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COMMUNITY CULTURAL WEALTH IN THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE:  
A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF LATINX STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

BY

AMITY BUTLER, ERIK ENGSTROM, GENA LUSK, AND SHURLA ROGERS-THIBOU

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

SEATTLE UNIVERSITY

2020

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## ABSTRACT

### COMMUNITY CULTURAL WEALTH IN THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE:

#### A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF LATINX STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

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Supervisor: Colette M. Taylor, Ed.D.

This study is a systematic review of existing research literature dealing with Yosso's (2005) community cultural wealth model and its influence on practices of student engagement for Latinx community college students in the United States. Inclusion criteria was limited to peer-reviewed studies and doctoral dissertations published between January 2014 and December 2019. A total of 21 studies were discovered, data extracted, and synthesized using methods of qualitative data collection and analysis.

Study findings included two to four practices for each of the six forms of capital in Yosso's theoretical framework. Practices such as mentoring, goal-setting, program mapping, storytelling/*testimonios*, and an emphasis on relationship with institutional agent(s) were among the primary findings that crossed multiple forms of capital. The dissertation also possesses an extended discussion on implications and suggested practices for community colleges to leverage the existing cultural capital of Latinx students.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### **Introduction**

According to the 2017 U.S. Census, the Latinx population is the fastest growing population in the United States with a 6.2 percent increase since 2010 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2017). Pew Research Center (2017) also shows an increase in the Latinx population throughout the US, which climbed to approximately 58 million in 2016, and accounts for 50% of the overall national population growth since 2000. The report further predicts the continuous increase in the number of Latinx Americans over the next 40 years (Pew Research Center, 2017). Based on these projections, inevitably higher education in the United States will be serving more Latinx students in the coming decades.

While these demographic changes should be reason for celebration, many higher education leaders worry about the current completion rates of Latinx students and rightfully question if higher education is presently failing to appropriately serve and support Latinx students. Pew Research Center (2017) found that almost 40% of Latinx Americans over the age of 25 had some college experience. These statistics suggest that Latinx Americans are one of the demographics most likely to drop out of higher education (Flores, 2017). Looking for answers to this phenomenon, Gaitan (2013) identified six primary factors that tend to impede Latinx student success in higher education: (1) family limitations due to finances, (2) college proximity to home, (3) obligation to familial roles, (4) future employment restrictions, (5) lack of community support once on campus, and (6) lacking a bond with any one institutional agent at the college.

As the Latinx population in the United States continues to increase, it is imperative that higher education, and community colleges in particular, focus not only on access for Latinx

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students, but also on student success (Bailey, Jaggars, & Jenkins, 2015b). Degree completion is critical to the long-term success and thriving of Latinx Americans, especially in the highly competitive, demanding, and ever-changing labor market of the United States (Pew Research Center, 2017). Higher education institutions must reduce the barriers to Latinx students completing their degree programs.

### **Statement of the Problem**

According to Swail (2003), for the last several decades, retention and completion rates for African Americans, Latinx, and Native American students in American higher education have remained lower than the rates of their White and Asian counterparts. Policymakers have focused on nationwide, statewide, and system-wide initiatives to increase successful academic outcomes for minoritized students (Boland, Gasman, Nguyen, and Samayoa, 2018). Regardless of demographic changes, higher education in the United States needs to focus on equitable outcomes for all students (Bailey, Jaggars, & Jenkins, 2015b). Encouragingly, community college systems are redesigning policies and practices to meet the needs of all students, especially Latinx students, to increase college access, retention, and completion rates (Boland et al., 2018; Bailey et al., 2015b).

As community colleges consider appropriate redesign, the work of educational critical race theorists must be considered. Critical race theory (CRT) applies a lens to examine the ways institutions and power structures are maintained, including various ongoing and unacknowledged forms of racism. Solorzano and Yosso (2001) used critical race theory to “develop a pedagogy, curriculum, and research agenda that accounts for the role of race and racism in U. S. education and to work toward the elimination of racism as part of a larger goal of eliminating all forms of subordination in education” (p. 2-3). When it comes to students of color, specifically Latinx

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students, community colleges across the United States are attempting to embrace anti-deficit frames of thinking and to confront lingering effects of racism that stand in the way of educational equity.

### **Purpose of the Study**

Goldrick-Rab (2010) raises an important question: “Given all of the challenges community colleges face, what policies and practices represent the most promising areas of reform?” (p. 454). This question is at the heart of the present study. Bolman and Deal (2013) note that “structural design rarely starts from scratch. Managers search for options among the array of possibilities drawn from their accumulated wisdom and the experiences of others” (p. 75). Therefore, in order to appropriately transform the policies and practices of community colleges and identify the most promising areas of reform, the researchers have set out to synthesize the research literature and the “array of possibilities” identified by other higher education scholars. The purpose of this systematic review is to explore how one such critical race theory (CRT), anti-deficit model might present a promising pathway forward for community colleges as they rethink and redesign approaches to Latinx student engagement.

### **Research Questions**

This study will examine the existing research on Yosso’s (2006) community cultural wealth (CCW) and how it is transforming, if at all, student engagement practices in the community college context. The researchers were interested in understanding exactly how community colleges are leveraging Latinx students’ existing cultural wealth to help them succeed and persist to degree completion. Therefore, the following two research questions guided this study:

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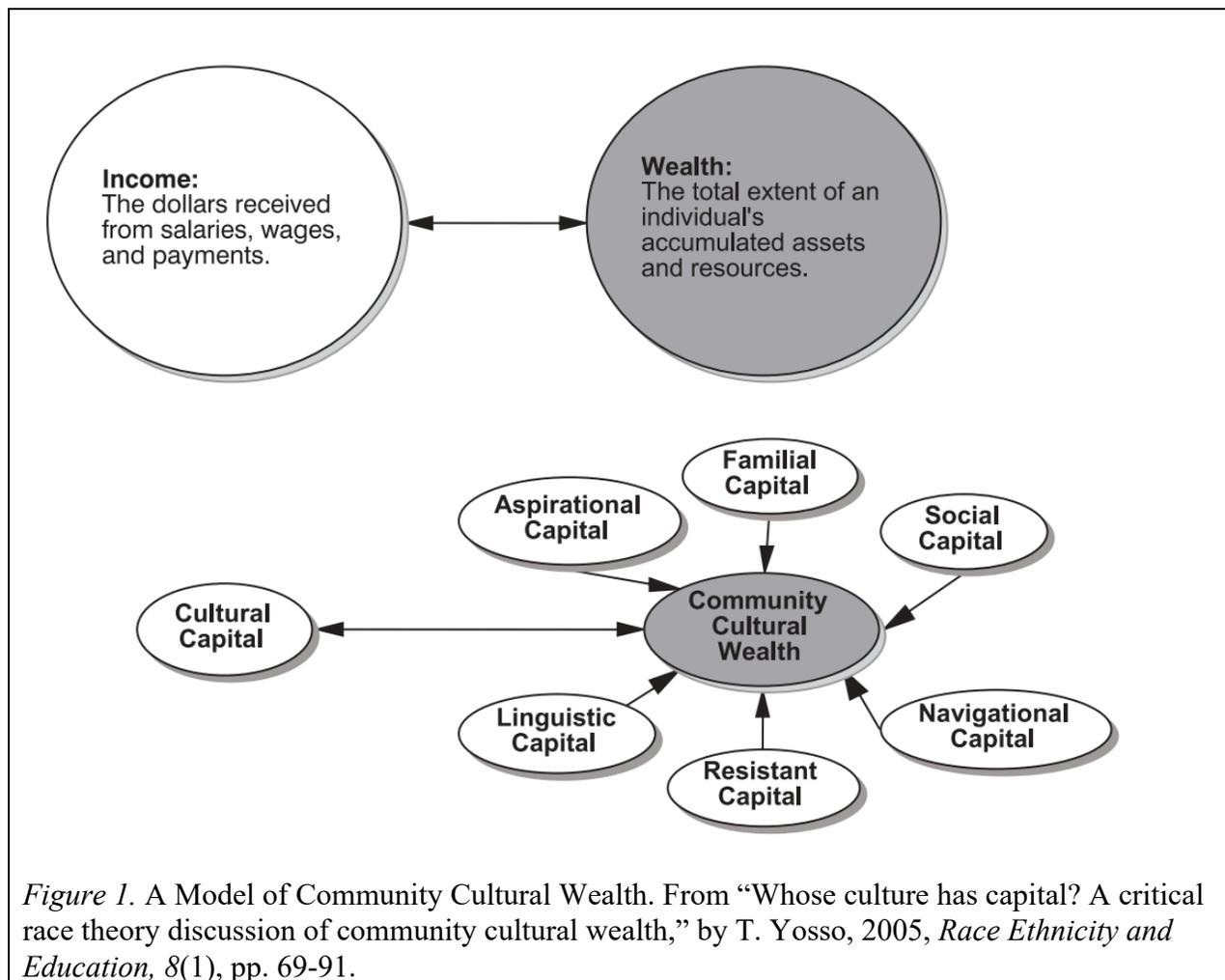
1. How has Yosso's (2006) community cultural wealth model been utilized in student engagement practices for Latinx community college students over the past 5 years?
2. What student engagement practices are recommended or suggested for community colleges to better leverage the existing community cultural wealth of Latinx students?

