admin." She found it unprofessional for teachers to communicate this to students. However, she was also sensitive to the economic institutional challenges of a small school and said,

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These smaller institutions are struggling and if you look at all of them, there's

a similar story in many, many institutions…. That absolutely influences

students and it's the one thing that makes me uncomfortable because I think it's

wonderful to give a chance to anybody.

However, "I do think the administration probably underestimates the work that you

have to do with students who come unprepared in very key areas to be successful in

[an] academic environment."

Bot discussed the institution's historical culture, which "was a very different

culture" with "not much diversity." She did not think that the institution had moved

on from that historical cultural identity. She pointed to a different era and said, "It's a

different generation and I think that's been our struggle." She discussed social media,

technology, and "more creative ways to engage students." She thought that the

professional environment had adapted to technology and so too should institutions of

higher learning. Bot also discussed the neurological development of students' brains

and their interpretation of information due to technology. She concluded that students

today presented new and different needs unlike St. Jude's historical culture. She

thought the institution to be, "in a bit of a crisis," in its attempt "to re-define itself"

and thought they were "stuck" in how to implement said re-definition "because we are

not upper administration by any means. We're middle management if you would call

it that." Bot also provided a written post-interview reflection, adding that students

were "drowning in student loan debt" on a national scale. She said she did not have a

solution, but indicated that students who attended St. Jude's "often come from

environments and families with little to no resources, are the ones graduating with 100k or more student loan debt and with an education that doesn't necessarily lead immediately to a well-paying job." According to Bot, St. Jude's needed to re-think the degrees offered to set students up for success upon graduation. Recall that Bot provided both academic and social examples as an IA. These examples represented Bot's historical knowledge of the institution, which she applied to her academic and social contact with students. Through this lens and her contact with students, Bot guided students through an institutional cultural world that faced challenges. She was a cultural guide for students and for the institution.

System developer. The system developer category includes a program developer, lobbyist, and political advocate. A program developer, "develops program that embeds students in a system of agents, resources, and opportunities" (Stanton-Salazar, 2010, p. 1081). A lobbyist, "lobbies for organizational resources to be directed toward recruiting and supporting students" (Stanton-Salazar, 2010, p. 1081). I previously proposed expanding upon the definition to also include retention to read, lobbies for organizational resources to be directed toward recruiting, retaining, and supporting students. A political advocate, "joins political action group that advocates for social policies and institutional resources that would benefits [*sic*] targeted groups of students" (Stanton-Salazar, 2010, p. 1081). Recall that I suggested expanding the political advocate definition to read: "joins or is a part of an internal or external political action group that advocates for social policies and institutional resources that

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would benefit targeted groups of students." Stanton-Salazar's (2010) expanded definition read,

> Just as an institutional agent may advocate for an individual student or youth, they may also join an organized group of institutional agents in advocating for social policies "aimed at providing needed resources and enhancing social justice" (Hepworth et al., p. 31, (1997) [*sic*]). (as cited on p. 1100)

IAs provided examples of actions that supported all of the areas under this category as they did for direct support and integrative support.

  Program developer. Eliza, Maria, Lillian, Jacob, Phaedrus, and Maggie spoke of developing programs in distinctive ways. Eliza, Maria, and Lillian referred to programming as a form of event planning. Eliza described annual events in collaboration with a particular academic department and campus programs, including workshops, fairs, speaker series, or networking events. Maria equated programming to providing students with social support, "opportunities for [students] to hear speakers or presenters or also of having the student leaders create a program. Empower them to come together in a topic that they really care about and they're passionate about." It could be a religious, cultural, or social program. Maria collaborated with other departments to create programs for students and mentioned *The Club's* conference day and cultural night as on-campus programming. Maria was responsible for programs in her professional role, but asked students about their needs and created programs for them so, "students [could] be empowered to lead those programs and [she] not be the point person for all those programs." She created Chair

and co-Chair roles as a model. She discussed programming in terms of student engagement, large event programming, family programming, faculty, interdepartmental, and inter-staff programming. Lillian discussed creating a safe space for students within the context of programming for them to feel like they mattered. This space included a multicultural and interfaith space. She said, "spaces have specific target audiences of students who may be reticent to engage a lot of times." Through programming efforts, Lillian exemplified actions of a program developer and cultural agent.

The Strummer Leadership Program (*SLP*) at St. Jude's derived from a national program with historical roots that served first-generation students. St. Jude's designed leadership roles as work-study to help fund students. Identified students were asked to apply and approximately 20 students were accepted into the program. Students were involved with organizations in the local community that focused on social justice work. Recall that *The SLP* program was housed under *The Center*, which embodied the institutional mission's commitment to social justice. Given *The SLP's* historical roots, although not founded with Latino students in mind, Jacob found "a compatible philosophy with a Hispanic-Serving Institution." The foundress of the original national program wanted to help first-generation students "be successful in college." Originating from a very poor region of the United States, the foundress witnessed "how few people successfully went to college and she wanted to turn that around, and that's what their foundation is dedicated to and they do it

through this strategy of community engagement." The majority of the students who

participated in *The SLP* program were Hispanic.

Before officially beginning the interview with Phaedrus, he shared his plans

for his office space. Once I obtained consent and began the interview, I asked him to

repeat his plans to capture on audio recording. He described the program he intended

to create in detail, which was part of the HSI STEM grant St. Jude's received. The

effort revolved around high technology to prepare students for a highly competitive

job market. Not all office buildings on-campus had central air conditioning, but his

office space did, and because of this and its size, he intended to re-design it into a

classroom to house the equipment that would provide students with hands-on

experience. This new technology was comparable to the technology that students at

only one other highly ranked local research institution had access to and no other HSI

in the area had. It was, "The actual equipment, not something similar to it, but the

actual equipment," said Phaedrus. The equipment also had the capability to hold

worldwide meetings. He wanted students to work "with the most cutting-edge

technology that's offered." Phaedrus also wanted other teachers to appreciate the

value of this technology to evolve their teaching. Recall that this was what Bot

considered necessary to move the institution forward from its historical culture.

Phaedrus had not found any academic research that focused on Latino students at a

HSI using this high technology. He received IRB approval to begin the research and

said, "We're going to start creating the literature here." He described his testing

efforts of the technology in detail. Phaedrus' programming efforts aligned with his

actions as a resource agent and the movie he and his students saw was directly

associated with the content of these STEM efforts.

Maggie as did Bot provided me with institutional historical background.

Maggie shared that when the institution was designated a HSI she began the program

that supported all first-generation students. The program included assigned mentors

to first-year student mentees. Any student who self-designated as first-generation and

wanted to participate in the program could do so. In addition to this program, she also

led the effort to assist students academically. If the mentors felt their mentees needed

additional academic support, they communicated with Maggie. She said, "I have

always been there to provide the support that students need."

Lobbyist. Although Soma did not self-describe as a lobbyist, when she spoke

of her networking efforts, she referred to them as "a work in progress" because she

was attempting incorporate networking into an academic program inclusive of career

coaching. She wanted to build a research infrastructure. Before obtaining the HSI

grant, the institution received two grants. As a trained grant writer, Soma led these

grant writing efforts. She, "pushed a lot to change" the learning environment for

students. In addition to improving the physical space, she also created a program,

"that got a huge pull from Hispanic and first-gen. students because there was a real

interest for that and so for the last five years we've been having very successful

number of students go to that program." In this example, Soma lobbied for

organizational resources by first building the research infrastructure, which brought in

student mass, which then led to obtaining power, cash, and capital to bring curricular

changes to improve the career aspect for students. She said, "it's a slow build-up process to that." While she may not consider herself a lobbyist, these actions were that of a lobbyist with overlap actions of a networking coach.

Whilst speaking about advocating for students, Eliza referred to limited budgetary resources. She considered her actions as advocating, but here, Eliza's efforts are worthy of mention even if these efforts were not targeted to a specific group of students. She lobbied for financial support

> just to make sure there are resources available to students because our budgets get cut and things get cut around here all the time, so it's like we really need to have these opportunities for students, but I can't claim that's just for first-generation college students. That's really just making sure that there's at least basic resources available for students.

She also said, "It's probably not for advocacy, might not be the right word, but I think individually, just trying to be just supportive and doing what I can individually when I work with students." Eliza was vigilant about budget cuts and lobbied to maintain resources for her department to serve students, including first-generation Latino students.

Whether it was an example of work-study, a family challenge or a reason to seek counseling, all IAs mentioned the financial challenges first-generation Latino students faced. They supported students by listening (resource agent), referring them to particular offices or in some cases walking with them to introduce them to a specific individual (bridging agent, institutional broker, or coordinator) or simply

giving of their personal resources to provide students with social experiences they otherwise might not access. These are all examples of overlap, but what these IAs worked toward was to support students, however they could, and in whatever form they could be it described within one role or another. They worked to support and retain students, and in Phaedrus' example, he used his own personal resources to support students. He said, "by the time the paperwork goes through, the semester would be over so you build that in. It's like parking tickets here. You just build in $300 and you can park wherever you want." Parking can be a challenge on-campus even with a parking pass.

     Political advocate. Working from my earlier expanded definition as, joins or is a part of an internal or external political action group that advocates for social policies and institutional resources that would benefit targeted groups of students, I argue that within the specific context of this Catholic HSI, *The SLP* program has attributes of a political action group given its commitment to social justice, active involvement in community organizations, and peaceful demonstrations. Recall that *The Center* housed *The SLP*. Had and Jacob described immigration activism in the form of

> an inter-faith prayer vigil at the immigration and customs enforcement [ICE] detention center in [the local area], which is the regional jail, immigration jail and we have a leadership role there once a year, and we support them the rest of the year.

There was also, "an immigration justice project in *The Center*." This project included workshops on Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA). Students received special training in translation services. There were also other translation projects working with Latino families at a local school where *Strummer Leaders* translated for parents at parent/teacher conferences approximately twice a year.

Had described the origins of *The Center*, named after a religious member of the founding order of the institution. He spoke of teaching and raising political consciousness, collaborating with *The Center's* efforts and participating in the inter-faith prayer vigil at the ICE detention centers. He thought that many first-generation Latino students came with "that political conscious" and taught students to have their voices heard in a "larger way in the world… politically in the world." He mentioned participating in other demonstrations. One course in particular included activism as part of the curriculum and said, "it's important to [do] that—political advocacy."

Jacob, like Soma, described having an "open office door" for students. Jacob made "fair trade tea" available for them along with, "a willingness to sit down and talk with students, and get to know them and help them deal." He was attentive to members of the LGBTQ community and said, "I'm also a part of the Catholic Church that is slow to come around to the social justice issues involved in [the] LGBTQ community." He spoke of first-generation Latino students within this context and helping students "with the establishment of their organization." He spoke of a "safe space" for students just as Lillian, Helen, Soma, Roland, and Phaedrus did.

System linkage & networking support. The system linkage and networking support category includes a recruiter, a bridging agent, an institutional broker, and a coordinator. A recruiter, "actively recruits students into program, department, etc." (Stanton-Salazar, 2010, p. 1081). Stanton-Salazar (2010) further expands upon this definition by adding, "often involves interfacing with community organizations or educational institutions" (p. 1101). Recall that Stanton-Salazar (2010) distinguished recruiting and supporting students in the lobbyist action area with the caveat that a lobbyist, "lobbies for organizational resources" (p. 1081) versus a recruiter who "actively recruits students…. interfacing with community organization or educational institutions" (p. 1101). A recruiter completes the action of recruiting, but does not necessarily lobby for organizational resources to recruit. A bridging agent, "introduces students to institutional agents[,] has a strong social network [, and] knows what key players do" (Stanton-Salazar, 2010, p. 1081). An institutional broker "negotiates introductions and agreements between two or more parties [and] knows what resources are available and who controls or possesses them" (Stanton-Salazar, 2010, p. 1081). A coordinator, "assesses student's needs [,] identifies resources to address need [,] provides or accesses institutional resources on behalf of student [, and] ensures student utilizes resources" (Stanton-Salazar, 2010, p. 1081). Recall that coordinating, "an extension of *brokering*" (Stanton-Salazar, 2010, p. 1101). IAs provided examples of actions that supported all of the areas under this category except for the recruiter role.

Recruiter. None of the IAs described their efforts as having actively recruited students into their academic program or department. George, Helen and Soma mentioned speaking with prospective students who were interested in the academic programs they represented, but these students were referred to them or contact with them was via an organized recruitment campus day. George said, "I'm not necessarily as a recruiter as I have goals to get a certain amount of students in or anything like that, but I mean, I do help promote the university and try and help them find the best fit here." Soma described her recruitment efforts as, "It's the days when potential students who are interested in our programs visit us and so faculty from the departments do go in there and we do speak with parents." Helen said, "I'm not sure I recruit, but if someone's really interested and expresses an interest, then I'm absolutely like, 'This is what it is. Let me explain more.'" George, Helen, and Soma did not actively set out to recruit students, but they were part of the recruiting process by speaking to prospective students. It might be interpreted and argued that via this process, they were fulfilling the role of recruiters.

Bridging agent. The focus in this area "is on person to person introductions and connections" (Stanton-Salazar, 2010, p. 1101). As a small institution, IAs had a strong internal social network and good sense of what key players in various departments did. Some IAs also had a demonstrated strong external social network. Robert Anthony's overlapping example presented earlier at the beginning of this chapter was one such instance. Jacob, Maria, and Had also had well established relationships with community organizations. Through their programming efforts

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Eliza, Maria, and Lillian served as human bridges between internal and external

constituents. Lillian commented, "A bridge. That's a great word. A human bridge."

The person-to-person introductions the three of them made for students were either in-

person or virtual introductions via e-mail.

When students faced academic challenges as discussed under the action area

of networking coach, another overlap example, Lillian, Maggie, Dziga, and George

introduced students to faculty members or provided other academic resources via the

actions of a bridging agent. Lillian spoke of working collaboratively

> with other departments, with other faculty and staff, making it a space where
>
> we're not in contention with each other, but we're actually working together to
>
> make the student experience better, I think is seen as a bridge a lot of times. It
>
> feels like a bridge, but sometimes it just natural… Attending faculty sessions,
>
> going to their programs, programming with them lets the students see that
>
> we're working together and not in opposition… We're saying that together
>
> they create a seamless experience for the students and it makes them, their
>
> [educational] experience much more robust.

Lillian also introduced the concept of self as possible "silo'ing" effect. Rather than

the focus being on oneself, she emphasized the focus of helping students.

> Instead of it being about me and what I need and what makes me happy, and
>
> you and what you need and what makes you happy, how do we find out what
>
> the student needs and what makes them happy?" That's usually where we find
>
> a common ground. Somewhere deep down inside, do you remember that

feeling of wanting to really help students back in the day? That's where we're

going for right now. I'm still there!

Soma said,

We are all bridges in this small department because you need to talk about our

students and we try to, if we know that the student is going to someone's class,

we go in and talk to the faculty. We are bridges in that context all the time.

Helen and Roland introduced students to library staff. When Helen heard

students mention their preferred teachers, she approached these faculty members and

asked, "Can I watch you teach?" She wanted to learn their teaching strengths to

improve her own with the end goal of serving students. She said, "That was

phenomenal and it was so different because it was so not my style, but I learned."

Helen, in essence, bridged herself to other professors to learn teaching techniques for

her students. For students, Helen said,

The bridging for students would be that I try to be aware of what people are

teaching in my own department so if a student says something like, 'I'm really

interested in this,' I can say, 'Oh, well, great because this teacher teaches that,'

or 'Go talk to this teacher.'

Similar to Helen, Maria approached faculty and administrators, "even though

there's been some turnover." She reached out to members of the institutional

community and introduced herself. She said, "We're such a small campus and we

need to all work together." She was familiar with the campus culture, faculty, and

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administrators. She built a strong internal and external social network, was aware of

what key players did and introduced students to necessary IAs to meet their needs.

     Institutional broker. Phaedrus provided an example of the fine line between

being a bridging agent and an institutional broker. He indicated that sometimes there

might be an issue with a student involving the Dean of Students office, public safety

or counseling services as a "mix of all three and sometimes it's just one or sometimes

it's two, and in those situations, when possible, I try to accompany them to those

meetings." At times students may not

> know how to express themselves in an appropriate way in those kind of
>
> meetings. In other words, they have a story and they're upset. They don't
>
> understand that there's a politics of every meeting and if you come in and
>
> you're angry and you're loud, you've already lost before you started, and so,
>
> they need to know how to listen and sometimes I ask permission if I can
>
> reframe what they ask, but it's always their permission so I would never say,
>
> "What he or she meant was…" No. He or she said whatever it was, I'll just
>
> say, "Would you mind if I just rephrase that in a different way?"

The majority of the time the student agreed with Phaedrus' request to rephrase, but

the purpose of the exercise was to be a role model for students and expose them to

speaking to people in positions of authority. On another occasion, Phaedrus

participated in a meeting with two students and an administrator. One was a first-

generation Latino student and the other was first-generation, but non-Latino. The

meeting ended with the administrator asking Phaedrus to, "take the rest of the

meeting." He said, "That would be an example of being a bridge then becoming the bridge." Phaedrus explained this outcome to the students by asking, "Why do you think that person is frustrated?" The students understood that they could have presented their case differently. Phaedrus also explained the value of doing so within the allocated timeframe. He helped the students secure another meeting, "and they were better at it."