### **Conceptual Framework**

Tinto (2000) found that engagement is the single most significant predictor of graduation and completion. Students who disengage or "disintegrate" from the social or academic environment are far more likely to dropout or consider transferring (Tinto, 2000). Clearly, the literature reveals that engagement is critical to student success. At the same time, this leads to overly simplified narratives and assumptions within higher education. One such narrative removes the institution from culpability when students do not complete their program. Using the student engagement literature, this narrative erroneously assumes that any student who fails to persist, learn, graduate, and/or be satisfied must not have engaged in the learning enterprise or committed adequate time to learn and succeed (Kuh et al., 2007). Steele's (2011) work on academic performance and stereotype threat has challenged those assumptions and overly simplified narratives. For many academically struggling students, the narrative and solution is not as simple as putting in *more* time engaging in the campus environment (Steele, 2011). Steele's (2011) research shows this is especially true for many minoritized students, most of whom are asked to navigate an educational system that was designed around dominant forms of epistemology and cultural capital (Yosso, 2006; Swartz, 1997; Baxter Magolda, 2004). While the researchers cannot diminish the fact that engagement is essential to education (Kuh et al., 2007), the researchers also cannot ignore the fact that pedagogical systems have advantaged and disadvantaged certain groups throughout the history of higher education (Quaye & Harper, 2015;

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Yosso, 2006; Bourdieu, 1977). Therefore, the researchers sought to better understand student engagement for Latinx community college students. The research team reviewed promising practices informed by critical race theory. Specifically, Yosso's (2005) *Community Cultural Wealth Model* guided this study.



As displayed in Figure 1, Yosso's (2005) model of community cultural wealth looks at six forms of cultural capital: aspirational, familial, social, linguistic, resistant, and navigational capital. All six forms of cultural capital intersect to varying degrees for each individual, and collectively comprise what Yosso (2005) calls *community cultural wealth*. She defines this term as “an array of knowledge, skills, abilities, and contacts possessed and utilized by Communities

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of Color to survive and resist macro and micro forms of oppression” (Yosso, 2005, p. 9).

*Aspirational capital* refers to the ability to maintain hopes and dreams for the future even in the face of barriers (Yosso, 2006). *Linguistic capital* includes the intellectual and social skills attained through communication experiences in more than one language and/or style (Yosso, 2005). *Familial capital* refers to those cultural knowledges nurtured among familia (kin) that carry a sense of community history, memory, and cultural intuition (Yosso, 2005). *Social capital* can be understood as networks of people and community resources (Yosso, 2005). *Navigational capital* refers to the skills of maneuvering through social institutions (Yosso, 2006). *Resistant capital* refers to those knowledges and skills fostered through oppositional behavior that challenges inequality (Yosso, 2005).

### Overview of Methods

Critical to any systematic review is the methodology. As evidence-based education practitioners, the PICO framework was utilized to ground eligibility criteria. The population was limited to Latinx students in the community college context. Interventions included any curricular or co-curricular practice that leveraged or engaged any one of Yosso’s six forms of community cultural capital. Comparison was drawn to the suggested practices at the conclusion of each eligible study. For outcomes, studies that resulted in a broad range of student engagement, satisfaction, or success were evaluated. Ultimately, the eligibility criteria of the systematic review was intended to be restrictively narrow only when it came to the population, date of publication, study quality, and connection to CCW. Otherwise, this systematic review was purposefully designed with openness and generosity when it came to student success practices and outcomes.

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The research team utilized three primary databases—EBSCO, JSTOR, and ProQuest, including ProQuest Dissertation & Theses Global—to conduct the search. The team also identified seven journals or publications and searched those databases individually for eligible studies. Utilizing advanced search features, the protocol established keyword and filtered searches utilized to explore each identified database. Studies that turned up via database searches were input into RefWorks for recordkeeping management and further investigation of eligibility. After reviewing all abstracts and removing study duplicates, the full texts of each eligible study were thoroughly reviewed. Each eligible study was confirmed by at least two researchers.

Following this rigorous process of determining and assuring eligibility, data collection was completed. Using qualitative methodology, the research team extracted data using a set template and matrix. The extracted data was verified for accuracy by a second researcher. Data analysis was informed by the work of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), and followed their coding cycles and thematic labels.

### **Significance of the Study**

Yosso's (2005) CCW model can be applied to all levels of the educational pipeline in the United States (Yosso, 2006). For educational equity to be realized, it is imperative for all levels of the pipeline to critically evaluate which forms of cultural capital/wealth are being centralized and affirmed, and which forms are being marginalized or viewed negatively within the educational system. If higher education in the United States is genuinely interested in improving completion rates among Latinx students, it must be willing to rethink and redesign around alternative forms of cultural capital. No student should be marginalized or made to feel that "college wasn't made for them" (Yosso, 2005; Mayhew et al, 2016). Higher education policymakers, educators, administrators, and professionals must identify promising practices that

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engage and leverage the existing cultural capital of Latinx students and that will help them succeed. The hope is that this study will synthesize the recent body of research on this topic and help higher education professionals, especially those in the community college context, rethink what they do and how they do it.

It is also imperative to acknowledge the inherent diversity represented within the Latinx student population. In this study, the researchers attempted to refrain from assuming Latinx college students are a monolithic group. The truth is that each Latinx student steps foot on campus with a unique story, goals, and established skills. While this study certainly has the potential to advance the field by synthesizing critical research, the researchers also hope it inspires higher education professionals to embrace an anti-deficit mindset and to discover the existing cultural capital within each Latinx student.

### **Backgrounds and Roles of Researchers**

Since the researcher is the interpretive and analytical tool in qualitative research (Maxwell, 2013; Miles et al., 2014), developing awareness of personal inclinations, biases, assumptions, experiences, and positionalities is methodologically imperative (Bourke, 2014). Complete neutrality or objectivity is impossible. Therefore, positionalities cannot be negated—they must be accounted for and increasingly understood in qualitative research. As a research team, we each bring to this study our personal experiences with cultural awareness, and our professional experiences of working with students. All four members of the team approach this work through the lens of education practitioners.

Bourke (2014) explained that the researcher's political stance, beliefs, and cultural background are variables that impact the qualitative research process. The life experiences of those conducting the study, like those of whom the study is conducted about, are framed in

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social-cultural contexts (Bourke, 2014). The author concluded that the differences in identity can result in bias observations and interpretations, and a disjointed nature of the study. Bourke (2014) too questioned his positionality as a White male studying race related experiences of undergraduate minoritized students. Therefore, the researchers felt it imperative to provide a brief section on our individual positionalities.

**Amity Butler:** As a White female member of the dominant culture, I have not experienced the kinds of exclusion or imposter syndrome that many of the subjects in our studies we examined have experienced. However, I must be cautious as we learn and consider the Community Cultural Wealth model as it relates to the studies we examined. My background of 26 years in public education as a 15-year classroom teacher and coach to 10 years as a building principal to a central office administrator have given me a breadth of perspective with which to consider Latinx students and what they bring to the educational setting. In my latest position, I work with more English Learners than I ever have before. The work involved in Yosso's (2005) Community Cultural Wealth model provides me with background and theory that strengthens the support we can provide to our K-12 students and families.

**Erik Engstrom:** As a White male, my experience of the educational pipeline and broader American society has undoubtedly been privileged. I grew up in Southern California and attended public schools until high school. My proximity to the southern border meant my life was filled with Mexican cultural influences, including many friendships with Chicana/o neighbors and classmates. Mexican cultural influences were also incorporated into the academic curriculum during my primary and secondary education. In many ways, I have grown up with a respect and appreciation for Chicano culture. However, as I learned in adult life by moving to Ohio and Washington, my upbringing was unique.

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I also bring to this study my experience as student affairs professional having served 14 years at private liberal arts colleges. I am passionate about student success, equity, and well-being that extends beyond classroom. My work centers upon student engagement and learning through co-curricular programs. I constantly implore students to think of campus community spaces and experiences as an extension of their classroom learning. From a purely pedagogical perspective, I believe that learning is more than the consumption and retention of information—it is a process whereby learners construct meaning and attempt to become better human beings. Undoubtedly, this perspective informs my approach to this study and relationship to the research itself.