George described being an intermediary between other faculty members and students, "all the time." When students were unable to meet with their faculty members, George would help students, "track them down. We have a lot of part-time faculty [and] they don't hold as many office hours. They don't have an office to hold office hours a lot of times, so I'll help them." He made contact with the faculty member, asked when the faculty member could meet with the student, and communicated back with the student. He was also "a go between a lot of students and administration and faculty." He read the framework and repeated,

> Knows what resources are available and who controls or possess them, yes.
> That again, just 'cause I've been here for a while and I know where to send
> people. It's a small school, so it's easy. I know people. I can call people and
> say, "Hey, I'm sending this student to talk to you."

When Robert Anthony first arrived, he wanted to learn what additional benefits there might be to having the HSI designation other than having received grant funding. He learned that The United States Department of Agriculture had a national program.

I connected with someone from that program who's the representative in this

area and I had him come to campus; try to build connections with our Vice

Presidents, our President, our academic departments. For the last several

years, [the national representative] sends us scholarships and internship

information so I pass it on to career services, to the faculty and staff.

He forwarded the information to students, asked them to review the scholarship,

internship or job information.

Susan knew "the ropes." She accompanied a Latino student, although she was

not sure he was first-generation, to an administrative office because he had many

problems. She said, "I made sure that he would not go to any offices without me

because of the lack of understanding."

Coordinator. In another instance George also served as an intermediary, but

this time George ensured that the resources made available to the first-generation

Latino student were tailored to the student's needs. The student approached George

to share that he did not understand the material in one particular course. The student

shared his personal plight of being born to a teenage mother and his father's

incarceration with little communication with him throughout his lifetime. The

instructor also approached George with no knowledge that the student had already

spoken to George. The faculty member initially thought the student simply did not

care about his academic performance. After George explained the circumstances and

confirmed that the student, "really cared a lot," the faculty member was understanding

and committed to speaking and working with the student. George reported that they

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were meeting outside of class. "I'll always make notes to follow-up with the students." He too mentioned the small size of the institution where, "everyone kind of knows each other." In his student follow-ups, he asked students about their communications with faculty members and told them, "If that doesn't work, don't hesitate to come back and talk with me more." On yet another occasion, approximately eight or nine first-generation Latino students approached George to share that they could not understand their professor because of a strong accent. They indicated that they did not want to offend the faculty member, but they could not understand the material and were concerned about passing the course. The students wanted to drop the course. George explained that the drop deadline had passed and they would receive a withdraw on their transcripts. He recommended the students stay in the course and committed to speaking to the appropriate person in the department. He said to the students, "We're going to work with the instructor…, but just give it more time and I feel like it might work." Of the approximately eight or nine students only one dropped the course because the student had already missed an exam, but for the other students he said, "We're gonna find a common ground between the instructor and them so that they can pass the class with a respectable grade."

Maria also tailored support to a student's needs and said, "I like to collaborate a lot with different departments, so sometimes that's three, four different departments, too." Although she contextualized this example within the networking coach role, Maria was more accurately working as a coordinator. She assessed that working with

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three different departments would be more beneficial for the student rather than just working with her department. Because it was the student's last semester, Maria wanted to optimize the student's preparedness for employment via exposure to different professional areas. Maria assessed the needs of the student, coordinated the needed support and sought expert knowledge from colleagues. She selected the three areas to specifically meet the needs of the student.

When students approached Jacob in a crisis, as might be homelessness, he reached out to his community network, which included experts in dealing with homelessness. "You want to connect them, more than with information; you want to connect them with the right people so that's what we do. Connect them with partners." Although the institution employed counselors, some of who were trained in social work, Jacob thought that there was a need for social workers

> because we don't necessarily have a lot of staff that are trained in dealing with the kinds of crises like food security, housing security, domestic violence, all the things that come with poverty. We don't have people trained to deal with the poverty problems of our students and that's what we need.

He thought that students from poverty were not successful in colleges because they did not know where to turn and if they did not find someone competent to help them with specific crises issues and "with the material dimensions of those problems" it would be challenging to succeed. If a student was experiencing domestic violence or food scarcity issues, they needed to know their options and where to go. These "are

very material needs that a social worker can help with." Jacob believed in "hand holding" just as Susan did and thought resilience was "oversold."

> You know, and I say that with some hyperbole, but these are very fragile years in these young people's lives and the barriers they have to face are more than they deserve and we need to be ready to help them, almost in loco parentis here.

The type of "helpful intervention" some students require is "dramatic" and

> we need to be ready to supply and I say that because I read all this stuff about resilience, and certainly, no pain no gain and all that stuff… people do learn from suffering, but it also destroys people, before they can learn and so you gotta be ready to intervene, in that dynamic…. If someone's facing homelessness, you have to find them a solution to that problem.

Bot also spoke of food insecurities. With the student's permission, she asked if she could contact an on-campus resource about the food pantry and additional information or ideas on how to navigate the system to help the student obtain additional funds for food.

All 15 IAs provided examples of the actions they took to support first-generation Latino college students' academic and social advancement. Some of these actions supported high-demand needs. However, I presented all examples to address questions one and two of the study. Question one comprised embedded unit of analysis one (see Figure 4, Embedded unit of analysis one corresponding to first-generation Latino college students) and presented the results of eight first-generation

Latino college students' designations of their IAs and descriptions the specific actions

IAs took to support their academic and social advancement. Question two comprised

embedded unit of analysis two (see Figure 4, Embedded unit of analysis two

corresponding to institutional agents) and presented the results of 15 identified IAs

and how they described the specific actions they took to support the academic and

social advancement of first-generation Latino students. The results from questions

one and two demonstrated that all of the actions (theme two) corresponding to the 14

areas or roles within the four categories (direct support, integration support, system

developer, and system linkage and networking support) of Stanton-Salazar's (2010)

framework were present except for the recruiter role. Recall that an embedded,

single-case design (multiple-units of analysis) allowed me to explore three research

questions given that "an embedded design can serve as an important device for

focusing on a case study inquiry" (Yin, 2014, p. 55). I also analyzed the results of

question three as a unified whole, which comprised embedded unit of analysis three

(see Figure 4, Embedded unit of analysis three corresponding to the similarities and

differences between students and IAs) and next present the results.

Question Three: Similarities and Differences between Students and IAs

3.   What are the similarities and differences between the actions of institutional

         agents, as described by first-generation Hispanic college students, compared to

         those described by the identified institutional agents?

         In order to address this question three, I created Table 3 to provide an overall

perspective of the examples IAs and students provided individually. It is relevant to

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keep in mind that students designated their IAs, and therefore, were able to provide specific academic and social examples of the support they received from their IAs. However, IAs did not know which student(s) designated them and, therefore, shared general examples of the academic and social support they provided first-generation Latino students. If an IA or student IA described an academic or social example or both, I documented in the corresponding academic or social column. Table 3 details the matching pairs of IAs and students as well as the academic and/or social support as described by both.

IAs and Students' Academic and Social Matching Pairs

Table 3

IAs and Students' Academic and Social Matching Pairs

Institutional Agent	Student	Academic Support	Social Support
IA #1 (Robert Anthony)	Student #2 (Laela)	Student and IA	Student and IA
	Student #8 (Ismael)	IA	Student and IA
IA #2 (Jacob)	Student #1 (Terry)	Student and IA	Student and IA
	Student #5 (Isabel)	Student and IA	Student and IA
	Student #6 (Sam)	Student and IA	Student and IA
	Student #8 (Ismael)	Student and IA	Student and IA
IA #3 (Helen)	Student #1 (Terry)	Student and IA	IA
	Student #6 (Sam)	Student and IA	Student and IA
IA #4 (Maggie)	Student #1 (Terry)	Student and IA	IA
	Student #4 (Micaela)	Student and IA	IA
IA #5 (Phaedrus)	Student #4 (Micaela)	Student and IA	IA
IA #6 (Eliza)	Student #5 (Isabel)	Student and IA	IA
IA #7 (Roland)	Student #2 (Laela)	Student and IA	Not mentioned
	Student #5 (Isabel)	Student and IA	Not mentioned
	Student #6 (Sam)	Student and IA	Not mentioned
IA #8 (Soma)	Student #5 (Isabel)	Student and IA	IA
	Student #7 (Yoyo)	Student and IA	Student and IA
IA #9 (Maria)	Student #6 (Sam)	Student and IA	Student and IA
IA #10 (Lillian)	Student #6 (Sam)	IA	Student and IA
IA #11 (Had)	Student #3 (Jeniffer)	Student and IA	Student and IA
IA #12 (Susan)	Student #7 (Yoyo)	Student and IA	Student and IA
IA #13 (George)	Student #7 (Yoyo)	Student and IA	IA
IA #14 (Bot)	Student #6 (Sam)	IA	Student and IA
IA #15 (Dziga)	Student #8 (Ismael)	Student and IA	Student and IA

Note. Matching pairs listing institutional agents (IAs) as designated by students, including the academic and social support described by each student and IA.

Academically, Terry had to maintain a certain grade point average in order to participate in the Strummer Leadership program. Since her freshman year, she built a relationship with a staff member who taught her time management skills and made sure Terry passed her classes. Terry also learned that genders are not binary in an academic setting from one of her IAs. This helped her examine how she felt about herself, leading her to consider that she might be gender fluid. Socially, the Strummer

leadership program represented a "tight knit family" where she and other Strummer

Leaders grew together via activities that provided her the opportunity to get to know

other Strummer leaders better. Two of her IAs provided financial support. Under the

tutelage of one of her IAs, Terry became a mentor to other students. Via academic

engagement and learning, Terry said that she had grown socially and her IA helped

her further develop and know herself better. Jacob, Maggie, and Helen all taught

courses regardless of their professional roles, providing academic support to Terry,

Isabel, Sam, Ismael, and Micaela. Socially, Jacob, Maria, and Eliza provided

community involvement opportunities for Terry, Isabel, and Sam. Maggie indicated

that she viewed a student as a whole person upon their arrival on a college campus,

much like Helen—holistically. Maggie viewed the needs of first-generation Latino

college students academically, socially, and emotionally. Socially, they sometimes

needed support to acclimate to roommates, make friends, seek financial assistance and

were "unsure of how to do that or what to do a lot of times." It was incumbent upon

her to give social support by speaking with students and providing social strategies.

Helen provided first-generation Latino students with social support by attending

sports events, but she was also cognizant of burn out. Recall, she considered herself a

facilitator. Like Lillian, when Helen addressed social issues with students, she was

self-aware and asked herself where her "line of advice" ended and where an expert's

advice began. She also mentioned her own social life and her family members'

awareness of it or lack thereof based upon their view of her dedication to her

profession. She mentioned the ongoing conversation with colleagues about what it

takes to support first-generation Latino college students, including more time to spend with them to "meet their academic and social holistic needs."

Laela received academic support from her IAs in and out of the classroom. She said she, "felt very comfortable going to Robert Anthony for anything academic or social because he had unique perspectives and she "knew he had a lot of experience." Roland did not reference social support, but both he and Laela spoke to the academic support he provided. Laela referred to him as an "inspirational" teacher. She learned "a lot" from him and his teachings "made a big impact" on her beliefs. Of the academic support Roland provided first-generation Latino college students he mentioned participating on institutional committees to bring forth student concerns regarding the curriculum. When students considered changing academic majors, he helped them consider career implications. He also created realistic graduation timelines. He assisted students in navigating the college experience from a curricular standpoint and referred them to additional academic resources. Robert Anthony viewed the academic support he provided students via his professional role. Laela disagreed, as she believed he was accessible for academic, social, and all support needed. Recall that Robert Anthony also assisted Ismael to secure an internship in his home geographic area where his had worked for 25 years. Robert Anthony considered his networking efforts as social support whether these efforts were to introduce students to his personal or professional network or bring national HSI representatives on campus and introduce them to campus administrators.

Both Jeniffer and Had spoke of the academic and social support received and given. Although Had could not explicitly speak about Jeniffer since he was not aware of the student who designated him, they both spoke of the community involvement program that was part of an academic course. Recall that Jeniffer found a Catholic community organization where she continued to volunteer after the required hours were completed. She spoke of Had's academic support through several personal/social challenges she experienced. Had served in two professional roles, encompassing academic and social spheres.

Micaela spoke in detail about the academic support Maggie provided her. Maggie was Micaela's primary academic contact and with Maggie's support, Micaela made the Dean's list. Socially, Micaela did not speak to Maggie's support, but as previously described, Maggie's approach to her support of students was academic, social, and emotional. Micaela too did not provide any examples of Phaedrus' social support. He, however, provided examples of taking students to a museum, movie, and pizza. Recall he also assumed personal financial responsibility for these activities. Academically, Micaela felt quite supported by Phaedrus, particularly with the in-class journal she wrote. According to Micaela he kept the journal because she, "wrote a lot of personal stuff and he really liked it." She said she had written more in that journal than she had in her entire life. Academically, Phaedrus spoke in detail about the support he provided students. He was culturally sensitive to first-generation Latino college students' needs and brought in a speaker who could address them. He

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academically advised students and acquired an assessment tool that helped students

with their emotional intelligence at no cost to them.

Isabel received academic support from Jacob, Eliza, Soma, and Roland.

Similar to Laela's description of Robert Anthony, Isabel referred to Jacob as the

person she could go to for anything. "He takes care of, almost all of the students he

has. He takes care of them a lot and tries to help us in any way he can." He was

instrumental in offering financial support and referred her to any additional services

she needed whether academic or social. Isabel participated in the peaceful

demonstrations at the regional immigration detention center alongside other first-

generation Latino students. Recall that Isabel changed her major three times. Eliza,

Soma, and Roland were instrumental in guiding her to arrive at her final decision.

Soma gently helped her transition out of a major while Eliza helped her better assess

her options and Roland provided a detailed academic plan to graduation. Roland also

helped her see that her career option was available upon graduation or later in life by

sharing his wife's achievement of the same career goal. Although Jacob described the

academic support he provided students as "minimally," both Terry and Isabel

disagreed. They indicated that they felt they could go to him for any matter. Jacob's

professional role included both academic and social aspects. Academically, Eliza

spoke of helping students with their academic major choices. Soma described

assisting students academically as her passion. I presented Roland's view of his

academic support in Laela's example. Jacob worked with students who were

"passionate about social justice." Students also went to him, "because they need[ed] a

safe place." Again, although Jacob did not know who had designated him, Terry

discussed the value of physical space. Socially, Eliza mentioned social event

programming as the primary method of supporting students. Soma defined her social

support extensively ranging from family to health to residence life to cultural

concerns and volunteer activities. She said that she considered herself, "I consider

myself very lucky to have not had the, even 100th of the troubles that my students

have." Soma described having a student in class who would not share in the

strawberries she had brought because her mother had worked the strawberry fields all

of her life and just could not eat them. In addition to traveling with students

internationally, Soma also traveled with a group of students locally. She witnessed

> the conditions that many of our students lived in - near third world in a first
>
> world country. To have seen that - it's not compassion. It's just you have to
>
> be non-judgmental in that way and you would try to understand it. I don't
>
> know if I understand everything they are going through. I will not because I
>
> am not that person, but just to think of the humongous challenges that they're
>
> facing.

Again, Roland did not share any social support he provided first-generation Latino

students.

Sam designated six IAs. This was the highest number designated. Sam

described that as she read my flyer posted on-campus, a faculty member approached

her to ask if she would be participating. She "got really angry" and asked herself why

she should participate since she felt the institution was not doing anything for her.

She did not see the institution as Hispanic-serving. She imagined a HSI as one that made financial resources more available to students, "helping them out just like financially 'cause from what it seems, a lot of my friends who are Latino are all coming from like very, very poor families and are struggling." During this part of the interview, Sam referred to *The Club* as "the only resource we have on this campus." It is important to contextualize that she was comparing her experience to her brother's experience; he was attending a large public institution where Sam felt he was receiving more support. She did not know if the institution her brother was attending was a HSI. She said,

> It just always seemed like when it came down to him and being a Latino, he always kindda had people to go to or just places that he could go. I don't know. He just seemed to have a lot more, a lot more than like our school has, and I mean, I understand he went to a large university, and this is really small, but I figured 'cause it's really small we could possibly have more stuff and now we're losing a lot at this moment.

She spoke of a tuition increase and cutbacks and not having a curriculum that supported first-generation Latino students. This was early on in the interview where she expressed her frustration with administration. Then there was a moment of transition when she said, "but at the same time I absolutely love college life." Being on-campus made her feel, "a little less poor" and she "love[d] being surrounded by an amazing support system 'cause I don't have that back home so it's just - there's a lot of good, but there's also like a lot of bad." The bad referred to the financial challenges

and her frustration with the various administrative offices. She said, "I'm dealing with that right now, at the moment."

Jacob was the first IA Sam mentioned. "Well, I mean, if it wasn't for him like I wouldn't even be here." This was similar to the comments Terry and Isabel made of Jacob. He provided Sam with financial support. He was an academic and social support for Sam. Recall that Jacob's professional role was both academic and social although he said that he was called-on for more *SLP* social support. He spoke of supporting the LBGTQ campus community, the "inter-faith prayer vigil" at the regional immigration detention center, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrival (DACA) workshops, translation projects with Latino families, including parent/teacher conferences. Sam described Jacob, Helen, and Maria, as academic and social support systems for her. She shared that Roland was accessible when she considered changing her major. Roland too discussed this type of academic support for students. He also encouraged her to speak in class, as did Helen. Sam described Helen as also being approachable, encouraging her to share her thoughts and using her voice. Socially, recall that Helen gave Sam a small rock with a message after Sam had shared a difficult personal circumstance with her. Helen shared that active listening was a practice she relied on in her classes. She also provided supplemental information on active listening. Helen did not expect students to do anything she would not do. She made herself uncomfortable by becoming a student again and sharing her experience with her students. She created a safe space for her students. Recall that Helen preferred the term facilitator. As such, she thought that addressing

social issues was first understanding that not all issues were merely academic, "but you also address some of the social issues that the students might share with you." Helen gave an example of a student who was disruptive in class. In a one-on-one with him, Helen learned that he had difficulties with his father. His father wanted him to study business and the student wanted a focus on sports. Helen helped him harness his interest in sports academically. Recall too that she attended students' sports events to support them.

Sam did not mention academic support from either Lillian or Bot. Sam described herself as a "shy person." When she first made contact with Lillian, Sam described her as, "someone who was nice," encouraged her to embrace her introversion, be herself, and reassured her that she would make great connections. This encouraged Sam to step out of her comfort zone. Lillian provided Sam with "wonderful feedback." Sam described Lillian as "happy" when Lillian saw Sam speaking to others. Lillian indicated that she "inadvertently" provided students with academic support because it was her professional role to make sure students had the needed academic resources. Socially, Lillian provided support to first-generation Latino students similarly to Eliza – through programming. Like Helen, Lillian also created a safe space for students and actively listened. She referred students to other resources and accompanied them as needed. Recall that Lillian's approach was through questions. She did not want to curtail any students' learning experiences, but she also thought it important to be supportive if family or parents were not able to help students. Helen too did not assume that all first-generation Latino students

needed assistance. She did not subscribe to students being "pobrecitos" (the poor or disadvantaged ones).

Maria provided Sam academic and social support. When Sam first arrived as a freshman, it was Maria and Jacob who most assisted Sam. Sam said she could "easily go to" Maria to discuss her classes or when she was "stressed or overwhelmed" with emotional matters. Maria spoke to helping students with academic major decisions, internships, family, navigating the college system, career exploration, community partnerships, their goals and hopes, on- and off-campus employment, referrals to additional support, on-campus group participation, volunteerism, communication, and work-life balance. Rather than giving students answers, like Lillian, Maria respected the student learning experience, asked questions and guided students. Bot was "a huge support system" for Sam. Although she did not provide academic support for Sam, like Jacob she provided support to help Sam work through her financial challenges. Bot coordinated efforts with Jacob and reassured Sam, "Don't worry, me and Jacob would go and speak to them and tell them that you need more time, like, we're gonna make sure you are able to get the resources that you need." This quote was Sam's in reference to Bot. Them referred to the respective administrators and/or staff members in the relevant offices Sam needed to have contact with to resolve the challenges she faced. Sam said that Bot was a, "huge reason that [she was] still living and breathing." Bot indicated that if academic support was limited to classroom teaching, then she did not feel she supported

students in that way, but she did guest speak in classrooms and provided psychoeducation. By this she meant,

> This might be the college experience and this might be your experience and these are the resources we have and that it's okay to feel overwhelmed and stressed and not know how to navigate, but we are here to help you.

Yoyo indicated that Soma, Susan, and George provided academic support and Soma and Susan provided social support. Soma's open door policy allowed Yoyo to spend time with her in her office, which provided academic support. If Yoyo had any academic content questions, Soma was available in the same physical space. If Yoyo had not shown, Soma followed-up. Soma also inquired about Yoyo's family and social activities. Susan and George helped Yoyo organize her schedule and plan accordingly to align her major and minor, pre-requisite courses, and graduation timeline. Yoyo could go to Susan, "for anything… she just asks how I'm doing, how my major classes are doing, and if I need anything specifically." Susan inquired about Yoyo's physical and mental well-being. I presented Soma's academic and social support of students from her perspective. Susan academically supported students by creatively finding language in the course catalogue to help them complete coursework that was discontinued. She provided social support by also accompanying students to any relevant offices and had contact with families. Although Yoyo did not mention social support from George, George did say that he volunteered at social events. He drove a van transporting students to events. He

helped at graduation and the annual senior graduation party. He also participated in a

5K run. He said, "I love to help and provide support where I can."

Ismael expressed his passion of diversity issues. Recall that he chose this

institution because of its HSI designation. Academically Jacob and Dziga supported

his course projects and encouraged inquiry of difficult questions pertaining to

institutional support of first-generation Latino students, lack of Latino faculty, and the

unionization effort. Ismael provided supplemental information on his course projects.

Although Ismael did not speak to Robert Anthony's academic support, socially Robert

Anthony encouraged him, "just to keep on striving." Like Sam, Ismael said he was a

shy student when he first arrived, but Robert Anthony encouraged him to talk and be

assertive while being professional. Jacob taught Ismael how to be resourceful when

meeting people by indicating that these individuals could help with employment or

research in his area of interest. All three helped Ismael "without knowing." They

helped him work through being away from home and stability both at home and on-

campus. I presented Robert Anthony and Jacob's perspectives on their academic and

social support of first-generation Latino students. Dziga supported students

academically by recognizing their life challenges and designed his course with

recursive teaching as well as working with students on assignment timelines.

Through academics, he learned more about the social issues that affected first-

generation Latino students and supported them by helping them incorporate these

issues into their coursework. He attended peer presentations to learn more about these

social issues and thought that professional development was needed to better support students.

The composite of Table 3 addressed the similarities and differences between the actions of IAs, as described by first-generation Hispanic college students, compared to those described by the identified IAs. Although Stanton-Salazar (2010) referred to the 14 actions areas as roles, it is important not to confuse these action roles with the professional roles IAs assumed as faculty members, staff or administrators. Again, I did not disclose the professional roles of IAs to protect their confidentiality due to the small size of the institution. The results demonstrated that professional roles played a part in the type of support IAs provided students, but there was also overlap. In other words, faculty members sometimes provided social support in addition to academic support and staff and/or administrators provided academic support in addition to social support. Also, recall the overlap in actions as depicted in Figure 7. Recall too that students designated their IAs and were able to speak directly to the academic and/or social support they received from each IA. However, because IAs were not aware of the student who designated them, their responses were generic to the academic and/or social support they provided first-generation Latino college students. In other words, the examples of the support IAs provided were not specific to the student who designated them. In addition, some IAs were able to provide examples specific to first-generation Latino students and in other instances IAs were able to identify examples of Latino students, but were unsure or did not know if students were first-generation. Where these examples were present, I identified in the

results section of questions one, two, and three. I also concurrently examined if the

actions IAs took to support first-generation Latino students' academic and social

advancement met Rendón's (1994) criteria for validation as presented in Chapter 2.

Validation Theory

In Chapter 2, I introduced Rendón's (1994) validation theory and the literature

surrounding it. I posited that validation theory might inform the actions of IAs in

Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework. I indicated that validation theory might be

applicable when working with first-generation Latino students and serve as a strength-

based model (Hurlock, 1925; García, 2015; Lopez & Louis, 2009) to scholars and

practitioners alike. IAs (termed external agents) in Rendón's (1994) study validated

students by providing feedback, working individually with students, designing

structured learning in such a way where students could witness their own learning,

providing equal treatment of all students, demonstrating approachability, and having

the genuine desire to teach students. Rendón (1994) differentiated between validation

and involvement. Validation referred to what a student received from someone who

took initiative to assist them whereas student involvement related to the student

learning process (Rendón, 1994). Validation theory was two-fold, including

academic and interpersonal validation where academic validation referred to students'

scholastic ability and interpersonal validation occurred when IAs helped students

develop personally and adjust socially (Rendón, 1994). Rendón Linares and Muñoz

(2011) reaffirmed the core tenents of validation theory: "1) validate students as

creators of knowledge and as valuable members of the college learning community

and 2) foster personal development and social adjustment" (p. 12) and detailed

validation theory's six elements. While the focus of this study was not on validation

theory, the data provided to address questions one, two, and three in this study

demonstrated that the actions IAs took to support first-generation Latino students also

validated them.

Validation Theory Applied

Feedback. At mid-term, in addition to a letter grade, Helen provided students

with a written evaluation. The written evaluation explained where students started

and how they had improved. Dziga provided conceptual support and feedback on

students' projects in one-on-one meetings where they "are getting their questions

answered and feel like that they're not operating in a vacuum." Jeniffer provided

supplemental information demonstrating Had's feedback of her academic work.

Micaela received positive feedback on the journal she wrote, which Phaedrus asked to

keep. She also said that he listened, "When I had things to say, I would say it to him

and he would listen and give his feedback." Sam said of Lillian, "She always just had

very wonderful feedback. She would always be really kind." This social feedback

was in reference to Sam reaching out and speaking to others, challenging her

introversion.

Individual work. Several IAs worked individually with students. Helen

referenced her belief that all students were "a genius in something." Because she

genuinely felt this way, she did not force this, but if she could not make a connection

with a student she said, "I go out of my way to track that student down." Recall she

worked one-on-one with a student who was disruptive in class who then shared he

was having challenges with his father because his father wanted him to major in

business and the student was interested in sports. Helen garnished the student's

interest in sports to complete an academic assignment. In general terms and

maintaining student confidentiality, Maggie spoke of working with a student who

experienced a trauma and how this required one-on-one work. Isabel described her

one-on-one meetings with Eliza whilst changing her academic major. Recall she

changed three times. Soma's open door policy permitted Yoyo to work individually

with her. George met one-on-one with students and with St. Jude's catalogue helped

them explore other majors. Bot worked individually with students, connected with

them, and said that students dealing with other significant matters were not learning in

a meaningful way. She learned of students' food scarcity and said that this inhibited

study and focus because "they don't have enough fuel in their body to even focus." I

presented Dziga's one-on-one work with his students.

Structured learning. Helen realized that her methodology was best suited for

a two-day schedule rather than the three-day schedule and approached her department

Chair to make her case and requested a change. She incorporated active learning and

provided supplemental information. In addition to her course content, she

incorporated time management to help students meet her deadlines alongside other

classes. She provided assessment differentiating between grading rubrics and active

learning. In-class exercised included group work, group dynamics, and pair work

rather than "busy" homework. She, like other IAs designed structured learning in a

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way where students witnessed their own learning. Phaedrus structured his material to include what was relevant to students' lives. Eliza, Maria, and Lillian all discussed program design. Soma had two colleagues whose research included teaching pedagogies. They helped re-design a first-year course to include career development. Dziga, like Phaedrus encouraged students to create projects that were relevant to them and structured recursive learning and one-on-one meetings.

  Equal treatment. Helen provided equal treatment of all students. She recognized that students learn differently, used different teaching techniques and was aware of physical and safe space. She said, "I try to be very egalitarian in my rooms." Helen had a transgender student in her class who was very clear on a preferred pronoun. She changed her syllabi to accommodate students' preferences and asked them to let her know how they wanted to be identified. Phaedrus gained gender sensitivity particularly with first-generation Latina students when he realized that some examples he used did not apply. He assumed that a college-aged young woman would date and for some students that was not the case due to family and cultural reasons. This awareness increased his ability to treat all students equally by adapting his examples. By assuming a financial cost, Phaedrus exposed students to social experiences equal to those of privileged students. Eliza said, "I'm really just wanting to help the student find their journey." Soma provided examples of first-generation Latino students, but indicated that she was vested in all students. She realized she might need to learn more culturally, but did not distinguish first-generation Latino student from other students. Lillian considered students as leaders in their own way.

Quiet and introverted leaders could sometimes lead just one person, but were equal to

leaders who lead large groups. She wanted "to provide a space where they can feel

brave." Susan embraced all students. She, like Soma, provided examples of first-

generation Latino students, but said, "I have not really paid much attention to the first-

generation. I just take them all, you know, equal and demand the same thing and

advise the same way, and just because I think they all deserve that." George

demonstrated equal treatment by valuing all majors the same. If a student was not

performing well in his respective department, he would sit one-on-one with a student,

open the institutional catalogue to help guide the student.

Approachability. Students approached Helen after class because they knew

she was "absolutely open always" and would help however she could with class and

otherwise. When a student divulged being "on suicide watch," Helen responded

appropriately to ensure the student's safety. Laela shared how she could approach

Robert Anthony for anything. Terry, Isabel, and Sam said the same of Jacob. Maggie

provided the example of a student who lost her father and approached her for support.

Maggie like Soma had an open door for students. Micaela said she could talk to

Phaedrus "whenever and he's really cool too about everything." It was just as easy

for Sam to approach Roland and Helen as it was to seek assistance from Jacob and

Maria when she was stressed and/or overwhelmed. Maria provided two specific

examples of students who approached her for help. Recall, one student was unsure of

applying to medical school and the other wanted to lead a specific social effort, but

did not feel confident in her ability. The safe space Lillian created gave a student a

place to approach her. She was then able to "read" the student and provide assistance. She said that having worked with students for "more years than many of them have been alive, you just know when they've come to you and they need help, but they don't know how to ask for that help." Lillian tried to be the person students would reach out to to "vent" and ask for help. She listened "for as long as they need and that space create[d] a space for them to be able to come and ask for that assistance further." Yoyo could easily approach Soma and Soma tried to create "open safe spaces." Soma said,

> Students are comfortable I know to come and tell me about their problems, even if they were not my students and so I think having more people who look like themselves is another way to break that barrier so that they see that there are more people out there who will look like them.

Recall that Soma was available to parents who reached out to her in the middle of the night.

Genuine desire to teach. Helen shared that her students knew she was "dedicated." She said, "I mean I really also think I love their learning process. I love when they are excited about something. They know that they can come and share that with me." Her teaching was her "vocation." She made efforts at St. Jude's to have an expert in a particular department help professors teach. Phaedrus equated his teaching to learning when he referenced making his teaching relevant to his students' lives. "They've lived through it and they're living it now so I'm learning as much as I'm teaching, which is pretty cool." Had said that he liked teaching people who engage

him. Laela referred to Roland as "an inspirational teacher." Teaching took place in and out of the classroom whether it was an academic, a staff member or administrator who taught. George had several professional roles within St. Jude's, but ultimately chose to work more directly with students versus more administrative roles because he liked to see student growth. Recall that Robert Anthony and Lillian also chose St. Jude's. Robert Anthony selected it because of its size, which made for personalized experience with students and Lillian made her choice because of the institution's mission.

Therefore, the data in this study demonstrated that the actions IAs took to support first-generation Latino students also validated them. IAs provided feedback, worked individually with students, designed structured learning, provided equal treatment of all students, demonstrated approachability, and had the genuine desire to teach students in or out of the classroom. In addressing questions one, two, and three while examining for evidence of validation theory, the data demonstrated that validation theory not only informed Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework, but validation theory occurred in tandem with the actions of IAs. In tandem, they produced the following model.
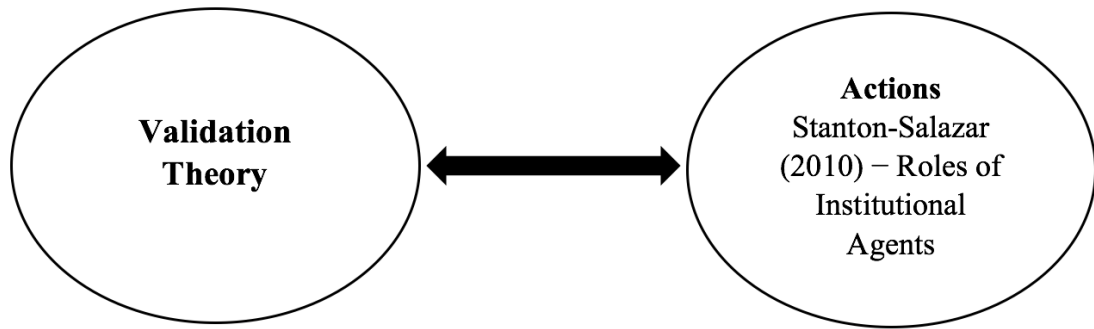
Figure 9. Tandem Model of Validation Theory and Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework. This figure represents the concept of validation theory working in tandem with Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework. Created by D. M. Hernández (2017).