My passion for building community across human differences among college students runs parallel with my need to offer them a rich college experience that is inclusive and offers a sense of family. College students are increasingly identifying as lonely, and racial divisiveness is thriving under the current presidential administration. I would be remiss to not mention that these concerns are a driving factor for this research study. Finding productive practices to combat these social concerns is a motivating factor for me.

**Gena Lusk:** I grew up in a rural Oregon town with an estimated population of 1200 residents, many were high school educated, lower to middle class, and White. My K-12 years were met with two students who don't identify as White.

Our research question focuses on the Latinx experience, I feel ashamed of the misconceptions I grew up with. Growing up in a rural town, farming was the primary employment option. Most high schoolers would spend their summer days behind the wheel of massive farming equipment. Alongside the teenagers, migrant workers were on foot performing most of the manual labor associated with hay baling. Migrant workers were primarily classified

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as Mexican and undocumented, regardless if that was accurate. I feel ashamed for my willingness to accept this stereotype so ignorantly. It is my hope that our study demonstrates the importance of inclusiveness and cultural awareness for educators to consider when developing practices that leverage student engagement.

**Shurla Rogers-Thibou:** I was born and raised in the United States Virgin Islands (U.S.V.I.), a tourist destination that holds a wealth of cultural diversity. My birthright grants me immediate U.S. citizenship, yet the geographical location of my birthplace wraps me in the narrative of a Caribbean woman. I have spent half of my life as a native of the U.S.V.I. and the other half as a long-term visitor in the State of Washington where I searched for a place of being-and-belonging when I attended Shoreline Community College. I bring with me to this research my struggles when navigating through a predominately White institution as a person of color; I longed for family, familiar community, and both programs and courses that aligned with my multi-layered cultural identity. I hope that our study can reach a large audience of practitioners who may consider, strategize, and implement best practices that support Latinx students' successful completion of college, which may further encourage them to seek degrees at the university level.

Latinx college students in the United States is a growing population. This population of students should be supported when designing policies and practices for college students' success. Martinez and Hernandez (2008) shared that Latinx students are more likely to attend a community college than any other form of postsecondary education. Our agreement to approach this study with Latinx students seemed relevant to postsecondary education's promotion of diversity and inclusion. Our two research questions call for practitioners to support Latinx students' success and persistence toward degree completion in postsecondary education.

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Considering that none of the team members are of Latinx background, the development of our individual positionality prior to conducting the study directed us toward a self-reflection of student engagement, while allowing us to remove ourselves from the center of the research work as this ensures validity of the data collected and analyzed. “The concept of self as research instrument reflects the likelihood that the researcher’s own subjectivity will come to bear on the research project and any subsequent reporting of findings. Interpretation consists of two related concepts: the ways in which the researcher accounts for the experiences of the subjects and of her or himself, and the ways in which study participants make meaning of their experiences” (Bourke, 2014, p. 5).

The knowledge gained from conducting this study enhances our cultural awareness of ways that Latinx students navigate the college experience, and how the researchers can mindfully contribute to Latinx students’ success in preparation for and/or through their experience in the academe.

### **Limitations and Delimitations**

This study will have some limitations and delimitations, which are necessary to address. Delimiting factors, outside of the research team’s control, are: (a) due to the criterion established for the sample of reviewed to provide evidence, findings are to limit to peer-reviewed articles and doctoral dissertations; (b) selected time frame for published literature; (c) definitions and/or misclassification of Latinx, student engagement, student success, and associated practices may be inconsistent; (d) coding protocols relied on study authors to make the connection between student engagement practices and cultural capital; and study only focused on Yosso’s Community Cultural Wealth Framework.

Third, it is important to point out that there is expansive literature on student engagement practices for Latinx community college students. Many excellent studies further the conversation on this subject matter that pay no consideration to Yosso's CCW framework. Though the researchers find CCW compelling, it is undoubtedly not exhaustive when it comes to student engagement practices or Latinx student capital for that matter. For example, using several other asset-based theoretical frameworks, Rendon, Nora, and Kanagala (2014) expand upon Yosso's CCW framework and forms of cultural capital. They add four new forms of capital to the list: (1) *ganas*/perseverance, (2) ethnic consciousness, (3) spirituality/faith, and (4) pluriversal (Rendon, Nora, & Kanagala, 2014). For this reason, the researchers must highlight the delimitation that comes with focusing exclusively on Yosso's CCW framework, and strongly encourage that the present study be read alongside the broader literature on Latinx student success and engagement strategies.

Study limitations may include: (1) risk of bias, such as lack of blinding for subjective outcomes or unavailability of data; (2) inconsistency of effect or association, as demonstrated by high heterogeneity; (3) potential imprecision in results due to few events or small sample size; (4) indirectness of evidence, such as the use of an intermediate or short-term outcome; and (5) possibility of publication bias. The research team took various measures to reduce the impact of these limitations, especially accounting for and attempting to reduce bias in data collection and analysis. However, it must be responsibly acknowledged that qualitative systematic reviews possess inherent limitations.

### **Definition of Terms**

**Achieving the Dream.** Achieving the Dream is a national initiative for community colleges to develop interventions based on longitudinal findings from academic transcripts and

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additional information on student demographics to inform policymakers on which group of students need greater assistance to improve student success outcomes (Zachry & Schneider, 2006).

**Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE).** The CCSSE is a national and institution-specific assessment to evaluate community college student engagement as an indicator of the learning environment and effectiveness of the academic institution (Akin, 2009).

**Community Cultural Wealth (CCW).** CCW is a construct of the critical race theory that represents the techniques, knowledge, and skill-sets Communities of Color utilize to combat macro and micro-forms of oppression (Yosso, 2005).

**Critical Race Theory (CRT).** CRT is a field of study designed to speak truth to power and expose the impact of racism on programs, policies, and social structures (Yosso, 2005).

**First-year student.** First-year student is a gender-neutral label that shifts away from the term freshman. The term is also an identifier for academic progress.

**Guided pathways.** The guided pathways model is a redesign and critique of the current community college system in America. The model centers upon the goal of community college to be about access *and* student success. Everything within the student experience—from enrollment to graduation--is reconsidered and reoriented to keep students on the pathway to completion (Bailey, Jaggars, & Jenkins, 2015a).

**Latinx.** Latinx is a gender-neutral term that shifts away from the usage of Latino/a or Latin@, and also does not assume the gender binary (Salinas & Lozana, 2017). The population accounts for a very diverse group that typically includes: (a) Mexicans; (b) Central Americans;

(c) Latin Americans; (d) Puerto Ricans; (e) Dominicans (of the Dominican Republic); and (f) Cubans (Gaitan, 2013).

**Minoritized students.** Minoritized students are people that identify contextually with non-dominant communities based on race, sexual orientation, language, physical mobility, gender, and socio-economic status (Chappell & Cahnmann-Taylor, 2013).

**PICO Framework.** The PICO Framework is a structured approach to meta-analysis and meta-synthesis. It is an acronym that stands for (P) problem/population, (I) intervention, (C) comparison, and (O) outcome. (Schardt et al, 2007).

**Six Success Factors Framework.** The Six Success Factors Framework is a model developed to provide specific environmental conditions which are found to influence student success rates. The six factors include (1) directed, (2) focused, (3) engaged, (4) connected, (5) nurtured, and (6) valued (Purnell et al., 2014).

**Student engagement.** Student engagement is defined as student time and participation in educationally effective practices, both inside and outside the classroom, which leads to a range of measurable outcomes (Quaye & Harper, 2015).

**Student Engagement Momentum.** Student engagement momentum occurs when an academic institution provides resources, activities, and programs that assist in the continuous investment of student's time and energy devoted to the institution's educational resources, and the student is increasingly motivated to complete (Kuh, Kinzie, Cruce, Shoup, & Gonyea, 2006).

### Summary

The open access policies in American community colleges create a diverse student population with equally diverse goals and support needs. Yet the data suggests that Latinx students are underserved in higher education and this results in lower completion rates than

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White or Asian American community college students (Bailey et al., 2015; Gaitan, 2013). This is despite the fact that Latinx students are more likely to attend a community college than any other form of postsecondary education (Martinez & Hernandez, 2018). As community colleges focus increased attention on Latinx student success and engagement, the entirety of the student experience—connection, entry, progress, and completion (Completion by Design, 2018)—should be evaluated and subject to critical redesign in the hopes of improving student success outcomes (Bailey et al., 2015). This study will explore how community colleges in the United States might rethink and adjust their practices to better leverage the existing community cultural capital of Latinx students.