In other words, by executing any one or more actions, IAs also validated students. The data also demonstrated the IAs' actions and validation were two-fold, including academic and interpersonal validation. Recall that academic validation referred to a students' scholastic ability and interpersonal validation occurred when IAs helped students develop personally and adjust socially (Rendón, 1994). I presented evidence of academic and social support in addressing questions one, two, and three, which supported validation theory working in tandem with Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework. Validation is, therefore, the third theme of the study. Framework fluidity was the first theme and actions was the second theme. In 2011, Rendón, now Rendón Linares and Muñoz reiterated the core tenets of validation theory: "1) validate students as creators of knowledge and as valuable members of the college learning community and 2) foster personal development and social adjustment" (p. 12) and maintained Rendón's (1994) original six elements:

1. IAs hold the responsibility of reaching out to students rather than having the expectation that students will make the initial contact to ask questions. It is important to distinguish that initiating contact and supporting students is not

equivalent to coddling students. It is instead, helping students "believe in their ability to learn, acquire self-worth, and increase their motivation to succeed. Validating actions should be authentic, caring, and nonpatronizing" (pp. 17-18). Recall Had's effort to stay in touch with a student over the summer to make sure he returned the following fall. The student returned and was registered in Had's class.

2. When students feel validated, they, in turn, gain self-worth and the capacity to learn. Jacob and Dziga supported Ismael's interest in issues of diversity through course projects.

3. Consistent validation increases student's self-confidence thereby leading a student to become more involved, contributing to their student development. Sam joined *The SLP* and because of this she, "started falling in love' with the group. She then built relationships with people in student leadership positions and with supervisors. Sam said, "Now I'm involved in so much that I think maybe that's why I'm just like, 'Everything's going okay right now.'"

4. Validation can take place in and out of class. Helen attended students' sports events. Phaedrus invited students to a movie, pizza, and a museum.

5. Validation is developmental. In other words, rather than being considered an end, it instead should start early in a college student's experience and develop continuously through time. Bot continued working with a student two years after leaving the institution and reported the student was "thriving."

6.   Validation is important during the first few weeks of the first-year experience.

Maggie created the first-generation mentoring program, which began her

longer-term relationship with Terry.

The data also demonstrated that all of validation theory's six elements were

present as part of the IAs actions to support students academically and socially. At

the beginning of this chapter, I introduced Figure 7 to demonstrate the multiple and

simultaneous roles of IAs, which aligned findings of Stanton-Salazar (2010) and

Jiménez's (2012) findings. I then addressed questions one, two, and three of the

study, presenting the actions theme. Although validation theory was not the focus of

this study, in Chapter 2 I introduced the possibility of it informing Stanton-Salazar's

(2010) theory and in this chapter I presented the data demonstrating that validation

theory and Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework work in tandem (see Figure 7). Next,

I present the last theme of this study—Hispanic-serving versus Hispanic-enrolling.

Students and IAs differentiated between the two.

Hispanic-serving versus Hispanic-enrolling

Scholars have questioned whether HSIS are Hispanic-serving or Hispanic-

enrolling (Corral et al., 2015; Hurtado et al., 2015; Malcom-Piqueux, 2010). D. A.

Santiago (2009) offered that Hispanic-serving focused on persistence and graduation

and Hispanic-enrolling referred to access. Students and IAs at St. Jude's also offered

their opinion on the two terms.

Early in the interview and to contextualize the study, I asked students and IAs

if they were familiar with the term HSI (see Appendices C, F, G, and H). If they said

no, there was no additional follow-up. Some who answered affirmatively

immediately followed-up with additional details of their understanding. If

participants answered affirmatively, but did not provide additional details

immediately thereafter, I provided additional response time or followed-up, asking

them to share their understanding. At the close of the interview, I asked all

participants if there were any observations they wanted to share about participating in

the interview. It is relevant to understand that although St. Jude's holds the

designation as a HSI, it is a Catholic institution. I, therefore, present data as a

Catholic institution, then as a Catholic HSI, and close with addressing the

differentiation between Hispanic-serving or Hispanic-enrolling via the students and

IAs' voices.

A Catholic Institution

As was found in question one, Terry, Isabel, and Sam spoke of the

significance of *The Strummer Leadership Program* (*SLP*) had for them both

academically and socially. Jacob, Helen, Maria, Soma also referred to *The SLP* in

their interviews. *The SLP* was housed in *The Center*, which as discussed, was central

to the institution's mission and commitment to social justice as a Catholic institution.

Nine of 15 IAs mentioned *The Center* as part of their interviews: Helen, Maria,

Soma, Eliza, Had, George, Robert Anthony, and Bot. Helen said, "A lot of Latino

students, particularly, and Latina students use [*The Center*] so I got to know the

director of that…. So I try to figure out, 'Okay, where are [students] going?'" Robert

Anthony shared that *The Center* was, "a hugely valuable resource and the people who

work there, I would say, do everything that I just talked about doing myself." In

addition to Terry, Isabel, and Sam detailing the value of *The SLP* for them, Laela,

Micaela, and Ismael selected to attend this institution because it was Catholic. Yoyo,

Micaela, and Jeniffer added that the institutional size was relevant to them, but more

importantly, six of the eight students placed value on St. Jude's as a Catholic

institution. Students and IAs also discussed this Catholic institution as a HSI

A Catholic Hispanic-Serving Institution

Ismael shared what a Catholic HSI meant for him.

One of the big things for me was to continue my Catholic faith 'cause I grew

up in the private school system from kindergarten all the way through high

school and I just wanted to keep on going and faith played a big part with that.

On top of that, I was looking for a place where, not only, me, myself, I

identify as Latino, but I wanted to keep that… that aspect of it, and so when I

started looking at it - I actually first looked at all the HSIs.

Yoyo added, "I read that it was 45% Hispanic, so I thought being a first-generation

student to attend college, it'd be a little bit easier for me to be with a group of people I

identify with."

Two students were aware of the 25% "percentage scheme" (Baez et al., 2008)

that designates a HSI. Two students were unfamiliar with the term and the remaining

four were familiar with the term and offered varying perspectives. They gave a

different percentage or thought the designation referred to the institution having a

majority Hispanic student population. Students also offered their opinions on service

to Hispanic students or lack thereof and critiqued the institution as not being sufficiently Hispanic-serving.

Five IAs offered the correct percentage to the federal designation, one was very close to the correct percentage, seven focused the definition on service, and two expressed their discomfort of not knowing enough about the designation and wanted to know more. Of the two who expressed discomfort said, "I feel very ignorant in this sense, except for when I came to [St. Jude's] and they gave the introductory, sort of what is the history of the institution." The other IA wished for faculty or professional development around the issue, including workshops and training on how to support the institutional mission and the HSI designation and said, "I mean I think it's an important thing and I wish we actually did some real work around it." IAs and students questioned the institution's position as Hispanic-serving versus Hispanic-enrolling as have scholars (Corral et al., 2015; Hurtado et al., 2015; Malcom-Piqueux, 2010).

Hispanic-serving or Hispanic-enrolling?

From the student perspective, Laela offered that as a first-generation Latina student, other than her freshman year, she "didn't really see explicit motives or events or talks, very many talks or classes even that spoke to having a Hispanic-Serving Institution." She, like Phaedrus (IA) referred to student membership of *The Club*. However,

> for being a Hispanic-Serving Institution, [*The Club*] did not have the amount
> of people I thought would be in there… It's kind of disappointing being

classified as Hispanic-serving when in reality I don't really see too much—the

benefits—so the transparency of what that really means and as far as it goes to

benefitting students of Hispanic or Latino descent.

Recall Phaedrus' mention that *The Club* did not have a Latino advisor and it had gone

from a "vibrant club" of approximately 40-50 members to approximately "20 at the

most." Ismael also discussed *The Club* and although he was well aware of the HSI

designation given that he had researched HSIs prior to attending the institution, he

said, "We see it in numbers, but I don't really see it out in the actual community." He

referenced the lack of Latino faculty. "I've only seen probably one Hispanic

professor." He continued, "We may be a HSI, but we don't show the same diversity

within our faculty." Ismael, like Phaedrus discussed concern over the upcoming U.S.

presidential election.

Terry concurred with Ismael's sentiment regarding the lack of Latino faculty

by stating that there were only two Latina faculty members.

It would be great if they had more. The other professors are great, but it

would seem that there would be more. Just the feeling of, I don't know, to me

it just feels kind of good when you can get to connect with that person because

you come from a similar background, maybe culturally. It would just be great

to be able to relate to them.

Terry had a conversation with her friends where they discussed the HSI designation.

They concluded it did not "feel" like one because "it's not really specified enough."

She also referred to a climate survey where she reported the result to be more than

50% of Latino students who thought that racism existed on-campus. The survey was spurred by an on-campus incident where, "someone wrote the 'n' word on someone's door deck on one of the freshman floors," including "homophobic slurs," according to Terry.

Isabel focused on the financial or educational assistance to Latino students as did Sam. Recall that Sam did not view St. Jude's as a HSI because she imagined a HSI as one with more financial resources for Latino students. As a member of another on-campus student organization Sam and other students discussed what it meant to be a HIS. Like Ismael and Terry, Sam too pointed to the lack of Latino faculty. "How can this be a Hispanic-Serving Institute, especially when you look at like the lack of Latino professors we have on our campus, 'cause we only have one or two." Sam referenced the lack of Latino culture in the curriculum and critiqued the focus on STEM stating that the grant effort only focused on,

> one very small portion of the students. You're not helping the other huge amount of students that you have so I think when I think of Hispanic-Serving Institute, I think that it's about giving us more resources, more diversity on our campus, helping us, and understanding our situations of where we come from financially.

Roland, Eliza, Helen, Soma, Robert Anthony also discussed the lack of Latino faculty and staff. Roland thought it a primary deficit, "of institutional support for Latino first-generation students—one of the big problems we have is the lack of Latino faculty—is a big one here." He said that "our students" need people, "from

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their own backgrounds, from their own experiences" to develop bonds. "That's one where institutionally we fall down on providing the people to really meet the various needs that are particular to that demographic." Phaedrus, Robert Anthony, and Roland all referred to having non-White faculty or staff serve as proxies for culturally sensitive academic and social aspects of first-generation Latino students' educational experiences. Roland said, "It's not good enough." Eliza concurred and said that the institution is probably,

> not doing such a good job here with our diversity of our staff and our faculty and I think maybe that could be an issue. It's not really about the students [themselves], but it's more like what's their experience here like? Are they feeling supported enough?"

It was difficult for Helen when her students started to realize that not many individuals looked like them or spoke their language, "because it's true. I mean it's kind of a predominantly White professor body." Soma said, "I think having more people who look like themselves is another way to break that barrier, so that they see that there are more people out there who will look like them." Robert Anthony agreed. Faculty and staff as a "demographic body" did not "mirror" the student body. He too referred to the campus climate survey. One of the questions referred to whether or not it mattered of faculty and staff were representative of the student body. "The anecdotal responses from students were often, 'No, no, it doesn't matter. It's fine as long as you're a good teacher.'" Robert Anthony felt that, "to some degree" it was, "a semi-naïve answer." His theory was that first-generation Latino students "don't know

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what they don't know." In other words, no one has told them what to expect from college and "take everything at face value," accepting situations as they are. Like Phaedrus, Robert Anthony's response to having a non-Latino lead the student cultural group was, "No! Like that's not preferable. Do we have a plethora of Latino faculty and staff who can step up and do that? No, we don't. Should we? Probably. Yeah."

Bot thought overall that institutions needed to re-define themselves in order to provide services for the higher number of students and their needs. "We're not servicing our students. They're falling between the cracks. It's an unfair system to them. It's unfair to blame them for not being more ready for the college experience. I really think that we have to re-define this." She continued,

> I think it's incumbent upon the people on the ground, like me and the other service providers to come together and say, 'Look, this is what we're seeing. These are the needs of our students now in 2016 and this is I think what we need to provide as an institution as a whole.' So part of it is having a conversation. Can we come together and see that this is the culture here? These are ours. These are St. Jude's students… We have a particular culture here and how can we change, not losing our mission and vision as an institution? …I think this is, this is what we are being called to do.

Because the study of HSIs is in its nascent stage, more evidence is needed on how these institutions are making a difference for Latino students (Hurtado & Ruiz Alvarado, 2015). I offer that the actions IAs took to support first-generation Latino students were one aspect of how HSIs are making a difference. However, in this

study, what was evident was that the question of being Hispanic-serving versus

Hispanic-enrolling is just as vibrant as it is in the literature. Participants spoke to St.

Jude's as a Catholic institution, a Catholic HSI and offered their opinions on whether

St. Jude's was Hispanic-serving or Hispanic-enrolling. I, therefore, further developed

the model previously introduced whereby validation theory and Stanton-Salazar's

(2010) framework work in tandem to include context. The particulars of an institution

matter. In this study, the institution's size mattered as this its mission and its

designation as a HSI.
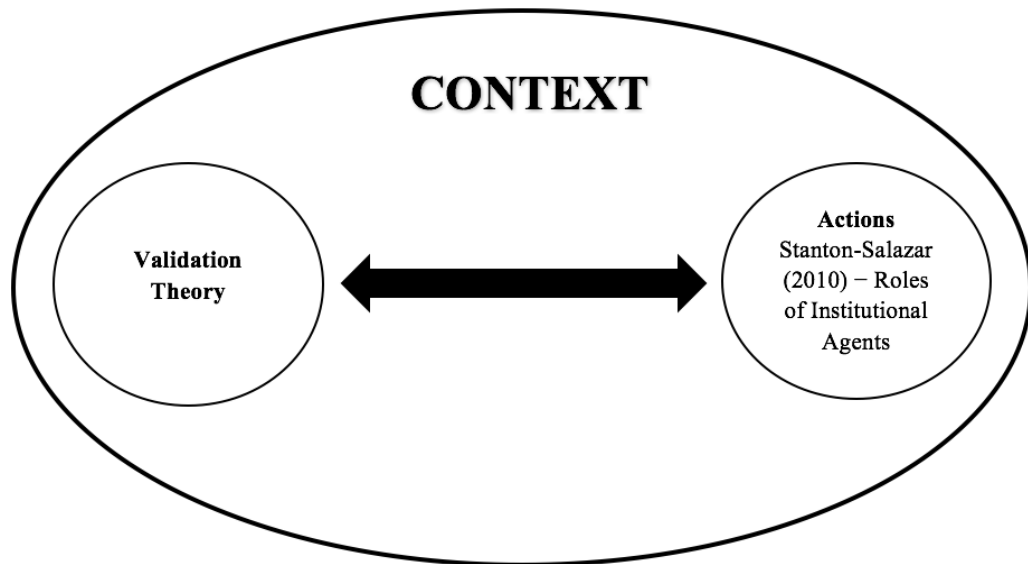
Figure 10. Tandem Model with Context of Validation Theory and Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework. This figure represents the concept of validation theory working in tandem with Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework within a study's context. Created by D. M. Hernández (2017).

The process that unfolded by asking participants at the onset of the interview

if they were familiar with the term HSI (see Appendices C, F, G, and H) came full

circle at the close of the interview when I asked all participants if there were any

observations they wanted to share about participating in the interview. From the

beginning to the end of each interview, which ranged from approximately 42 minutes,

the shortest, to 2 hours and 45 minutes, the longest, some participants appeared to have a "raised level of awareness" (Lincoln & Guba, 2000, p. 180), demonstrating ontological and educative authenticity about the differentiation between Hispanic-serving and Hispanic-enrolling. Recall D. A. Santiago's (2009) differentiation as Hispanic-serving focused on persistence and graduation while Hispanic-enrolling referred to access. Students were unaware of this differentiation, but their comments were representative of the issues that mattered to them, which is some instances affected their persistence as the data demonstrated.

Terry said,

Well I did want to mention how my friends and I were having a discussion about how we are a Hispanic-Serving Institution, but it doesn't feel like that because, although they have the program [for first-generation students], it feels like it's not really specified enough.

She continued,

I would just say that they should really, like our institution should really help students even more because I feel like the program [for first-generation students] isn't enough because some students don't really like the program as much—because they don't like to interact, so maybe they could help in another way.

I asked if she had any suggestions and she replied that there might be a faculty member mentoring program, but she was not sure if this was part of the first-generation program. Laela said that being a first-generation student "highly

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impacted" her experience and wished that there was, "more support than we have just because it's really not easy." Isabel initially thought the study would focus on the problems that the institution was currently facing, but found that the study focused on how the institution "works with Latino students, so, to tell you the truth, this really interests me." She found the study "educational." Sam said, "This has been a very passionate topic of mine." Recall her angry reaction when she first read the study's title. Yoyo's persistence depended on her. She said, "It's up to me to find what I want to do and how I want to experience college," but her reason for participating in the study was that she was interested in the results. Ismael's observation referred to his interest in diversity studies. He referred specifically to me as an emerging Latina scholar. He said, "a Latina is actually going for a higher purpose, a higher education, and not just going towards the stereotypical aspect that many people have." This comment was relevant because

> I have a lot of people back at home that don't believe in that, so, kind of, just being able to have a one-on-one interview, kind of have them talk to another person, kind of give them that aspect like, "Oh, there is more."

To clarify that I understood correctly I asked him if participating in this interview provided him with an experience that he could take back to his home and share that there was another Latina interested in and working with issues of diversity. He responded affirmatively and shared that pursuing his Ph.D. might be something he would be interested in doing.