## CHAPTER 2

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

#### **Introduction**

This chapter contains a review of research literature and is organized as follows: (1) the recent history and policy landscape of community colleges in the United States, (2) initiatives and models that are presently reshaping the community college sector, (3) review of the literature on student success and engagement practices before concluding with a section on the research literature regarding Latinx students, and (4) the conceptual framework that guides this research study.

#### **Community College Systems and Structures**

##### **The California Master Plan of Higher Education**

When it comes to Latinx community college students, several states are leading the charge. The top five states with the highest percentages of Hispanic and Latinx residents happen to be locations where community colleges are rethinking and redesigning. California, in particular, has gone to great lengths to enroll Latinx persons in postsecondary education. According to Boland, et al. (2018), California represents one of the most expansive systems of higher education in the United States. In California, 75% of students in higher education are enrolled at a community college (Boland et al., 2018). In an effort to increase the accessibility of higher education for all California residents, the State of California developed the California Master Plan. Established in 1960, the California Master Plan developed a system of cooperative higher education institutions including (a) University of California; (b) California State University, and (c) California Community Colleges (Boland et al., 2018). California Community Colleges (CCC) allowed greater accessibility into higher education compared to the University of California (Boland et al., 2018). According to Boland et al. (2018), most California

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Community Colleges were predominately minority-serving institutions. Stated by Boland et al. (2018), the Latinx population of California was approximately 38% in 2013, yet, in the year 2012, the California Latinx community earned the lowest household income compared to any other racial group in the state.

The California Master Plan has received criticism due to the poor transfer rate of Black and Latinx students to 4-year institutions since its inception in 1960, especially when compared to White students (Boland et al., 2018; Crisp & Nunez, 2014). Black and Latinx students in California are also far more likely to enroll in vocational programs than White or Asian students (Crisp & Nunez, 2014).

To address mounting criticism, the California educational system developed a long-term strategy to advance racial equity and create better pathways for students of color to earn college degrees. In 1991, the California Community Colleges Board of Governors approved a plan labeled the Long-Range Plan (California Community Colleges, 2016). Unfortunately, many of the lofty goals have not been met due to funding shortfalls and lack of follow through from the California Postsecondary Education Commission (California Community Colleges, 2016). Under a revised plan, a new framework was implemented to improve expansion efforts to increase retention of newly admitted students. The revised plan updated population data including student demographics and projected enrollment trends (California Community Colleges, 2016). The Long-Range Master Plan theorizes that by 2023, approximately 355,000 additional students will seek access to a community college to reach their educational goals (California Community Colleges, 2016). Once viewed as the gold standard in community college systems, California has continued to underperform when it comes to degree completion rates, especially when considering Latinx students. In the past 10 years, a new model has emerged that upholds the

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value of college access while also emphasizing the importance of student success and completion. This model is called the guided pathways model.

**Guided Pathways Model**

Since the publication of *Redesigning America's Community Colleges* (Bailey, Jaggars, & Jenkins, 2015a), the guided pathways approach has become one of the preeminent models for degree completion at community colleges nationwide (Jenkins, Lahr, Fink, & Ganga, 2018). The model is based on extensive research from studies on higher education and inspired by research in organizational, behavioral, and cognitive sciences (Bailey et al., 2015b). Designed in stark contrast to the conventional community college approach referred to as the “cafeteria” or self-service model (Bailey et al., 2015a), the guided pathways approach centers on four areas of practice: (1) map pathways to student end goals, (2) help students choose and enter a program pathway, (3) help students stay on path through intentional support services, and (4) ensure that students are learning through program learning outcomes and assessment (Jenkins, Lahr, & Fink, 2017). The model is highly structured and requires an integrated, institution-wide focus on student success (AACC Pathways Project, 2018). It is designed to create momentum toward student success and prevent attrition—building into the student experience various systems of monitoring progress and early-alerts that activate streamlined interventions (Completion by Design, 2018). Though still in early stages of formal implementation, research on the model has displayed both positive impact and significant potential for the future of postsecondary education in the United States (Jenkins et al, 2018), while also revealing several new challenges for institutions to confront (Fink, 2017).

Since student success is the ultimate goal of the guided pathways model, the entire student experience from admission to completion is considered (Bailey et al., 2015b).

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Nevertheless, extra attention within the model is given to the entry phase and a student's persistence through the first several terms. The associated programs within these phases of the student experience—i.e. career advising, placement testing, academic advising, orientation, and first-year experience curriculum/co-curriculum—present numerous opportunities to on-ramp students to pathways of success and to help them build momentum towards degree completion (Completion by Design, 2018).

The guided pathways approach begins with institutional readiness via organizational culture, academic curriculum, and simplified processes (Bailey et al., 2015b). In contrast to the cafeteria model which places strong emphasis on access and vast course options that result in confusing pathways to degree completion (Bailey et al., 2015a), the guided pathways model is designed to simplify the pathways to degree completion (Jenkins et al., 2017). Prior to a student ever setting foot in a college classroom, registering for classes, or undergoing a series of placement tests, college faculty must create program maps with clear course sequences and learning outcomes (Bailey et al., 2015b). Program maps serve as the guides for students to understand the pathways to completion and goal attainment, whether that be a degree, certificate, or transfer to a four-year institution (Bailey et al., 2015b). Program mapping requires system-wide ownership and supportive structures for students to easily navigate (Van Noy, Trimble, Jenkins, Barnett, & Wachen, 2016). Assuming organizational structures and mapped pathways are in place, a student can move from admission to entry while gaining momentum towards success (Completion by Design, 2018).

The guided pathways model is completely changing the landscape and design of American community colleges (Jenkins et al., 2018b). It is a force that requires the attention of community college leaders. Since the model is concerned with the entire student experience, it

draws from research and identified best practices in all facets of that experience. It is transforming student success initiatives in the United States community college systems and is holding institutions accountable for *both* access and completion.

### **Student Success Practices**

Goldrick-Rab (2010) stresses that increasing access to college is met with a declining rate of degree or certificate completion among students at two-year community colleges. The actions of community colleges and that of their students are framed in the idea of admission and attendance rather than college completion. State funding is often based on enrollment whereby colleges are rewarded for the number of students that enter into the institution, but have little incentive to focus on student success, graduation, and learning outcomes (Bailey et al., 2015a). To diagnose and address student success barriers institutions must address a dynamic set of challenges and shift their focus from access to completion (Goldrick-Rab, 2010; Bailey et al., 2015a).

Goldrick-Rab (2010) dismisses the popular idea that practitioners tend to attribute low college completion rates to multiple student deficiencies, and instead explore ways in which the institution policies affect student progress. She states that “all efforts to enhance community college student success should be rigorously evaluated within frameworks that are capable of both estimating and explaining impacts” (p. 22). The author believes that progress can be made if the best research on community colleges requires the use of both quantitative and qualitative methods. Goldrick-Rab (2010) asserts that “the increased attention to the public 2-year sector in policy circles should be matched by increased attention by researchers” (p. 22).

Goldrick-Rab (2010) examined studies from education, social science, and policy over the course of 25 years, mainly factors that contribute to community college students’ success.

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The methodological approach included 2,200 published studies since 1985, and articles that contained abstracts use of a combination of the keywords, such as community college students; 2-year student; degree completion; persistence, momentum, and barriers. Other published scholarly works were consulted, and a total of 3,000 studies were filtered down to approximately 750 studies, all of which met two criteria: (1) the use of quantitative or qualitative methods to address the research questions, and (2) quantitative studies had to produce findings that could reasonably be generalized beyond the sample to the larger population of community college students. Social inequalities were considered as a factor that impact community college students' success, many analysts show that one of the root causes of low college completion rates are connected to student characteristics.

Kuh et al. (2005) promote the idea of collaborative efforts as a foundation for student success in college. Kuh et al. (2005) share that their project began with the question: "What do high-performing colleges do to promote student success, broadly defined?" (p. 295). The question was met with findings taken from their visits to 20 institutions that provided answers. The conclusion rests on the idea that student learning and overall success should be widely shared by various groups of stakeholders. "Any institution that wishes to make student achievement, satisfaction, persistence, and learning a priority must have competent student affairs professionals whose contributions complement the academic mission of the institution in ways that help students and the institution realize their respective goals." (Kuh et al., 2005, p. 296).