Being a Catholic HSI mattered for all of the reasons presented. It mattered that students were first-generation Latino. It mattered that it was a Catholic institution. It mattered that it was a HSI and just like the literature on HSIs is in its nascent stage (Hurtado & Ruiz Alvarado, 2015) so too are the issues that students and IAs expressed. In other words, as a relatively new designated HSI, St. Jude's faced issues that in its prior history were not present. Bot and Maggie detailed the institution's history and how it had evolved through time. It should be expected that the new designation brought new issues to light for an increasing first-generation Latino student population along with discerning the question of whether St. Jude's was Hispanic-serving or Hispanic-enrolling or both. According to Robert Anthony, the topic of Hispanic-serving was discussed throughout the years and said, given "the wording of this Hispanic-Serving Institution, 'Do we serve our students of that designation, and how do we do so?'" Receiving grant funding was certainly part of this, but he also said that students raised the issue of few Latino faculty, staff, and administrators. As with Phaedrus, Robert Anthony pointed to the fact that the student cultural club did not have a Latino role model to serve as its leader. Roland mentioned issues of institutional curriculum not meeting students' needs. Tracking student persistence and the issues affecting first-generation Latino students already discussed were relevant matters to Robert Anthony. He said,

> Are we actually serving Hispanic students or just enrolling them? We
>
> generally, we're just enrolling them. Could we be serving them? Yes. Do I
>
> know how we can serve them better? Minimally. Are there people who

probably have much more expertise in that area and we should hire them to come do that? Yeah.

Jacob agreed with the relevance of this study. He said, "Yeah, well, it's a very important study you're doing, Diana…. So, we have to serve these students well. Yeah." Phaedrus thought it would be "healthy" to ask professors, "So what do you think being a HSI school is and what's your responsibility as a professor?" This might shed light on the professional development needs for faculty members, staff, and administrators. He continued, "I think your study is much bigger than… identifying. I think it actually could be part of the problem solving and making institutions stronger." Roland's observation of his participation in the study was, "Only positive reactions in the sense that some of the questions allowed me to probably reflect more on some of the ways I've helped students over the years. So that's been good."

Maria's observation spurred questions. She asked if I was a first-generation Latina. I responded affirmatively and she said, "Okay, so that's just inspiring too. Being able to see someone because I haven't had a lot of experience with working with women of color, especially first-gen. and Latina." For Lillian it was refreshing to get off "the machine." She said, "You get caught in the rigmarole of being an administrator and it's always nice to rejuvenate that feeling of being an agent, being an advocate for the students. So, good times!" Had felt the interview was "very engaging." It made him think through things that he saw as a challenge. He wanted "to become more of an IA" and "be of help or be one to learn something myself in the process"—to focus "heavily" on what he had been doing—his one-on-one meetings

with students. This comment was similar to Roland's observation. Susan enjoyed her

participation "immensely" because she expressed her views and feelings "that very

few people understand." George expressed his appreciation for the community at the

institution—at its acceptance and inclusion of students. He thought it was "really

good for first-generation students." He felt the small size provided the opportunity to

provide students with the support then needed. He also respected the fact that as a

Catholic institution he felt no pressure to be Catholic or to believe in Jesus. "There's

Muslim students walking around and they're comfortable. There's Atheist students."

In other words, as a Catholic institution, he did not feel that students had to be

Catholic to attend. "Everyone feels welcome and accepted." Bot said, "We have a

particular culture here and how can we change, not losing our mission and vision as

an institution?" Recall she spoke to the institution's historical culture versus the

needs of students today, which included learning and technology. Dziga wished he

knew more. He said he had no had training or learning on HSIs nor had he done

research. He had picked "up bits of information here and there, sometimes from

students, sometimes from other faculty, but there [had not] been any formalized

context." He continued, "Just having this resource for the institutional agents to

reflect on and sort of asking myself which of these I fulfill has given me a lot to work

with, so yeah, this is really useful."

Whether the participants had prior knowledge of HSIs or were learning more

about the designation through the process of participating in the study, they were in

the process of discerning whether St. Jude's was Hispanic-serving or Hispanic-

enrolling. Students attended and IAs worked at this institution because it was

Catholic and/or a Catholic HSI or its size or mission. Students and IAs discussed *The*

Club or *The Strummer Leadership Program* and the relevance these organizations had

within the institution. Each of these layered aspects contributed to the results of this

study. Just as the literature on HSIs is in a nascent stage so too are the feelings,

thoughts, and emotions expressed by the study's participants given its relatively

recent designation. However, the question of being Hispanic-serving versus

Hispanic-enrolling mattered in relation to the purpose of the study. The study

demonstrated that all the actions in Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework were present

except for the recruiter role, and via these actions, IAs validated students. These

actions, in some cases, had a direct effect on first-generation Latino students'

persistence, which, according to D. A. Santiago's (2009) differentiation of Hispanic-

serving versus Hispanic-enrolling, made St. Jude's Hispanic-serving. St. Jude's was

also Hispanic-enrolling an access institution and held the HSI designation by meeting

the 25% percentage scheme (Baez et al., 2008).

Additional Findings

The focus of this study was on IAs' actions and how their actions supported

first-generation Latino college students at a Catholic HSI, using the roles in Stanton-

Salazar's (2010) framework as a priori codes. After thorough and extensive

examination of each of these areas, except for the area of recruiter, the data

demonstrated that all of the actions described fell within the roles of the framework.

Participants used the word mentor throughout the interviews, but recall that Stanton-

Salazar (2010) drew from the mentorship and social work literature. Thus,

mentorship is already an integral part of the more detailed roles within the framework

and adding it as a role would be redundant.

Financial challenges and family pressure to declare a specific academic major

were two circumstances that were exhaustively present in the interviews. These

circumstances, when shared by students led IAs to action, but these circumstances

were not actions themselves. The actions the IAs took to help students manage these

circumstances varied from IA to IA, which I described within the applicable roles.

IAs also vividly described the action of active listening. Helen, in particular,

discussed it at length and provided supplemental information on the topic. While

active listening was an action, I interpreted it to be a personal resource within the area

of a resource agent. In other words, it was not a standalone action that in and of itself

led to providing students with social capital, which is Stanton-Salazar's (2010)

premise. Mental health, safe spaces, homelessness, food scarcity, and the unique

timing the unionization effort affected the actions IAs took to support first-generation

Latino students, but again, the actions fell within the roles of the framework.

Another area of consideration was employee turnover. One of the IAs

interviewed would no longer be employed prior to concluding the study. Of the four

IAs who did not confirm their interview summary, I cannot confirm if they continue

in their professional roles based on institutional website data. Students identified two

individuals who were no longer part of the organization. The examples of the actions

these individuals' took to support the student participants were just as descriptive as those of the IAs interviewed.

Three additional areas merit consideration: language, IAs' self-identification as first-generation students and the "ripple effect" (Hernández & Sikes, 2015). Although I offered to interview in either Spanish or English, of the 23 total participants, only Isabel interviewed in Spanish. Once she expressed her preference to interview in Spanish, she "warned" me that she might not understand some Spanish words even though Spanish was her first language. She wanted to interview in Spanish because she did not have the opportunity to speak much on-campus and wanted to take advantage of doing so during the interview. Recall my discussion in chapters two and three of providing participants the option to interview in their preferred language because in so doing I align with the practice of coalition pedagogy to express my value in bilingualism, build rapport, trust, and connect with my participants (O. Pimentel, 2013; C. Pimentel & Pimentel, 2002). Studies have demonstrated that bilingualism is a form of social capital (Stanton-Salazar, 2004; Stanton-Salazar & Dornsbusch, 1995). Social capital undergirds Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework. Of the 15 IAs, four spoke Spanish, six did not, four said they spoke "a little" Spanish, and one is unknown. During the interview, Roland spoke a few words in Spanish, but opted to interview in English. Phaedrus, Soma, Jacob, and Helen all mentioned some aspect of language in their interviews. Helen used the work of Latino scholars in her class, which provided Spanish-speaking students the opportunity to translate to non-Spanish speaking students. Jacob worked to create

opportunities for bilingual students to translate at parent/teacher conferences in the local community. After interviewing with Terry via Skype, I met, greeted, and thanked her mother virtually in Spanish. While on-campus, I also had the opportunity to speak Spanish with a few staff members.

With no prompting during the interview, seven IAs self-identified as first-generation students themselves. Upon further review of the data, I found that one IA was clearly not first-generation. Since this data point was not included in the interview protocol, I asked IAs if they were first-generation in the follow-up e-mail, which included their interview summaries for member checking. Three IAs confirmed they were not first-generation, leaving four unknown.

Last, there were several examples of the "ripple effect" or passing it forward. Jacob provided the example of the student who needed to work within walking distance to campus and received a full-time employment offer. He said that she was a "conduit for other students. Ismael mentored elementary and high school students and Jeniffer continued to volunteer at the Catholic non-profit organization well after she completed her in-class hour requirement.

Summary

In this chapter, I introduced eight student participants and 15 IAs. The focus was on the actions of these IAs and their support of first-generation Latino college students' academic and social advancement. I presented four major themes, including actions, which addressed questions one, two, and three of the study. I also presented additional findings and introduced a conceptual model (Hernández, 2017) based upon

these findings. I will discuss these themes, recommendations, and conclusions further

in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Blumenstyk (2015) wrote that American higher education was in crisis. The average undergraduate tuition cost in the 2013-2014 academic year was $30,094. This national data aligned with St. Jude's tuition structure. In fall 2013, four-year private non-profit institutions comprised 18.9% of total enrollment (Blumenstyk, 2015). Although higher education may be in crisis according to Blumenstyk (2015), the data in this study demonstrated that the actions institutional agents (IAs) took to support first-generation Latino students positively contributed to their academic and social advancement. Latinos have made gains entering higher education and comprise the largest student group of color on college campuses (Cuellar, 2015; Fry & Lopez, 2012). Considering these gains, IAs have the potential to positively affect the college experience of the largest growing student group of color on college campuses today. Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework is a roadmap to this outcome and could be a proactive rather than reactive approach to student achievement. The findings of this study are relevant because by 2020, minority students will comprise 45% of public high school graduates (Blumenstyk, 2015). This is an increase from 38% in 2009 according to The Western Interstate Commission on Higher Education (WICHE) and most of these students will be Latinos (Blumenstyk, 2015). Given this growth coupled with the 25% percentage scheme (Baez et al., 2008) as the marker for the HSI designation, more institutions will be eligible to apply for the HSI federal

designation and compete for federal funding (Cuellar, 2015). Hurtado and Ruiz Alvarado (2015) called for more evidence on how HSIs are making a difference for Latino students. This research study contributed to their call by being the first to focus on the actions IAs took to support the academic and social advancement of first-generation Latino students at a Catholic HSI.

I interviewed eight students who designated 15 IAs to address three questions in this research study:

1. How do first-generation Hispanic college students describe the specific actions institutional agents take to support their academic and social advancement at a Catholic Hispanic-Serving Institution?

   - Using Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework detailing the actions of institutional agents, and as described by first-generation Hispanic college students, to what degree are they representative of:

     a. direct support?

     b. integrative support?

     c. system developer?

     d. system linkage & networking support?

2. How do the identified institutional agents, themselves, describe the specific actions they take to facilitate the academic and social advancement of first-generation Hispanic college students?

- Using Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework detailing the actions of institutional agents, and as described by the identified institutional agents, to what degree are they representative of:

  a. direct support?

  b. integrative support?

  c. system developer?

  d. system linkage & networking support?

3. What are the similarities and differences between the actions of institutional agents, as described by first-generation Hispanic college students, compared to those described by the identified institutional agents themselves?

Major Themes

In Chapter 4, I presented four themes as major findings: framework, actions, validation theory, and Hispanic-serving versus Hispanic-enrolling. An in-depth examination of the framework demonstrated alignment with Stanton-Salazar (2010) and Jimenez's (2012) findings of simultaneous and multiple roles. I introduced fluidity to represent the movement that occurs with any given example of IAs' actions to accurately depict multistranded and multiplex relations (Stanton-Salazar, 2010). The study demonstrated that all 14 roles were present except for the recruiter role and these roles worked in tandem with Rendón's (1994) validation theory (see Figure 8). The fourth theme presented was the question of Hispanic-serving or Hispanic-enrolling (D. A. Santiago, 2009). In this chapter, I will introduce a conceptual model

created by the data presented in Chapter 4, but first, each of the four themes merit further discussion.

The Framework

As a result of the recursive data analysis process, the data revealed the fluidity of the 14 roles in Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework based upon the examples provided by both students and IAs addressing the three questions of the study. Stanton-Salazar (2010) and Jiménez (2012) found that IAs played simultaneous and multiple roles. I presented a new model of Fluidity - Overlap Example of Institutional Agents' Actions (Hernández, 2017; see Figure 7), exemplifying the movement of these multistranded and multiplex relations (Stanton-Salazar, 2010). I used Robert Anthony's example to visual demonstrate fluidity. However, any combination of IAs' actions can create such movement from any one or more of the 14 roles in the framework creating an overlap of actions. Therefore, Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework offers a roadmap that scholars and practitioners alike can follow to support the academic and social advancement of first-generation Latino students. Practitioners in particular, once familiar with the framework, can self-examine where their professional roles naturally lend themselves to action and ask themselves which areas not currently employed can be developed or further developed to assist students. In other words, Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework can be proactively employed as a roadmap to become an IA or improve as one. Some areas due to the nature of professional roles may not be applicable, but others may. IAs were provided with a

copy of the framework during the interview and they found it helpful as a professional

and self-examination tool of their actions.

Actions

The actions of IAs were the heart of this study. The data presented in Chapter

4 demonstrated that all areas of Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework were present

except for the recruiter role. I provided extensive and detailed examples for each of

the 13 roles of the framework for both students and IAs and an explanation within the

recruiter role. These examples addressed questions one and two of the study. To

address question three, I provided a detailed summary of the academic and social

support provided by IAs as a means of comparing the examples provided by both IAs

and students (see Table 3). The data also demonstrated that IAs' actions worked in

tandem with Rendón's (1994) validation theory.

Validation Theory

In Chapter 2, I introduced Rendón's (1994) validation theory as well as the

literature surrounding it and posited that validation theory might inform the roles of

IAs in Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework (see Appendix A). The data demonstrated

that validation theory informed the framework. First, academic validation occurred

when IAs assisted students to trust in their academic ability. Second interpersonal

validation took place when IAs helped students with personal development and social

adjustment. There was evidence to support that IAs took proactive steps in reaching

out to students, affirmed their academic work, and supported them academically and

socially. The study results supported the core tenets of validation theory and its six

elements. By using Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework, I operationalized the construct of validation theory by using the 14 roles in the framework as specific indicators through Yin's (2014) embedded case study design as a different methodological perspective (Nora et al., 2011). This study also met Rendón Linares and Muñoz's (2011) call for additional evidence of academic and interpersonal validation as a means to further examine validation theory. Later in this chapter, I will introduce a conceptual model (see Figure 8) to exemplify the interactivity between validation theory and Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework. This model may serve as a strength-based model (García, 2015; Hurlock, 1925; Lopez & Louis, 2009) for scholars and practitioners to apply when working with first-generation Latino college students. However, this model requires an additional area of consideration—context.

Hispanic-serving versus Hispanic-enrolling

I introduced Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) in Chapter 1 and in Chapter 2 I presented supporting literature on the history of HSIs. Núñez et al. (2016) found that institutions and small liberal arts institutions combined represented 9% of all HSIs and form part of type four, "(4) Small Communities 4-Year Institutions" (p. 4). The six HSI types were: "(1) Urban Enclave Community Colleges, (2) Rural Dispersed Community Colleges, (3) Big Systems 4-Year Institutions, (4) Small Communities 4-Year Institutions, (5) Puerto Rican Institutions, and (6) Health Science Schools" (Núñez et al., 2016, p. 4). Several scholars have posed the question of whether HSIs are Hispanic-serving or Hispanic-enrolling (Contreras, et al., 2008;

Corral et al., 2015; García, 2015; Hurtado & Ruiz Alvarado, 2015; Malcom-Piqueux,

2010). D. A. Santiago (2009) differentiated between the two by offering that

Hispanic-serving focused on persistence and graduation and Hispanic-enrolling

referred to access. Students and IAs offered their opinion on the matter as discussed

in Chapter 4.

Students, for the most part, felt St. Jude's was not serving the needs of first-

generation Latino students enough primarily because of the lack of financial support

and diverse personnel. IAs reiterated students' financial challenges and concurred on

the lack of diverse personnel. In addition, St. Jude's had the unique circumstance of

being in the midst of a unionization effort. Blumenstyk (2015) indicated that the

demographic shift posed challenges for institutions of higher learning because Latino

students "will be coming to college with less academic preparation and fewer

resources to pay for it" (p. 15). Even with these challenges, the IAs in this study

collaborated; referred students to internal and external experts; provided scholarships,

work-study, internship opportunities, safe spaces, active listening; and philosophically

placed the interest of the students first. According to D. A. Santiago's (2009)

differentiation of being Hispanic-serving versus Hispanic-enrolling, St. Jude's met

both criteria. It is an access institution and the actions IAs took to support first-

generation Latino students' academic and social advancement meant they focused on

students' persistence and graduation. Maggie's words, "The outcome is

graduation…. Graduation of course, but more confidence."