### **Student Engagement**

Alexander Astin's (1984) theory of student involvement hypothesizes that the more time a student invests in their college experience, the more student development and learning will

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result. Student involvement is measured by the amount and significance of emotional and physical energy students devote to their academic experience (Astin, 1984). Education programs and resources are only effective if they can increase student's involvement in the process (Astin, 1984). Involvement can be measured through the lens of academic coursework, participation in campus activities, and connections made with campus faculty and staff (Astin, 1984). The theory maintains that a student's involvement is varied based on the student's continuous investment in their college experience. Astin's (1984) theory is especially pragmatic—highlighting a number of ways in which faculty and administrators can measure student involvement.

In many ways, Astin's (1984) work paved the way for contemporary research on student engagement in higher education. However, as Quaye and Harper (2014) point out, there is a “key qualitative difference between involvement and engagement: it is possible to be involved in something without being engaged” (p. 4). The work that has followed Astin (1984) has largely focused in on engagement and its contrasting features to involvement.

Leading the way in the study of student engagement is George Kuh and associates (2005, 2007). Through their research and involvement with multiple institutes has come many of the national surveys frequently used by educational institutions to study student engagement. In one such study, Kuh, Kinzie, Buckley, Bridges, and Hayek (2007) define student engagement as representing two critical features:

The first is the amount of time and effort students put into their studies and other educationally purposeful activities...The second component of student engagement is how the institution deploys its resources and organizes the curriculum, other learning opportunities, and support services to induce students to participate in activities that lead

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to the experiences and desired outcomes such as persistence, satisfaction, learning, and graduation. (p. 44)

Quaye and Harper (2015) offer a more succinct definition, saying that student engagement is “participation in educationally effective practices, both inside and outside the classroom, which leads to a range of measurable outcomes” (p. 2). However, Kuh et al.’s (2007) definition highlights an important dynamic: that two parties—the student and the institution—share responsibility in student engagement. The time and energy a student invests into the learning process cannot solely be the student’s concern. Higher education institutions must create the conditions for students to succeed. These compelling environments (Kuh, Kinzie, Shuh, & Whitt, 2005) create practices and programs that make student engagement inescapable (CCCSE, 2014).

These conditions and engagement opportunities should span the entire student experience and be applicable to all postsecondary students. However, when it comes to community college student engagement, several frameworks are presently driving policy change. Namely, Completion by Design’s (2018) Loss/Momentum Framework and RP Group’s (2013) Six Success Factors.

**Loss/momentum framework.**

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation funded various initiatives that developed the Loss/Momentum Framework as a continuation of the work established in Achieving the Dream (Completion by Design, 2018). The model focuses on student pathways and the end goal of degree completion (Completion by Design, 2018). It views the student experience in four stages: connection, entry, progress, and completion (Completion by Design, 2018). The framework measures each stage in terms of how it contributes to student engagement *and* momentum. The framework possesses a simplified perspective on student experiences as contributing either

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positively or negatively to engagement and, therefore, to student success and degree completion (Completion by Design, 2018). All institutional services and agents work to facilitate students' experiences that create positive student engagement momentum and encourage students towards the next step in their student journey. Each step is perceived as a process that builds into the next. Though the framework provides a common list of momentum and loss points, the list is not exhaustive. Not every positive or negative element to the student experience is detailed within the Loss/Momentum Framework. Ultimately, every institution must survey and explore common themes in engagement loss/momentum points (Completion by Design, 2018).

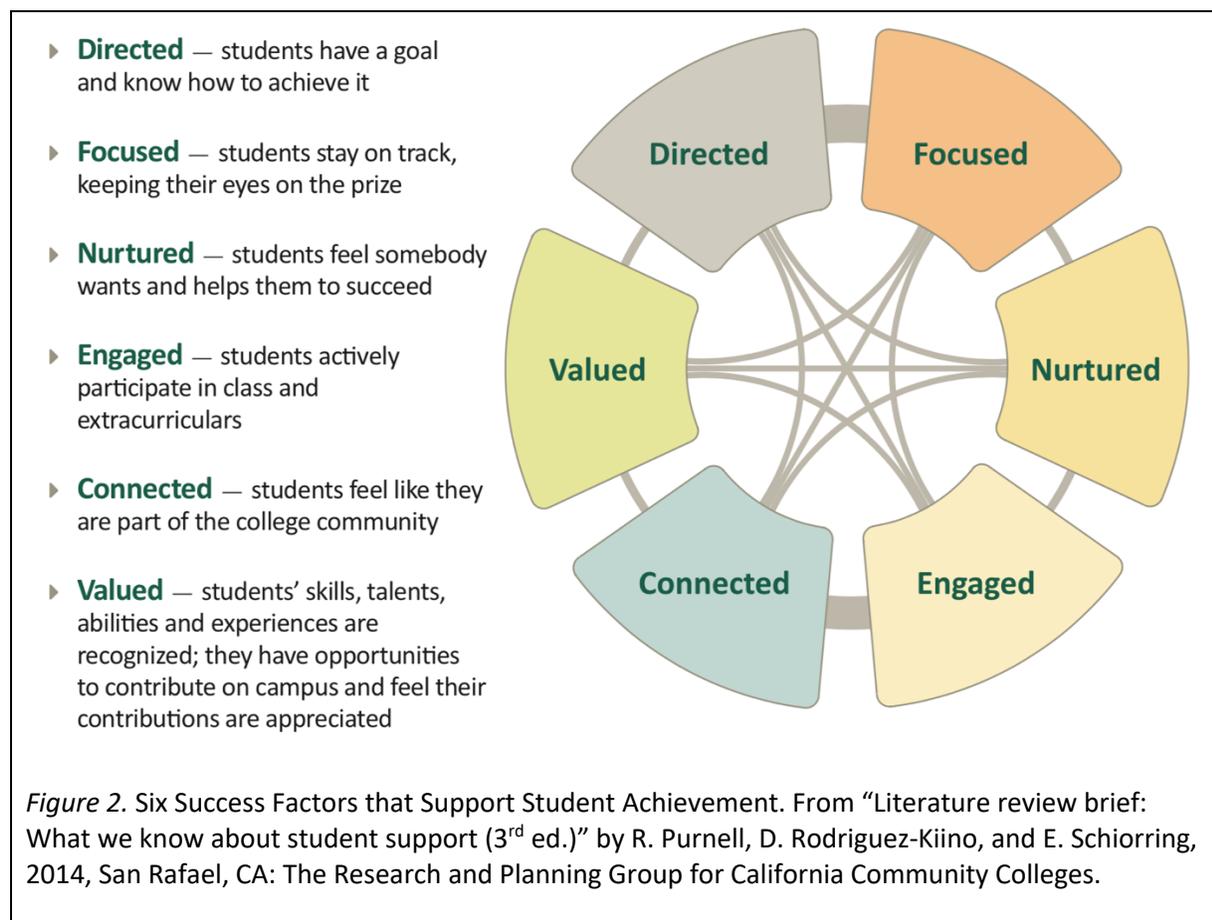
**Six success factors framework.**

The second theoretical lens serves to complement the first. Where the Loss/Momentum Framework leaves the institution to discern points of engagement loss or momentum, the Six Success Factors provides appropriate substance for momentum experiences during the entry process. The RP Group—a professional association of community college administrators in California working to strengthen the state-wide system—conducted an extensive review of the literature to explore the environmental conditions which contribute to student success (Purnell, Rodriguez-Kiino, & Schiorring, 2014). The authors of the report concluded that students are more likely to succeed when:

- (1) They have a goal and path leading to this goal, (2) they stay motivated to achieve this outcome, (3) they are engaged in the classroom, (4) they feel connected to the college community, (5) they believe that their success matters to others, and (6) they feel they are contributing positively to the college culture and community (Purnell et al., 2014, p. 4).

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The RP Group has continued to utilize these success factors in multiple studies since and has summarized them with the titles of “directed, focused, engaged, connected, nurtured, and valued” (Purnell et al., 2014). The framework is laid out simply in Figure 2 below.



### Challenges Faced by College Students

Goldrick-Rab (2010) raises an important question for higher education—“given all of the challenges community colleges face, what policies and practices represent the most promising areas of reform” (p. 454)? The author addresses this question by looking at institutional practices and how community college administrators make decisions. One of those practices is academic advising. She argues for the importance of academic advising toward student success because

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without it students do not succeed (Goldrick-Rab, 2010). As a result of inadequate academic advising, many students take classes that they don't need and take more time to complete required courses. This in turn jeopardizes financial aid eligibility and leads to a higher likelihood of dropping out (Goldrick-Rab, 2010). Deil-Amen and Rosenbaum (2003) note that many stakeholders at colleges are under the belief that all students know how to navigate through college, and this assumption has contributed to the problem of attrition. They reference, as an example, "At a community college that serves a high poverty area, the academic support center dean notes that many students make mistakes in selecting classes on their own, and they later learn that their degree will take longer than they anticipated" (Deil-Amen & Rosenbaum, 2003, p. 124).