A New Conceptual Model for Consideration

In Chapter 4, I introduced a further developed model, including context—Validation Theory informing Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework within a study's context (Hernández, 2017; see Figure 9). The data demonstrated that the actions of IAs reciprocally validated students. Hernández and Sikes (2015) found what Sikes coined as the ripple effect, which some may understand as "paying it forward." Examples of the ripple effect in this study included Ismael tutoring Latino students, Jeniffer volunteering at her selected charity well after her required hours were completed, and first-generation Latino students translating at parent/teacher conferences. In other words, students were giving to others and "paying it forward," producing a ripple effect. There were also examples of social justice activism for immigrants at regional immigration detention centers, prompting students to share their stories of family members held at similar detention centers across the country. Although this study did not focus on the ripple effect, I offer the following strength-based conceptual model (García, 2015; Hurlock, 1925; Lopez & Louis, 2009), which may lead to future research (see Figure 11).
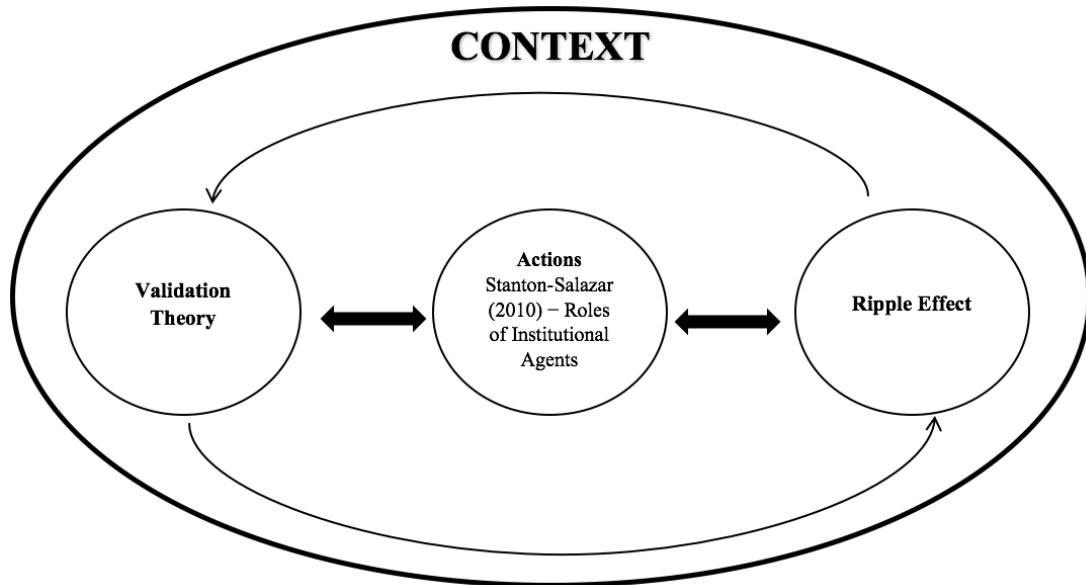
Figure 11. Tandem Model with Context and Ripple Effect of Validation Theory and Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework.   This figure represents the concept of validation theory working in tandem with Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework causing a Ripple Effect within a study's context. Created by D. M. Hernández (2017).

Implications for Future Research

I invite scholars to examine and challenge the new conceptual model

presented (see Figure 10) based upon the findings of the study. Following are a series

of considerations and a list of questions for future research:

The Framework

- Although good qualitative research is particular rather than general,

   (Creswell, 2014; Greene & Caracelli, 1997), comparing this study's

   findings to another or other comparable Catholic HSI(s) would be

   beneficial to test the generalizability of Stanton-Salazar's (2010)

   framework within a similar context.

- Stanton-Salazar (2010) built his theoretical framework on the premise

   of social capital. However, Lillian argued that students had not quite

   yet acquired social capital in the college-going process. She assumed

responsibility to learn the resources available at St. Jude's to be able to provide students with social capital. How then, if students are not aware of social capital, can they learn that they are working toward gaining social capital through the actions of IAs? Do they know what social capital is? If not, how might they learn this concept early in their educational experience and should it be integrated into the curriculum?

Actions

- Test the conceptual model by focusing on the ripple effect. This study presented some examples of the ripple effect, but a thorough research study would test the theoretical accuracy of this conceptual model. Did the actions of IAs create a ripple effect for first-generation Latino students and if so how?

- In a longitudinal study of student participants who designated IAs, were there any long-term benefits and/or outcomes students experienced based on the actions of their designated IAs?

- Phaedrus discussed an increase in first-generation Latino students for a particular minor. How do the actions of IAs influence, if at all, the choice of an academic major or minor as compared to that of family members of first-generation Latino college students?

- The results of the study demonstrated that first-generation Latino college students experienced epistemological in-class learning based

upon the actions of their designated IAs. Using Fink's (2013) "Taxonomy of Significant Learning" (p. 35), which aspects of Fink's model are present in first-generation Latino college students' learning from their designated academic IAs?

- Bensimon (2007) indicated that IAs, "seemed to be directed by an inner ethical compass" (p. 443). Museus and Neville (2012) found four IA characteristics to be: common ground, holistic support, humanization, and proactive support. Further inquiry into the guiding characteristics that lead IAs to action might explore this inner ethical compass. Is the inner ethical compass, for example, care, trust, compassion, empathy, etc.? Are these characteristics visible in IAs ontological, epistemological, axiological, and methodological approaches? In this study, Helen shared some information about these areas, including her Freirean and active listening approaches, but most importantly, she believed that each student had a genius. Lillian believed that "at-risk" students were "at-risk of being wonderful." Consideration might be given to an interdisciplinary study between psychology and higher education to examine the characteristics of IAs, which lead them to carry out the actions in Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework.

- Tschannen-Moran (2014) examined trust within the K-12 context. Only Roland mentioned the word trust in his interview. With the scant

literature on trust in higher education, specifically with first-generation

Latino college students, trust is a characteristic worthy of detailed

examination given Tschannen-Moran's (2014) work and further

exploration of Bensimon's (2007) inner ethical compass finding. How

do the actions of IAs affect trust building between students and their

designated IAs?

- Amidst the national discourse on safe spaces (McIntire, 2015) and

  alongside the findings in this study, what can we learn from the actions

  of IAs who created safe office spaces? Can these approaches be

  translated to a larger campus safe space effort and if so, how?

Validation Theory

- Further test the theoretical accuracy of the conceptual model (see

  Figure 10) by conducting a qualitative research study using Rendón's

  (1994) validation theory and its six elements as the theoretical

  framework. Consideration must be given to element six because it

  stipulates the first two weeks of college. Examine if the actions in

  Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework are evident, and if so, is there

  evidence of the ripple effect? In essence, it is this study in reverse.

Hispanic-serving versus Hispanic-enrolling

- Replicating this study at a different institution that falls within one of

  any of the other five clusters in Núñez et al.'s (2016) typology of HSIs

would also test the generalizability of the framework and continue the discussion on whether a HSI is Hispanic-serving or Hispanic-enrolling.

- Students in this study provided their reasons for selecting St. Jude's. Ismael in particular mentioned the importance to him and his family to choose a Catholic HSI. With the growth of the Latino population, what might be the projection of more Latino students attending Catholic HSIs? If so, how can Catholic colleges better prepare for an influx of first-generation Latino college students? Are Catholic institutions equally Hispanic-serving and Hispanic-enrolling? If so, why?

- In this study, there was a particular circumstance of a unionization effort. When institutions of higher learning as organizations, and HSIs in particular, experience these extenuating circumstances, what is the effect on service to students, if any? Is there an effect on community morale? If so, what is the effect and how does this translate to service to students? How might this compare to another Catholic HSI experiencing the same circumstance?

Additional Findings and Considerations

In Chapter 3 I discussed examining any negative or discrepant information (Creswell, 2014), which included information that countered themes as a form of establishing trustworthiness of the data. In Chapter 4, I presented additional areas that merited consideration: financial challenges, family pressure to declare a specific

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academic major, active listening, mental health, safe spaces, homelessness, food scarcity, institutional unionization efforts, employee turnover, language, and IAs' self-identification as first-generation students. Recall that these circumstances when shared by students led IAs to action, but these circumstances were not actions themselves or actions that provided students with social capital. The following are also areas of consideration for future research, but I present them here because they may be considered negative or discrepant information that counter themes (Creswell, 2014).

- While not within the scope of this study, further research on the parental pressure experienced by first-generation Latino students to declare an academic major preferred by family members requires attention. The result was exhaustively present in the data. Robert Anthony described it as the student boiling point and crisis of not failing because "failing was not an option." This aspect, coupled with mental health, another area also mentioned by IAs, might be considered an interdisciplinary research effort.

- An unexpected finding in this research study was students' mention of IAs that were no longer part of the institution - employee turnover. When developing a study on the actions of IAs and anticipating a similar result based on this study's results, I would suggest including what, if any, are the effects on first-generation Latino students' academic or social advancement when IAs leave an organization?

`   In Chapter 2, I provided literature reflecting the current activism on race and

race relations on many college campuses across the country. The results of the study

demonstrated that students and IAs alike protested current immigration issues facing

Latino students and their families. A pertinent implication for future research based

upon this finding might include some of the considerations I presented in Chapter 2.

- How do scholars and emerging scholars use national current affairs

  data to support their scholarship when this data has not yet been peer

  reviewed or examined as empirical data?

I aligned and categorized implications for future research based upon the

findings of the study. Just as relevant as conducting future research is it is also

relevant to implement practices from empirical research. In the following section, I

discuss three areas of practice pertinent to higher education: policy, planning and

leadership. I include suggestions of practice within each of these areas according to

the findings presented in the study.

Policy, Planning, and Leadership

Educational Policy

The history of HSIs was detailed in Chapter 1 as well as the process and value

of funding for this designation. The seminal work of scholars on HSIs (Benítez,

1998; Laden, 1999, 2001, 2004; Olivas, 1982) has now emerged into a field of study

in its nascent stage (Hurtado & Ruiz Alvarado, 2015). The Hispanic Association of

Colleges and Universities (HACU), Excelencia in Education, and committed scholars

are affecting national policy by conducting research and producing data. With

planning and leadership, policy at an institutional level can forge a new path by taking

the HSI designation and finding a home for it in its institutional mission similar to that

of HBCUs and TCUs. Contreras et al. (2008) found that no HSI in their study

mentioned the designation in their mission statements and called for administrators to

consider the roles of faculty and staff to help carry forth the mission of serving Latino

students. This study found that the IAs at St. Jude's carried out the institution's

mission by the academic and social support they provided first-generation Latino

students. However, "when the mission does not encompass an identity focused on

ensuring Latino/a student success, other goals will likely take priority, making

attending a HSI no different from attending a Predominantly White Institution (PWI)"

(Torres, 2015, p. 64). The results of this study provide St. Jude's the opportunity to

validate its HSI designation and align it with its social justice commitment in its

institutional mission.

Educational Planning

Martinez and Gonzales (2015) focused on bridging student services and

academic affairs by examining if and how six programs at HSIs validated students.

Martinez and Gonzales (2015) found that collaborative programs, including family

"demonstrated success in serving Latino students" (p. 83). Creating a pathway from

entrance to graduation was an effective mechanism for student success. Their model,

"Advancing Latina and Latinos: Pathways to Validation" (p. 85) may serve as a

planning tool for institutions to assist first-generation Latino college students from

orientation to graduation and beyond.

Micaela (student) and Robert Anthony (IA) discussed the benefits that a HSI grant provides. However, if grant funding ceases and programs as well as staffing are affected, then services to first-generation Latino college students may not be sustainable long-term. When an institution receives a grant, it is imperative at that time that planning begins for a potential future loss of funds. It is incumbent upon the institution to find alternative means to continue a program found beneficial to first-generation Latino college students even if on a smaller scale. Institutional leadership can play a vital role in this planning process to minimize the feelings that, for example, Sam and some IAs felt toward administration or the general feeling that the institution was not serving first-generation Latino college students well enough. Many institutions at different times in their history may experience budget cuts as well as unionization efforts (Bradbury, 2015; Elejalde-Ruiz, 2016; Quigley & Shanklin, 2015). Helen expressed her understanding of these administrative pressures and managed to focus her energy on serving students by becoming a stronger teacher. Dziga felt that participating in the union process was a way to achieve better service to students. Whichever the approach, IAs demonstrated high collaboration with one another. Participating IAs mentioned other designated IAs with no knowledge of whether or not they participated in the study. However, other than the first-year mentoring program, there was no evidence to suggest that there was a concerted planned institutional effort to support first-generation Latino students as Martinez and Gonzales' (2015) suggested. Laela felt there was more support freshman year and after that, in ongoing years, "you're kind of on your own." Given this, the work of

designated IAs became even more critical to support first-generation Latino students

from day one through graduation and beyond.

Just as valuable as planning for smaller scale programs from the onset of a

federal grant in preparation for a non-renewal is becoming familiar with the literature

on HSIs as soon as the designation is achieved. Disseminating HSI information and

providing professional development at all levels of the institution could better inform

the institutional community of the needs of first-generation Latino students from a

strength-based modeling approach (García, 2015; Hurlock, 1925; Lopez & Louis,

2009; Martinez & Gonzalez, 2015; Rendón, 1992, 1994, 2002, 2009, 2011).

Applying the strength-based approach could shift the focus from the lack of student

preparation (Blumenstyk, 2015) to understanding first-generation Latino students'

self-perception of academic preparedness (Boden, 2011), leading to the creation of

institutional infrastructure to support students by creating a pathway from entrance to

graduation (Martinez and Gonzales, 2015). Learning from the literature, including the

results of this study, coupled with identifying IAs at all levels of the institution, and

using Stanton-Salazar's (2010) model as a roadmap could provide the initial tools for

institutions to create a professional development series. However, it is relevant to

recall the financial, personal, and professional challenges Helen, Phaedrus and other

IAs faced when serving students with high needs. Faculty, staff, and administrators

identified as IAs met and in some cases well-exceeded service to students.

Supporting and providing resources to IAs is a learning process for institutional

leadership. In other words, the institutional shift from a Predominantly White

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Institution (PWI) to a HSI should be considered a long-term commitment and not a short-term fix at all institutional levels. A professional development series would support the institutional community from the onset of the designation to long-term institutional and student-focused planning. Concurrently, institutional leadership could begin discussions on the HSI designation and its inclusion in the institutional mission statement and/or vision statement, pioneering the way for other HSIs as the first in educational history to implement.

Educational Leadership

Northouse (2013) wrote that leadership was a "highly valued commodity" and defined it as, "a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal" (p. 1). Cortez (2015) wrote that leaders at HSIs "must respond to the needs of a growing yet historically underserved population in higher education and in the United States" (p. 136). Students and IAs alike discussed the need for more campus diversity at all levels especially as a designated HSI. In Chapter 3, I reported a generic racial data point to protect IAs' confidentiality. Of the 15 IAs interviewed, nine self-identified as White or Caucasian and six were non-White. The Latino representation within the non-White participants was severely low. For the most part, however, the majority of the participating IAs in this study demonstrated a high level of cultural sensitivity, which is one of three significant findings in Cortez' (2015) study.

Cortez (2015) studied five leaders at one HSI who described organizational change and the changes implemented to improve student outcomes and those of the

organization. "Three institutional structures and practices [administrators] found

critical in their efforts to create a supportive campus environment for Latina/o

students [were]: (1) culturally sensitive leadership, (2) student-centered services, and

(3) intensive academic and career advising" (p. 140). The data demonstrated that the

leadership demonstrated by the actions of IAs met criteria one and two and

organizationally St. Jude's had implemented recent changes to address academic

advising as discussed in Chapter 4. Students and IAs at St. Jude's called for more

diversity given that faculty, staff, and administrators had not diversified at the same

rate as the student body. By diversifying, attention can also be drawn to language.

Understanding that diversity and language are not always one in the same, having a

diverse community with appreciation and ability to speak Spanish can create a closer

connection to Latino students and their families. Recall that four IAs spoke Spanish

and four said they spoke "a little" Spanish. In other words, although the majority of

the IAs were not Latino, eight of 15 had the ability, at some level, to communicate in

Spanish.

Another outcome of Cortez's (2015) study was "grassroots leadership" (p.

137)—a leadership type that steps away from hierarchical roles (Cortez, 2015; Kezar

& Lester, 2011). The administrators in Cortez's (2015) study exhibited grassroots

leadership by going beyond the responsibility of their roles, incorporating their

personal experiences, and staying "ahead of the curve" (p. 148) to support students.

Roland and Helen both shared their personal experiences. Recall that Helen attended

sporting events to support her students, going well-beyond her role.

Northouse (2013) described servant leadership as leaders who are, "attentive to the concerns of their followers, empathize with them, and nurture them" (p. 219) in addition to being ethical. Recall Bensimon's (2007) result of IAs who, "seemed to be directed by an inner ethical compass" (p. 443). IAs in this study exhibited the behaviors of servant leaders and achieved results of grassroots leaders. They appreciated international experiences and languages; maintained open doors for students; were aware of the actions of other IAs (although unaware of their participation in this study), willing to go beyond the call of duty, culturally sensitive and student centered; and "seemed to be directed by an inner ethical compass" (Bensimon, 2007, p. 443). Just as transformation is occurring as scholars write the HSI literature that is in a nascent stage (Hurtado & Ruiz Alvarado, 2015), transformation can also occur at policy, planning, and leadership levels.

Conclusions and Positionality

Hurtado and Ruiz Alvarado (2015) wrote that there are significant areas of research needed to advance our knowledge on the role HSIs have in this country's higher education system. The authors called for more evidence and documentation on the unique initiatives taken by institutions that are making a difference in Latino students' talent development as well as institutional cultural shifts that support advancing their education. This study and others like it whether focused on HSIs, first-generation Latino students, IAs or the emergence of a particular niche of work such as this one, which combined these three areas within the context of a religious institution, contributed to this call to action. Studies such as these matter because as

the Latino population grows and Latino students attend institutions of higher learning, this particular student demographic changes the composition of the institution itself. Unlike HBCUs or TCUs, HSIs do not have a specific mission that focuses on the Latino student population and the federal government does not automatically fund HSIs as it does HBCUs and TCUs (Núñez et al., 2016). Instead, HSIs compete for funding once they meet the 25% benchmark, but until then "HSIs have been doing more with less" (Malcom et al., 2010, p. 12) and if federal funding is not granted or is not continued, HSIs will continue to do more with less.

This study demonstrated that one example of doing more with less was in the form of the actions IAs took to support first-generation college students' academic and social advancement. Eight students designated 15 individuals (faculty, staff, and/or administrators) who provided academic and social support and validated them as first-generation Latino college students. This created a ripple effect where Latino students' actions benefitted Latino families in need of translation services, Latino high school students in need of tutoring or an organization that received additional volunteer service hours. The 15 IAs' actions made a positive difference for first-generation Latino college students and first-generation Latino students, in turn, made a difference for others. This is why this research matters. The actions of IAs touched students' lives and extended well beyond the walls of an ivory tower. This research is practice, allowing for scholars, emerging scholars, and practitioners to continue to develop this work. This study is a bridge between research and practice.

We can no longer accept that our students are arriving on college campuses underprepared and we certainly can no longer accept that it is they who are deficient. We cannot make students responsible for a societal failure. Beyond acknowledging the educational gap for first-generation Latino students, we as educators must act. This study demonstrated that deficiency models do not have a place in higher education, and instead, need to be replaced with strength-based models (García, 2015; Hurlock, 1925; Lopez & Louis, 2009; Martinez & Gonzalez, 2015; Rendón, 1992, 1994, 2002, 2009, 2011). As educators, we must follow in the footsteps of these 15 IAs, assume responsibility for our own deficiencies, and hold ourselves accountable for our actions. Helen sought additional resources from high school teachers and looked to her peers to improve her teaching. Soma and Phaedrus worked toward obtaining resources that benefitted students' learning and future career aspirations. Susan used the course catalogue to help students double major even when certain majors were no longer available. Roland meticulously prepared students' academic plans to help them graduate on time or arrive at realistic graduation timelines. Examples in this study abound at the commitment IAs demonstrated to support first-generation Latino college students' academic and social advancement. Students took note and designated them their IAs because IAs' actions made a palpable difference for them.

We have a choice to continue to point to differences and/or deficiencies and place the burden of responsibility on students by using such terms as underprivileged or at-risk, or, we can embrace strength-based terms, beliefs, and models. Instead of

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labeling first-generation Latino students as underprivileged, we must instead assume

responsibility for our societal shortcomings and accept that we have underserved

them. We can convert negatives into positives as Lillian did when she said that at-risk

for her meant that students were "at-risk of being wonderful" or like Helen, we can

believe that all students are, "a genius in something." We, as educators, must make

this choice. Will we choose to focus on the problem or act to create solutions? Like

Lillian, will we make the choice of making education about the student and not about

us? Will we instead think about their happiness and take interest on what it means for

them? Will remembering what it felt like to want to help students when we began the

journey as educators help us find common ground? Our roles in higher education exist

because of students and our ethos should be to serve them.

In limitations of the study, Chapter 3, I indicated that my personal

background, values, and biases, including socioeconomic status, culture, history, and

gender as a first-generation Latina scholar, might be considered by some as a

limitation because they may shape my interpretations (Creswell, 2014). I, however,

believe these characteristics to have benefitted this work. González et al. (2005)

wrote, "people are competent, they have knowledge, and their life experiences have

given them that knowledge" (pp. ix-x). This quote references González et al.'s (2005)

funds of knowledge framework. Adhering to the fidelity of the study as outlined in

Chapter 3 demonstrated my competence to conduct an empirical research study, and

my culture, language, and first-generation status contributed to this work rather than

hinder it. These attributes allowed me to reach a group of students whose culture and

language I shared, which in turn served as a foundation to build rapport and trust (González et al., 2005; O. Pimentel, 2013; C. Pimentel & Pimentel, 2002). Students, who like me, traverse two worlds. It was my privilege to share this research with them and the dedicated IAs who work diligently to help first-generation Latino students advance academically and socially. I hope the findings of this study rekindle our commitment to our students to further encourage our own actions as IAs. Let us not differentiate ourselves within our professional roles, but instead bridge gaps between us for the benefit of our students. These students are us and we are they whether or not we are first-generation or Latino, both or neither. We are one as a community of scholars.

Appendix A
The Roles of Institutional Agents

Direct Support

Resource Agent
- provides personal and positional resources to students

Knowledge Agent
- knows "the system"
- accesses or provides knowledge pertinent to navigating the system

Advisor
- helps students gather information
- assesses problems and possible solutions in a collaborative manner
- promotes & guides effective decision making

Advocate
- promotes and protects the interests of "their" students

Networking Coach
- teaches students how to *network* with key institutional agents
- models appropriate *networking* behavior
- develops relationships with important and influential people

Institutional Agent

Integrative Support

Integrative Agent
- coordinates students' integration and participation in networks and professional venues (professional associations, department, school, etc.)

Cultural Guide
- guides students through new social situations in a particular cultural sphere
- teaches students to identify and interact with key people in cultural sphere

System Developer

Program Developer
- develops program that embeds students in a system of agents, resources, and opportunities

Lobbyist
- lobbies for organizational resources to be directed toward recruiting and supporting students

Political Advocate
- joins political action group that advocates for social policies and institutional resources that would benefits targeted groups of students

System Linkage & Networking Support

Recruiter
- actively recruits students into program, department, etc.

Bridging Agent
- introduces students to institutional agents
- has a strong social network
- knows what key players do

Institutional Broker
- negotiates introductions and agreements between two or more parties
- knows what resources are available and who controls or possesses them

Coordinator
- assesses student's needs
- identifies resources to address need
- provides or accesses institutional resources on behalf of student
- ensures student utilizes resources

First-generation Latino College Student E-Mail Introduction

Dear XXXX,

       I am contacting you as a Ph.D. Candidate from The College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia. My name is Diana Hernández and I am in the Educational Policy, Planning & Leadership program at the School of Education. I am conducting a study focused on institutional agents and the actions they take to support first-generation Latino college students at a Catholic Hispanic-Serving Institution. First-generation Latino college students are defined as students where neither parent has gone beyond a high school education (Pascarella, Pierson, Wolniak, & Terenzini, 2004). I have identified you as a possible participating student.

       An institutional agent is an administrator, faculty, or staff member who can play a vital role in providing student support. I have attached a form that more specifically provides examples of the type of support an institutional agent can give to students.

       I hope that you will consider participating in my dissertation study. The study will consist of one Skype, telephone, or face-to-face on-site interview lasting no more than one hour. A second optional follow-up interview can take place at your convenience by Skype, telephone, or if I am still on-site, in person. This second optional interview is only if you or I have follow-up questions, or if your reflections after the interview lead you to want to share additional information.

       I welcome your participation and ask that you please reply directly to this e-mail to indicate your interest. In your response, please confirm that you self-identify as a first-generation college student as defined in paragraph one. Please also specify your corresponding Latino heritage (i.e., Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Salvadoran, etc.) and include the signed consent form.

       I will then respond to schedule your interview and provide any additional details. If you are not able to participate, but know of another first-generation Hispanic college student who might be interested in participating, please feel free to forward this communication requesting that he/she be in direct communication with me at dmhernandez01@email.wm.edu.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Diana Hernandez
Ph.D. Candidate & Graduate Research Assistant
Educational Planning, Policy & Leadership
School of Education
The College of William and Mary
(Adapted from Hernández & Sikes, 2015)

THIS PROJECT WAS FOUND TO COMPLY WITH APPROPRIATE ETHICAL STANDARDS AND WAS EXEMPTED FROM THE NEED FOR FORMAL REVIEW BY THE COLLEGE OF WILLIAM AND MARY PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS COMMITTEE (Phone 757-221-3966) ON 2016-05-01 AND EXPIRES ON 2017-05-01.

You are required to notify Dr. Ward, chair of the EDIRC, at 757-221-2358 (EDIRC-L@wm.edu) and Dr. Ray McCoy, Chair of the PHSC at 757-221-2783(rwmcco@wm.edu) if any issues arise during this study.

Appendix C
Student Interview Protocol

Study Title: The actions institutional agents take to support of first-generation Latino college students at a Catholic Hispanic-Serving Institution: An embedded case study

Purpose of protocol:
- To collect data on first-generation Latino college students' perspectives on the actions institutional agents' take to support their academic and social advancement at a Catholic Hispanic-Serving Institution

I will audio record the on- or off-site in-person, telephone or Skype interviews and follow-up interviews

Open-ended, semi-structured interview:
- Greet the student
- Thank him/her for his/her time
- Investigator introduction (Diana Hernández)
- Review confidentiality aspect of the consent form
- Request permission to record
- Describe the purpose of the study
- Are you a first-generation Latino college student as defined by the e-mail introduction to this study?
- What is your specific Latino cultural heritage?
- What is the highest level of education your mother completed and corresponding country?
- What is the highest level of education your father completed and corresponding country?
- Why did you choose to attend this institution?
- Are you familiar with the term Hispanic-Serving Institution?
- Please share a little about your college experience to date (it can be anything you choose)
- (Interviewer) Provide definition of an institutional agent
- Based on the definition of an institutional agent and review of Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework, which you received, is there a faculty member, administrator, or staff member whose actions you feel have supported you **academically** to navigate your college experience?
  - o Please describe how (include the name of the institutional agent) has supported you?
    - ✓ (If the student has addressed below questions, skip, or readdress)
- Based on the definition of an institutional agent and review of Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework, which you received, is there a faculty member,

administrator, or staff member whose actions you feel have supported you **socially** to navigate your college experience?

- o Please describe how (include the name of the institutional agent) has supported you?
  - ✓ (If the student has addressed below questions, skip or readdress)
- Has this institutional agent been actively engaged in helping you:
  1. assess problems
  2. gather information
  3. and make appropriate academic and/or social decisions? (Jiménez, 2012, p. 151)
     - o If yes, please describe
- Has this institutional agent helped you develop your networking skills; for example, how to approach faculty, administrators, staff members, or professional associations to appropriately determine where to seek help if needed and access resources from those individuals? (Jiménez, 2012, p. 154)
  - o If yes, please provide examples
- Has this institutional agent assisted you to appropriately communicate with university personnel, authority figures, and/or gatekeepers? (Jiménez, 2012, p. 154)
  - o If yes, please provide examples
- Do you think this institutional agent has "actively served as a human 'bridge' to key faculty members, college/university personnel, or authority figures[?]" (Jiménez, 2012, p. 156)
  - o Please share an example
- Has this institutional agent actively advocated on your behalf for the purpose of promoting your interests within the college/university? For example, has he/she interceded and defended your rights as a student "to have access to key forms of resources and opportunities necessary for [your] success within the college/university[?]" (Jiménez, 2012, p. 155)
  - o If so, please provide an example
- Has this institutional agent provided you with academic, social, and perhaps emotional support when you have been faced with major life challenges and/or stressors? Has he/she listened compassionately to you and helped you look at your circumstances to enhance your sense of personal control to reduce uncertainty? (Jiménez, 2012, p. 157)
  - o Please share how the institutional agent has done this
- Is there any one circumstance where you believe the direct action of an institutional agent had a direct academic or social outcome that benefitted your educational experience that you would like to share in detail?
- Would you be willing to provide any written examples, including e-mails, feedback from academic work, or any other forms of written communication that may provide specific insight to the actions institutional agents have taken to support your academic and/or social advancement?

- Are there any observations you would like to share about your participation in this interview?
- Discuss the option of a follow-up interview via telephone, Skype, or in-person if still on-site
- Would you be willing to provide a written piece, documenting your reflections about our discussion today, including any additional examples not shared during this interview that you may recall later or additional actions not currently a part of Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework?
- Would you please provide the contact information for your designated institutional agent (i.e., e-mail, phone number, job title, department, office location, etc.)? YOUR INFORMATION WILL REMAIN ANONYMOUS!
- Do you know of other first-generation Latino college students who would be willing to participate in this study?
- Thank the student for his/her participation and provide contact information if he/she has any questions or wants to share anything else once he/she has had time to think about the process

Adapted from:

Hernández & Sikes (2015). *Institutional agents' support of students from underserved populations at tuition-free institutions: A multiple case study*. Manuscript in preparation.

Jiménez, P. W. (2012). *Institutional agents' impact on transfer student success through the avenue of social capital* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses. (Order No. 3514198)

Pendakur, S. L. (2010). *The search for transformative agents: The counter-institutional positioning of faculty and staff at an elite university* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses. (Order No. 3434494)

Appendix D
Consent Form

The College of William and Mary

Institutional Agents and First-generation Latino College Students at a Catholic Hispanic-Serving Institution

Dissertation Study

Diana Hernández is a Ph.D. Candidate in the Educational Policy, Planning & Leadership program, School of Education at the College of William and Mary, and I am interested in learning about your role as an institutional agent or as a student whose academic or social educational experience has been influenced by an institutional agent. This study is in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.). The focus of this study is on institutional agents and the actions they take to support first-generation Latino college students at a Catholic Hispanic-Serving Institution.

Your consent to participate in this project indicates that you will agree to participate in a telephone, Skype, or face-to-face, on-site interview and give permission for the conversation to be audio recorded. If a follow-up interview is selected, you give permission for this telephone, Skype, or face-to-face, on-site conversation to also be audio recorded. In addition, if any written communications between students and institutional agents are shared, you also give permission for use of this material for this study.

You understand that the accuracy and honesty of your responses are a vital part to the successful outcome of this research study. You also understand that you have the right to refuse to answer any question(s) during the interview. There will be no penalty for choosing not to answer any question(s). Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. A copy of the study will be sent to you electronically once it is complete using the email address you provide.

One indirect benefit from participating in this study is having the opportunity to contribute to research and practice that may enhance the ability of graduate students to better understand contemporary undergraduate college students and those individuals who work with them. You also understand that with as with all research, there may be unforeseen risks to the participant, and in this case, the only anticipated risks involve the time taken to participate in this study and inconvenience of responding to my questions.

You understand that all of the information collected is confidential. That means that your name or the name of your institution will not appear on material associated with

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this project. You may select a pseudonym to represent yourself if you wish; if you do not, one will be chosen for you. A pseudonym will also be selected for the institution. I will destroy any notes and audio recordings at the conclusion of this study. You understand that by providing your e-mail address, I may contact you to verify data or ask additional follow-up questions.

You understand that you may refuse to participate in or elect to discontinue participation at any time in this research study without prejudice or penalty. If you have any questions or concerns about this dissertation study, you may contact my dissertation Chair, Dr. Leslie Grant at lwgrant@wm.edu. You understand that you may report any problems or dissatisfaction to Dr. Thomas Ward, Chair of the School of Education Internal Review Committee at 757-221-2358 or EDIRC-L@wm.edu.

By signing below, you acknowledge understanding the purpose and requirements of the study, and that you agree to participate in this study. Your signature below signifies that you are at least 18 years of age and that you have received a copy of this consent form.

Participant	_____ Date _____

Pseudonym	_____

E-mail	_____

Researcher	_____ Date _____

E-mail	_____

(Adapted from Hernández & Sikes, 2015)

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You are required to notify Dr. Ward, chair of the EDIRC, at 757-221-2358 (EDIRC-L@wm.edu) and Dr. Ray McCoy, Chair of the PHSC at 757-221-2783(rwmcco@wm.edu) if any issues arise during this study.

Appendix E
Institutional Agent E-Mail Introduction (identified by students)

Dear XXXX,

I am contacting you as a Ph.D. Candidate from The College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia. My name is Diana Hernández and I am in the Educational Policy, Planning & Leadership program at the School of Education. I am conducting a study focused on institutional agents and the actions they take to support first-generation Latino college students at a Catholic Hispanic-Serving Institution. First-generation Latino college students are defined as students where neither parent has gone beyond a high school education (Pascarella, Pierson, Wolniak, & Terenzini, 2004).