Goldrick-Rab (2010) makes a strong case for postsecondary educators and administrators to be data-driven and to "identify opportunities for improved intuitional performance and enhanced student outcomes" (p. 450). Challenges in student success are dynamic and nuanced, and it is apparent that no easy answer exists. As institutions attempt to collect and utilize more meaningful data, Goldrick-Rab (2010) again offers reasonable advice to community college administrators. She calls for increased research with pragmatic questions or focus on program effectiveness (Goldrick-Rab, 2010). Ideally, this research will be designed to appropriately rule out competing explanations, providing grounds for stronger inference and better understanding of pathways to degree completion and student success (Goldrick-Rab, 2010).

### **Academic Advising**

The importance of student engagement with academic programs and advising professionals during their journey to earn a college degree is a notion that is further explored by

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Young-Jones et al. (2013). The authors sought out to study the factors that best promote student success in higher education and they conclude that future research is needed for the development of quality academic advising. They also claim that “the freshman year often seems to be a make-or-break time for undergraduate students in terms of continued progress toward college degree completion” (Young-Jones et al., 2013, p. 12). The authors share statistics taken from Hart Research Associates that show, in the year 2010, approximately one in seven (16%) high school graduates who entered into higher education did not progress beyond their first year in college.

Young-Jones et al. (2013) found that academic advising has a positive impact upon student success. They assert that academic advising can “vitaly impact all facets of a student’s academic experience, ranging from development of self-efficacy to practical applications of study skills” (Young-Jones et al., 2013, p. 15). The authors further add that the levels to which advisors are available to students (e.g. meeting with them, empowering them, and providing them with assistance and support) is clearly linked to factors demonstrated to predict student success (Young-Jones et al., 2013). Their second goal of the study was to discover the various ways that personal variables impact student progress. They found that a need exists in advising practices, especially in interventions, to improve supports and success pathways for certain at-risk populations. Specifically, students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds and minority high school students are more likely to receive secondary schooling in vocational rather than academic tracks (Young-Jones et al., 2013). They also found an interesting correlation between attendance patterns and student success—that uninterrupted transition to college increases the possibility of degree completion (Young-Jones et al., 2013).

Young-Jones et al. (2013) conclude that the results of their study “highlight how higher education institutions can benefit by supporting the research and assessment efforts upon which

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those interventions are based” (p. 16). Goldrick-Rab (2010) also promote the idea of researchers working collectively with key stakeholders at community colleges to increase student success. Young-Jones et al. (2013) notes that faculty-student interactions will not suffice for students’ academic goals and outcomes, instead, there should be overlapping institutional efforts outside of course-related faculty-student relations.

### **Latinx Community College Students**

According to the Pew Research Center (2017), the Latinx population in the United States reached nearly 58 million in 2016 and has accounted for half of the national population growth since 2000. In 2016, Latinx persons accounted for 18% of the nation’s population according to the U.S. census which includes both documented and undocumented citizens. The number of Latinx persons from Mexico has decreased as the migration from elsewhere in Latin America has increased. Thus the U.S. Latinx population is drawn from a diverse mix of primarily Spanish-speaking countries (Pew Research, 2017). The same research report states that almost 40% of Latinx persons age 25 and older had some college experience in 2015.

As Gaitan (2013) acknowledges, “As is true in all cultures, there is no single Latino family type. Latinos are as diverse as any other ethnic group. Mexican, Mexican American, Chicano, Central Americans, Latin Americans, Puerto Ricans, Dominicans, and Cubans comprise identities within the Latino population in the United States” (p. 20). She continues on to discuss the power struggle between the immigrant group and the English-speaking mainstream group with competing political interests. Throughout Gaitan’s book, she addresses many of the issues other researchers also have found get in the way of Latinx students not only getting into college, but persisting once they have begun. The following themes emerged when it came to factors impeding Latinx student success: (1) limitations due to finances, (2) college proximity to

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home, (3) obligation to familial roles, (4) institutional failure to affirm cultural capital, (5) future employment restrictions, (6) lack of community support once on campus, and (7) a need for an institutional agent at the college.

**Financial Limitations**

Gaitan (2013) personally connected with her broader research themes for Latinx college students—specifically, how she felt she couldn't tell her father about the possibility of going away to school until she received a scholarship to do so. She knew she would not be able to attend unless she was offered the money to do so. Many Latinx students are in the same position (Gaitan, 2013). Finances are one reason many Latinx students begin their college careers at community colleges. Unfortunately, finances also are often the reason many community college Latinx students do not transfer to four-year institutions (O'Connor, 2009, O'Connor, Hammack, & Scott, 2010). O'Connor also noted that, "Studies consistently show that Hispanics are at a major disadvantage compared to Blacks and Whites in their access to college financial information" (p. 198). O'Connor examined why there are a disproportionately high number of Latinx students attending community colleges compared to White and Black students. Many Latinx families are not aware that there are resources available to them that might make a college education accessible to them even if they do not have the financial wherewithal to pay for schooling. Stanton-Salazar & Dornbusch (1995) suggest disparities in access to four-year institutions as well as financial information may be a result of linguistic and cultural barriers that make it less likely that Latinx students will seek help from school personnel. This creates an information gap among Latinx students and parents which could result in students who may qualify for four-year institutions attending community colleges instead (Plank & Jordan, 1997). Martinez & Fernandez (2004) found that Latinx students attend community colleges at a greater

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rate than any other minoritized race or ethnic group in America. The research implies that the other groups may be seeking out education opportunities at four-year institutions at higher rates than Latinx students.

**Proximity to Home**

Often connected to the issue of finances is the expectations that Latinx students feel at home. Many Latinx families instill in their children a strong sense of family. “This [description] occurs so frequently that valuing the family as a characteristic of Latino college students borders on a stereotype” (Ortiz, 2004, p. 91). Moving away from or out of the home to attend college is not even considered for many Latinx students. It is even more unlikely for Latinas to attend college and live away from home (Gonzalez, Jovel, & Stoner, 2004). Gonzalez, Jovel, and Stoner (2004) found that female Latina students who left home to attend college illustrated, “Along with their excitement about the opportunity to attend a prestigious university, many of the students commented that they carried a sense of guilt with their decision to leave home. Most of the students described the awkwardness of feeling both happy and guilty at the same time” (Gonzalez et al., 2004, p. 20). Community colleges are a great solution for many students in this position. Latinx students can live at home and attend college in the local community in which they live. The problem then arises when they complete their two years at the community college and may wish or need to transfer to a four-year institution to complete their baccalaureate. Perhaps it is for this reason that many Latinx persons look at trade schools or career pathways that only require a two-year degree. Drawing inspiration from Nora and Rendon (1990), O’Connor states, “Hispanic students who begin at a 2-year institution are significantly less likely than their White peers to transfer to a 4-year school, for a variety of factors. Lack of financial resources and the need to work while in college were found to reduce likelihood of transfer, as

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well as the need for remediation in English and math” (2009, p.124). The pressure on many Latinx students is to contribute financially and functionally to the family. Moving away—even temporarily and with the hopes of increasing long-term earning potential—is still more than many Latinx families can presently afford (O’Connor, 2009). The student moving away or spending the time necessary to pursue higher education when they could be working and earning an income takes a toll on the entire family. This reality jeopardizes the family support and may create a tension at home for many Latinx students. Making the decision to move away for college despite these major obstacles is a tenuous step for any student to take who has grown up with a sense of family responsibility (Desmond & Turley, 2009).

**Family Obligations**

Proximity to home allows Latinx students to continue to care for family members while they attend school. Flexible class schedules also supports students with family obligations. Wood and Harris (2015) argue that male Latino students select colleges based on institutions they believe will have the greatest net-utility or potential value for their future earnings and economic trajectory to support their family obligations. They continue on to state, “Once a student enters college, they evaluate whether or not the perceived benefits and costs of college are in line with their actual experiences. When congruent, students are more likely to persist. However, when dissonance occurs between perceived and actual benefits and costs, students are more likely to leave” (Wood & Harris, 2015, p. 517).

Researchers Gonzalez, Jovel, and Stoner (2004) explored the female Latina experience as they interviewed Latinas leaving home for college. They found it difficult for Latinas and especially first generation college Latina students to navigate the multiple obstacles involved with leaving home. Female Latina student family obligations often center on caring for other

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family members. Historically and traditionally, Latina were viewed primarily as daughters, wives, and mothers—roles exclusive to the household or family network. As their roles have expanded increasingly outside the home and family, they have explored options in higher education to varying degrees often dependent and still with a focus upon family support. As stated in the previous section, female Latina students must contend with attending school away from home alongside being present for their families. Their struggles are both internal and external—internal in regard to homesickness and wanting to be near family, and external in regard to contributing financially to the family. Families with multiple children often have an easier time if the older male sibling has paved the way for a younger female child, but every family is individual in its situation (Gonzalez et al., 2004).