A student has identified you as an institutional agent. An institutional agent is an administrator, faculty, or staff member who can play a vital role in providing student support. I have attached a form that more specifically provides examples of the type of support an institutional agent can give to students. However, for purposes of confidentiality, the name of the student who identified you will not be disclosed.

I hope that you will consider participating in my dissertation study. The study will consist of one Skype, telephone, or face-to-face on-site interview lasting no more than one hour. A second optional follow-up interview can take place at your convenience by Skype, telephone, or if I am still on-site, in person. This second optional interview is only if you or I have follow-up questions, or if your reflections after the interview lead you to want to share additional information.

I welcome your participation and ask that you please reply directly to this e-mail to indicate your interest and include the signed consent form. I will then respond to schedule your interview and provide any additional details.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Diana Hernandez
Ph.D. Candidate & Graduate Research Assistant
Educational Planning, Policy & Leadership
School of Education
The College of William and Mary
dmhernandez01@email.wm.edu
(Adapted from Hernández & Sikes, 2015)

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Institutional Agent Interview Protocol

Study Title: The actions institutional agents take to support of first-generation Latino college students at a Catholic Hispanic-Serving Institution: An embedded case study

Purpose of protocol:
- To collect data from institutional agents' perspectives on the actions they take to support first-generation Latino college students' academic and social advancement at a Catholic Hispanic-Serving Institution

I will audio record the on- or off-site in-person, telephone or Skype interviews and follow-up interviews

Open ended, semi-structured interview:
- Greet the institutional agent
- Thank him/her for his/her time
- Investigator introduction (Diana Hernández)
- Review confidentiality aspect of the consent form
- Request permission to record
- Describe the purpose of the study
- What is your official title?
- How long have you served in this role?
- Which department is your role assigned to?
- How long have you been at this institution?
- Are you familiar with the term Hispanic-Serving Institution?
- Please provide a description of the students you primarily interact with
- How do you define first-generation Latino college students?
- Do you differentiate the term Latino/Hispanic to include various ethnic differences within the Latino/Hispanic community?
- Have you been actively engaged in providing **academic** support to first-generation Latino college students to assist them in navigating the college experience?
  - o If yes, please describe how you have accomplished this
- Have you been actively engaged in providing **social** support to first-generation Latino college students to assist them in navigating the college experience?
  - o If yes, please describe how you have accomplished this
- How have you actively engaged in helping first-generation Latino college students:
  1. assess problems
  2. gather information
  3. and make appropriate academic and/or social decisions? (Jiménez, 2012, p. 151)
     - o If yes, please describe how you have accomplished this

- Have you actively helped students develop their networking skills; for example, how to approach faculty, administrators, staff members, or professional associations to appropriately determine where to seek help if needed and access resources from those individuals? (Jiménez, 2012, p. 154)
  - If yes, please describe how you have done this
- Have you assisted students to appropriately communicate with university personnel, authority figures, and/or gatekeepers? (Jiménez, 2012, p. 154)
  - If yes, please describe how you have done this
- Have you "actively served as a human 'bridge' to key faculty members, college/university personnel or authority figures[?]" (Jiménez, 2012, p. 156)
  - Please share how you have done so
- Do you consider yourself an advocate for first-generation Latino college students?
  - If so, please explain
  - Probe for, promoting students' interests within the college/university, i.e., interceding and defending students' rights "to have access to key forms of resources and opportunities necessary for [their] success within the college/university[?]"(Jiménez, 2012, p. 155)
- Have you provided first-generation Latino college students with academic, social, and perhaps emotional support when they have been faced with major life challenges and/or stressors? This may include listening compassionately, helping them look at their circumstances to enhance their sense of personal control to reduce uncertainty? (Jiménez, 2012, p. 157)
  - Please share how you have accomplished this
- Based on the responses you have just provided, do you consider yourself an institutional agent?
  - Why or why not?
- Is there any one circumstance where your direct action(s) had a direct academic or social outcome that benefitted a first-generation college student that you would like to share in detail?
- Would you be willing to provide any written examples, including e-mails, feedback to academic work, or any other forms of written communication that may provide specific insight to the actions you, as an institutional agent, have taken to support a first-generation college students' academic and/or social advancement?
- Would you share your gender, please?
- Would you share your race, please?
- Would you share your ethnicity, please?
- Are there any observations you would like to share about your participation in this interview?
- Discuss the option of a follow-up interview via telephone, Skype, or in-person if still on-site
- Would you be willing to provide a written piece, documenting your reflections about our discussion today, including any additional examples not shared

during this interview that you may recall later or additional actions not currently a part of Stanton-Salazar's (2010) framework?

- Thank the institutional agent for his/her participation and provide contact information if he/she has any questions or wants to share anything else once he/she has had time to think about the interview

Adapted from:

Hernández & Sikes (2015). *Institutional agents' support of students from underserved populations at tuition-free institutions: A multiple case study*. Manuscript in preparation.

Jiménez, P. W. (2012). *Institutional agents' impact on transfer student success through the avenue of social capital* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses. (Order No. 3514198)

Pendakur, S. L. (2010). *The search for transformative agents: The counter-institutional positioning of faculty and staff at an elite university* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses. (Order No. 3434494)

Appendix G - Apéndice G

Protocolo de las entrevista estudiantil

Título del Estudio: Las acciones que llevan a cabo agentes institucionales para apoyar a los estudiantes hispanos de primera generación universitaria en una institución Católica cuya designación institucional es al servicio a hispanos: Un caso de estudio de diseño integrado

Propósito del protocolo:
- Recaudar datos sobre las perspectivas de estudiantes hispanos de primera generación universitaria en cuanto a las acciones que llevan a cabo agentes institucionales para apoyar su avance social y académico en una institución Católica cuya designación institucional es al servicio a hispanos

Grabaré en audio las entrevistas en local o fuera de local, en persona, por teléfono o Skype, así como las entrevistas de seguimiento

Entrevista abierta y semiestructurada:
- Saludar al estudiante
- Agradecerle a él/ella su tiempo
- Presentarse la investigadora (Diana Hernández)
- Repasar los aspectos confidenciales del formulario de consentimiento
- Pedir permiso para grabar
- Describir el propósito del estudio
- ¿Eres un estudiante latino de primera generación universitaria según la definición contenida en el correo electrónico presentando en este estudio?
- ¿Concretamente, cuál es tu herencia Latina?
- ¿Cuál es el nivel educativo más alto de tu madre, y en qué país?
- ¿Cuál es el nivel educativo más alto de tu padre, y en qué país?
- ¿Por qué elegiste estudiar en esta institución?
- ¿Conoces el término institución al servicio a hispanos?
- Cuéntame un poco sobre tu experiencia universitaria hasta el momento (puede ser cualquier cosa que quieras compartir)
- (Entrevistadora) Proveer la definición de un agente institucional
- Dado la definición de un agente institucional y repaso del marco de referencia de Stanton-Salazar (2010) previamente enviado, ¿hay algún miembro de la facultad, administrador, o miembro del personal cuyas acciones tu sientes te han apoyado **académicamente** para navegar tu experiencia universitaria?
  - Favor de describir cómo (incluye el nombre del agente institucional) te ha apoyado
    - ✓ (Si el estudiante ha respondido las a las siguientes preguntas, omitir, o volver a plantear)
- Dado la definición de un agente institucional y repaso del marco de referencia de Stanton-Salazar (2010) previamente enviado, ¿hay algún miembro de la

facultad, administrador, o miembro del personal cuyas acciones tu sientes te han apoyado **socialmente** para mejor navegar tu experiencia universitaria?

- o Favor de describir cómo (incluye el nombre del agente institucional) te ha apoyado
    - ✓ (Si el estudiante ha respondido las a las siguientes preguntas, omitir o volver a plantear)

- ¿Se ha involucrado activamente este agente institucional para ayudarte a:
  1. evaluar problemas,
  2. recaudar información,
  3. y tomar decisiones académicas y/o sociales apropiadas? (Jiménez, 2012, p. 151)
     - o Si sí, favor de describir

- ¿Te ha ayudado este agente institucional a desarrollar tus redes de contacto; por ejemplo, cómo ponerte en contacto con miembros de la facultad, administradores, miembros del personal, u organizaciones profesionales para determinar adecuadamente dónde buscar ayuda si la necesitas y acceder recursos de estos individuos? (Jiménez, 2012, p. 154)
     - o Si sí, favor de dar ejemplos

- ¿Te ha ayudado este agente institucional a comunicarte apropiadamente con personal universitario, personas en puestos de autoridad, y/o guardianes del sistema universitario? (Jiménez, 2012, p. 154)
     - o Si sí, favor de dar ejemplos

- ¿Piensas que este agente institucional ha "servido activamente como 'puente' humano frente a miembros clave de la facultad, personal universitaria, o personas en puestos de autoridad[?]" (Jiménez, 2012, p. 156)
     - o Favor de compartir un ejemplo

- ¿Ha abogado activamente de tu parte este agente institucional con el propósito de promover tus intereses dentro de la universidad? Por ejemplo, ¿ha intercedido y defendido tus derechos como estudiante "para que tengas acceso a recursos claves y oportunidades necesarias para [tu] éxito dentro de la universidad[?]" (Jiménez, 2012, p. 155)
     - o Si es así, favor de dar un ejemplo

- ¿Te ha brindado apoyo académico, social y tal vez emocional este agente institucional cuando te has enfrentado con desafíos importantes y/o motivos de estrés? ¿Te ha escuchado con compasión y ayudado a ver tus circunstancias como para poder ampliar tu control personal para reducir la incertidumbre? (Jiménez, 2012, p. 157)
     - o Favor de compartir cómo ha hecho esto el agente institucional

- ¿Hay alguna circunstancia donde crees que la acción directa de un agente institucional tuvo un resultado académico o social que beneficio tu experiencia educativa que quieras compartir en detalle?

- ¿Estarías dispuesto en dar ejemplos por escrito, incluyendo correos electrónicos, comentarios de trabajo académico, o cualquier otra forma de comunicación por escrito que puedan dar una perspectiva concreta sobre las

acciones que hayan tomado agentes institucionales para apoyar tu avance académico y/o social?

- ¿Hay alguna observación que te gustaría compartir acerca de tu participación en esta entrevista?
- Hablar sobre la opción de una entrevista de seguimiento por teléfono, Skype, o en persona si aún estoy en local
- ¿Estarías dispuesto(a) a escribir tus reflexiones sobre nuestra conversación de hoy, incluyendo cualquier ejemplo adicional no compartido durante esta entrevista que puedas recordar después o bien acciones adicionales que no son parte en este momento del marco de referencia de Stanton-Salazar (2010)?
- ¿Favor de proveer la información del agente institucional que has designado (es decir, correo electrónico, número de teléfono, cargo profesional, departamento, ubicación de la oficina, etc.)? ¡TU INFORMACIÓN SE MANTENDRÁ CONFIDENCIAL!
- ¿Conoces a otros estudiantes latinos de primera generación universitaria quienes estarían dispuestos a participar en este estudio?
- Agradecer al estudiante por su participación y entregar mi información de contacto en caso de que él/ella tenga alguna pregunta o quiera compartir algo más una vez que él/ella haya tenido tiempo de pensar sobre el proceso

Adaptado de:

Hernández & Sikes (2015). *Institutional agents' support of students from underserved populations at tuition-free institutions: A multiple case study*. Manuscrito en preparación

Jiménez, P. W. (2012). *Institutional agents' impact on transfer student success through the avenue of social capital* (Disertación doctoral). Obtenido en ProQuest Dissertations & Theses. (Orden No. 3514198)

Pendakur, S. L. (2010). *The search for transformative agents: The counter-institutional positioning of faculty and staff at an elite university* (Disertación doctoral). Obtenido en ProQuest Dissertations & Theses. (Orden No. 3434494)

Protocolo de la entrevista de los agentes institucional (AI)

Título del Estudio: Las acciones que llevan a cabo agentes institucionales para apoyar a los estudiantes hispanos de primera generación universitaria en una institución Católica cuya designación institucional es al servicio a hispanos: Un caso de estudio de diseño integrado

Propósito del protocolo:
- Recaudar datos sobre las perspectivas de estudiantes hispanos de primera generación universitaria en cuanto a las acciones que llevan a cabo agentes institucionales para apoyar su avance social y académico en una institución Católica cuya designación institucional es al servicio a hispanos

Grabaré en audio las entrevistas en local o fuera de local, en persona, por teléfono o Skype, así como las entrevistas de seguimiento

Entrevista abierta y semiestructurada:
- Saludar al agente institucional
- Agradecerle a él/ella su tiempo
- Presentarse la investigadora (Diana Hernández)
- Repasar los aspectos confidenciales del formulario de consentimiento
- Pedir permiso para grabar
- Describir el propósito del estudio
- ¿Cuál es el título oficial de tu puesto?
- ¿Cuánto tiempo llevas en este puesto?
- ¿A qué departamento corresponde tu función?
- ¿Cuánto tiempo llevas trabajando en esta institución?
- ¿Conoces el término institución al servicio a hispanos?
- Favor de describir a los estudiantes con quien más estas en contacto
- ¿Cómo defines a estudiantes latinos de primera generación universitaria?
- ¿Diferencias entre el término latino/hispano a incluir diferentes grupos dentro de la comunidad latina/hispana?
- ¿Te has involucrado activamente en ayudar a estudiantes latinos de primera generación universitaria mejor navegar sus experiencias universitarias **académicamente**?
  - o Si sí, favor de describir cómo lo has logrado
- ¿Te has involucrado activamente en ayudar a estudiantes latinos de primera generación universitaria mejor navegar sus experiencias universitarias **socialmente**?
  - o Si sí, favor de describir cómo lo has logrado
- ¿Cómo te has involucrado activamente en ayudar a estudiantes latinos de primera generación universitaria a:
1. evaluar problemas,

2. recaudar información,
3. y tomar decisiones académicas y/o sociales apropiadas? (Jiménez, 2012, p. 151)
   - Si sí, favor de describir cómo lo has logrado
- ¿Has ayudado activamente a estudiantes desarrollar sus redes de contacto; por ejemplo, cómo ponerse en contacto con miembros de la facultad, administradores, miembros del personal, u organizaciones profesionales para determinar adecuadamente dónde buscar ayuda si la necesitan y acceder a recursos de estos individuos (Jiménez, 2012, p. 154)
   - Si sí, favor de describir cómo lo has hecho
- ¿Has ayudado a estudiantes a comunicarse apropiadamente con personal universitario, personas en puestos de autoridad, y/o guardianes del sistema universitario? (Jiménez, 2012, p. 154)
   - Si sí, favor de describir como lo has hecho
- ¿Has "servido activamente como 'puente' humano frente a miembros clave de la facultad, personal universitaria, o personas en puestos de autoridad[?]" (Jiménez, 2012, p. 156)
   - Si sí, favor de compartir como lo has hecho
- ¿Te consideras defensor de estudiantes latinos de primera generación universitaria?
   - Si sí, favor de explicar
   - Explorar si el agente institucional promueve los intereses estudiantiles dentro de la universidad, por ejemplo, interceder y defender los derechos de los estudiantes "para que tengan acceso a recursos claves y oportunidades necesarias para [su] éxito dentro de la universidad[?]" (Jiménez, 2012, p. 155)
- ¿Has brindado apoyo académico, social y tal vez emocional a estudiantes latinos de primera generación universitaria cuando ellos se han enfrentado con desafíos importantes y/o motivos de estrés? Esto puede incluir escuchar con compasión, ayudarles a ver sus circunstancias como para poder ampliar su control personal para reducir la incertidumbre (Jiménez, 2012, p. 157)
   - Favor de compartir como has logrado esto
- Dado las respuestas que acabas de dar, ¿te consideras un agente institucional?
   - ¿Por qué o por qué no?
- ¿Hay alguna circunstancia donde crees que tu acción directa tuvo un resultado académico o social que beneficio la experiencia educativa de un estudiante de primera generación universitaria que quieras compartir en detalle?
- ¿Estarías dispuesto a dar ejemplos por escrito, incluyendo correos electrónicos, comentarios de trabajo académico, o cualquier otra forma de comunicación por escrito que puedan dar una perspectiva concreta sobre las acciones que hayas tomado como agente institucional para apoyar el avance académico y/o social de estudiantes de primera generación universitaria?
- ¿Por favor, cuál es tu sexo?
- ¿Por favor, cuál es tu raza?

- ¿Por favor, es su etnicidad?
- ¿Hay alguna observación que te gustaría compartir acerca de tu participación en esta entrevista?
- Hablar sobre la opción de una entrevista de seguimiento por teléfono, Skype, o en persona si aún estoy en local
- ¿Estarías dispuesto(a) a escribir tus reflexiones sobre nuestra conversación de hoy, incluyendo cualquier ejemplo adicional no compartido durante esta entrevista que puedas recordar después o bien acciones adicionales que no son parte en este momento del marco de referencia de Stanton-Salazar (2010)?
- Agradecer al agente institucional por su participación y entregar mi información de contacto en caso de que él/ella tenga alguna pregunta o quiera compartir algo más una vez que él/ella haya tenido tiempo de pensar sobre el proceso

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