**Institutional Failure to Affirm Cultural Capital**

As Yosso, Smith, Ceja, & Solorzano (2009), acknowledge, many universities often experience diversity of convenience versus genuine diversity or pluralism when referring to campus racial climates. Many campuses struggle to commit to providing equal access and opportunities to Students of Color. “Genuine racial diversity or pluralism refers to underrepresented racial and ethnic groups being physically present and treated as equals on the college campus. . . Such efforts may disrupt the institutional status quo and destabilize the university’s historical racial power base” (Yosso et al, 2009, p. 664).

“Critical race theory and Latino critical theory offer unique approaches to understanding and meeting the needs of Latinos in higher education. . . By focusing attention on alleged race-neutral and color-blind practices that in actuality are clearly quite racially biased and exclusionary, CRT and LatCrit can help higher education practitioners develop more responsive and comprehensive approaches that enhance the educational experiences of Latino college

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students” (Villalpando, 2004, p. 48). Villalpando reminds us that higher education can use CRT and LatCrit to consider their offerings focused on serving their Latinx population when assessing their progress or work toward improving their support for their minoritized populations.

As Juana Bordas discusses in her book, *Salsa, Soul, and Spirit* (2012), the Latinx culture is a collectivist culture. In a collectivist culture, family and group values take precedence over the individual. “People work for group success before personal credit or gain” (Bordas, p. 49). Higher education institutions have an opportunity to draw from Latinx students’ higher likelihood of familial capital (Yosso, 2006) and the sense of belonging (Strayhorn, 2012) and the collectivist culture Bordas speaks to when examining programming and practices designed to better include Students of Color and Latinx students in particular.

### **Future Employment Limitations**

Once enrolled in community colleges, Latinx students need to see the purpose of their classes as they relate to their future work in order to remain engaged and focused on school. As stated above, the concept of “net-utility” comes into play when studying becomes difficult or skills that were not quite mastered begin to surface. As Latinx students explore the community college option, they enter with a background where they may never have really enjoyed high school. They may not have had any interest and not wanted to go. Constantine, Kindaichi, & Miville, (2007) label these *individual factors* that impede college aspirations. They contrast these factors with *structural factors* that limit Latinx student persistence, which are often concerns about discrimination in the collegiate setting—the feeling that they will be prohibited from certain career fields or programs of study. In turn, some Latinx students don’t consider or explore certain career options. Latinx students may be unaware of many programs of study or job opportunities that exist because they have never had any exposure to the possibilities growing

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up. Specifically, programs of study outside of traditional studies or in the fields of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) are areas of concern for Latinx students (Green, 2012).

Expanding on Constantine, Kindaichi, & Miville's (2007) points above, if Latinx students are not aware of the possibilities that exist in various fields of study, they will never have the same opportunities other students have entering school. Thus, government funded programs grow out of these situations (Governor Inslee's Proposed Budget, 2019-2021). However, the money often comes ahead of the structures in place to help the programs they intend to support. Much STEM funded programming has been pushed into the community college system based on the problem Constantine et al. (2007) posed. The community college system appears to be playing catch up to inform Latinx students along with other students about the vastly changing employment opportunities in the STEM arena.

**Lack of Campus Community Support**

Another area affecting persistence in the Latinx college experience is the lack or apparent lack of a way to connect with a community on campus. Lack of connection may be a product of living at home and having a thriving social network off-campus (McCabe, 2016). It may also be a product of the community college commuter student experience versus a residential four-year institution (McCabe, 2016) or have something to do with the broad range of ages typically associated with community college student profiles. However, one factor Hagedorn, Chi, Cepeda, and McLain (2007) found that supports persistence at the community college level was when there is a critical mass of Latinx student representation at the community college level. When there is high representation of Latinx students, academic performance and retention are positively affected (Hagedorn, Chi, Cepeda, & McLain, 2007). Hagedorn et al. (2007) do not

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advocate for all Latinx students enrolling exclusively in campuses with majority Latinx populations, but that college campuses should consider recruitment strategies that work to gain favor with local Latinx communities.

**Lack of Connection with an Institutional Agent**

The last area the researchers discovered that impacted Latinx persistence in higher education is their ability to have an individual with whom they connect at the institution they attend. Since Latinx students traditionally place high value on family and relationships, it is theorized that with high-level support and relationship with college employees, these students could persist at higher levels. Tovar (2015) found that if community colleges were able to capitalize on connecting each Latinx student with an institutional agent (e.g. instructor, counselor, or advisor) who offered support, it would positively influence that student's success and persistence to degree completion.

According to Lundberg and Schreiner (2004) students' relationships with instructors, rather than student characteristics, had a stronger effect on student learning, especially for Latinx and other minority students. Interactions with professors also had a positive effect on Latinx grade point averages (Lundberg & Schreiner, 2004). Student perception that staff paid attention to them and cared about them resulted in higher retention rates (Lundberg & Schreiner, 2004). Relationships clearly have an impact on students. Mentoring programs also showed positive college outcomes for community college students, including Latinx students, and it did not appear to matter if the mentoring was formal or informal (Tovar, 2015).

A feeling of belonging was critical in developing a college persistence model for Latinx students (Torres, 2006). Torres (2006) also advocates for creating ways to honor the Latinx culture rather than asking students to leave their traditions at home. He talks about creating

cognitive maps that include positive symbols and strategies to teach self-reflection and self-regulation to students. The above strategies work together to encourage students to feel part of the new institution and demonstrate the commitment the institution has toward the student. Teaching strategies to learn also demonstrates the institution's commitment toward the student (2006).

### **Summary**

This chapter provided a brief review of the literature that informed the study questions and context. The researchers explored historical and contemporary trends in community college practice and policy. Further, the literature on student success practices and Latinx students in this branch of postsecondary education within the United States was reviewed. The next chapter outlines the study methodology.

## CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

### **Introduction**

As previously discussed in the first two chapters, Latinx persons make up a significant portion of the community college student population in the United States. Yosso (2006) and other critical race theorists maintain that (1) the United States educational pipeline, including postsecondary education, favors some cultural capital while marginalizing other forms and (2) postsecondary education must redesign its educational practices, policies, and pedagogies according to alternative forms of community cultural capital. If postsecondary education is going to make this fundamental shift, it must first identify the educational practices that affirm, validate, and leverage student cultural capital and have proven to improve student success outcomes. That is the task and purpose of the current study.

As a reminder, the researchers sought out to address the following research questions:

1. How has Yosso's (2006) community cultural wealth model been utilized in student engagement practices for Latinx community college students over the past 5 years?
2. What student engagement practices are recommended or suggested for community colleges to better leverage the existing community cultural wealth of Latinx students?

This chapter outlines the methodology used in the synthesis review. The eligibility criteria, information sources, procedures, data analysis, limitations, and delimitations for this study are defined.

### **Research Studies Eligibility Criteria**

As evidence-based education practitioners, the researchers drew inspiration from the PICO framework to ground our methodological approach to eligibility criteria. This framework has become popular in numerous fields seeking to better align research and practice (Schardt et

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al., 2007). PICO is an acronym that stands for (P) population, (I) intervention, (C) comparison, and (O) outcomes. Each of these elements and how they shaped the eligibility criteria of our study are discussed in this chapter.

### **Population**

As revealed in the stated research questions, the study was focused exclusively with Latinx community college students in the United States. While acknowledging the differences in these terms and their subsequent meaning, for this study, the researchers included studies that used any or all of the following racial identities: Latinx, Latina/o, Hispanic, and/or Chicana/o. Though the term Latinx is used as an all-encompassing term for these various racial or ethnic identities in this study, studies were eligible for inclusion even if the study used one of these applicable terms. However, participants must have been exclusively one or more of these racial/ethnic identities. Studies that included Latinx students and students from other ethnic or racial identities were excluded from consideration, since many of these studies reported findings in the aggregate.

Eligible studies were also limited to community college students. Four-year colleges or universities were excluded from consideration, since student engagement needs and practices inevitably differ in these contexts. However, studies that looked at students who successfully transferred from a community college to a four-year college/university were considered eligible as long as all of the study participants fit this demographic.

Participants of all ages and genders were considered eligible. Though the researchers initially considered balancing out single-gender studies, it was decided to include all eligible single-gender studies and to report findings in such a way that makes clear the possibility of gender imbalance should that be a result of the search.

## **Intervention**

This study sought to understand the implications of Yosso's (2006) community cultural wealth (CCW) framework when put into practice. The researchers wanted to understand the relationship between cultural capital and student engagement practices. Therefore, intervention could work in two different ways. Studies could begin with cultural capital and work towards student engagement, or begin with student engagement practices and then identify utilized cultural capital after the fact. However, in order to be eligible, the study must have engaged Yosso's theoretical framework and at least one of the six forms of community cultural capital, and connected that form of capital to a specific practice of student engagement. In this way, the intervention could have been the students' cultural capital or a practice of student engagement. Our focus was more on the phenomenon—the connection between cultural capital and student engagement practices—than on the order or direction of the relationship.

The inverse of this eligibility criteria was true as well. Studies that did not directly connect to student engagement practices, but simply identified the existence of CCW in Latinx community college students, were deemed ineligible. Same for studies that focused exclusively on student engagement practices without identifying one of the forms of cultural capital. If a study looked at forms of social or cultural capital that were not directly drawn from Yosso's (2005) CCW framework, the researchers considered that study ineligible.

## **Comparisons**

The PICO framework is often associated with meta-analysis in medical research where comparison and controls are imperative to rigorous scientific inquiry (Schardt et al., 2007). Given our first research question, comparison was less essential to our task. However, the second

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research question provided ample opportunity for comparison. Therefore, comparisons have been established between the findings of the eligible studies and the practices they eventually suggest or recommend community colleges employ.

### **Outcomes**

Since student engagement is a broad term, our study was purposefully generous when it came to student success outcomes. While it would be advantageous to only include studies with empirical data displaying student success, it was determined that this would limit some potentially important studies that were not longitudinal in nature or remained with study participants all the way to degree completion. Furthermore, many studies on student engagement incorporate measures such as student satisfaction, involvement, self-confidence, meaning-making, and support. The operating assumption was that these measures are important to student success and therefore degree completion. For that reason, the established outcome was student engagement.

Student engagement may include any of the following outcomes: student satisfaction, involvement, success, retention, persistence, and/or graduation. It may also include improvements to self-confidence, meaning-making, belonging, reduction in anxiety, and relationships to faculty and/or staff. Studies that did not display improvements to one or more of these measures, or display one or more of the outcomes listed above were marked as ineligible.

### **Timing**

Though the CCW framework was first introduced in 2005 and had an immediate impact on higher education research, the researchers opted to narrow the timing eligibility to explore more recent research. Specifically, eligibility was limited to studies published between January 2014 and December 2019. Limiting to recent studies assured that identifiable student success

practices are relevant and more likely to connect with the current experience of community college administrators and faculty.

### **Credibility**

The last element of study eligibility was the assurance of academic credibility and appropriate research standards in the social and behavioral sciences. The researchers elected to only include studies that were peer-reviewed or approved doctoral dissertations. Conference publications, master's theses, institution-specific research, and unpublished papers were deemed ineligible.

### **Information Sources**

Numerous information sources were utilized for this study. Three primary databases were employed: EBSCO, JSTOR, and ProQuest. Because these databases may exclude many doctoral dissertations, ProQuest Dissertation & Theses Global was also utilized. The team also searched the individual database collections of the following journals or publications: Journal of College Student Development, Review of Higher Education, Community College Review, Journal of Diversity in Higher Education, Journal of Hispanic Higher Education, American Educational Research Journal, and Journal of Race, Ethnicity, & Education. All information sources were searched in December 2019. The search period lasted 12 days and included the professional assistance of research librarians at two research universities.

### **Procedures**

Search procedures were informed by the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) reference retrieval process. This process involved four stages: (1) identification, (2) screening, (3) eligibility, and (4) inclusion.

## Search Strategies

During the identification stage, the researchers utilized the advanced search feature and conducted a keyword search on the three primary databases—EBSCO, JSTOR, and ProQuest, including ProQuest Dissertation & Theses Global. Within the advanced search feature, four primary categories were identified with a variety of possible terms within each category. The first category was setting: the community college. This could include any of the following key words: community college, 2-year college, career college, technical college, or junior college. The second category was the intervention: Yosso's CCW Framework (2006). This category exclusively searched under the key word phrase "community cultural wealth." The following key words were entered under the third category: Latinx, Latina, Latino, Latina/o, Latino/a, Latin@, Latinas, Latinos, Hispanic, Chicana, Chicano, Chicana/o, Chicano/a, Chicanas, and Chicanos. The fourth and final category was student engagement practices. For this category the researchers entered the following key words: student engagement, success, retention, persistence, graduation, completion, involvement, satisfaction, confidence, anxiety, belonging, and support. Once the key words were entered in each of the four categories, the researchers set the publication date limitations and selected the box for peer-reviewed sources only.

For the search of specified journals or publications, the researchers used individual online collection databases that hosted each journal. Because the search features were typically less advanced on these sites, the researchers had to rely on basic key word searches and date of publication. To remain consistent across all online collections, only three search words or phrases were entered: (1) community cultural wealth, (2) community college, and (3) Latinx. Where possible, different racial/ethnic identity terms were substituted and conducted secondary searches to see if different studies would emerge.

## Study Selection

Utilizing ProQuest RefWorks, all studies that emerged from the search were uploaded to the project database system. Each reference was automatically assigned a reference ID and placed in a folder corresponding to the search engine or publication collection from where it originated.

With all of the studies now in RefWorks, the first step in our selection process was to delete duplicate references. Duplicates were deleted from the project database so it did not disrupt our count or sorting process.

The second step in the selection process was a review of the study abstracts. This met PRISMA's criteria for the screening stage. The abstract for each reference was read by two researchers. Each researcher searched for anything in the abstract that clearly disqualified the reference for inclusion in the study. Following the abstract review, all references were sorted into folders marked eligible and ineligible.

The third step in the selection process was to locate the full text for each reference. For the studies that were not available via open access or Seattle University's library database, the researchers requested the reference's full text via interlibrary loan or electronic requests from any of our alternative library systems. If the full text of a study was unavailable after 10 days, the study was considered ineligible.

The fourth step in the selection process was to conduct a thorough review of the full text for each reference. This met the criteria for PRISMA's eligibility stage. This typically meant reading the full study to assure that it met all of the eligibility criteria. The most difficult aspect of this stage was how the study interacted with the CCW framework. The full text for all references were read by at least two researchers to assure eligibility criteria was sufficiently met.

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If the two researchers could not agree upon a study's eligibility, a third researcher was asked to read the full text and cast the deciding vote.

### **Data Collection Process**

Data was collected and extracted using two primary tools. The first was a reference notes template that helped the researchers summarize each of the primary elements of the study. The second tool was a synthesis matrix. The matrix included columns for each of the primary elements of a research study and was comparable to the reference notes template. However, the matrix also included two additional columns. The first column asked "what types of cultural capital did the study find and how did that relate to student engagement?" The second column included suggestions for student engagement practices and how they will help community colleges better leverage community cultural wealth. These columns directly corresponded to our research questions.

Researchers marked page numbers and utilized citations as much as possible. Direct quotes were prioritized over interpretive summaries. However, due to space limitations, summaries were often necessary. Researchers consulted with one another to assure that summaries were fairly and accurately representative.

### **Risk of Bias**

One of the strengths of the thematic dissertation in leadership practice is the dynamic of working within a research team. Collaboration and shared experience present an excellent opportunity, especially when it comes to qualitative data collection and analysis. Since the researcher is the interpretive and analytical tool in qualitative research (Maxwell, 2013; Miles et al., 2014), developing awareness of personal inclinations, biases, assumptions, experiences, and positionalities is methodologically imperative (Bourke, 2014). Complete neutrality or objectivity

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is impossible. Therefore, positionalities cannot be negated—they must be accounted for and increasingly understood in qualitative research.

Throughout this research project, the researchers individually and collectively worked towards cognizance of our respective positionalities and reflected upon how those positionalities might influence our study (Bourke, 2014). The researchers maintained that by recognizing our own positionality and the positionalities of our teammates, the diversity of our team could be leveraged as a strength for our study. Our research team spent years working collaboratively in a doctoral program in educational leadership. This shared educational experience afforded us the opportunity to better understand ourselves and one another. Prior to this study, each member of the research team wrote a short reflection on our life experiences, values, and positionalities with respect to the study's research questions. The researchers shared these personal reflections with one another to encourage collective transparency and awareness, and to reduce the risk of bias inappropriately impacting data collection or analysis. At numerous steps throughout the research process, the researchers returned to our positionalities and asked how they might influence our approach, understanding, or relationship to the current task at hand. This reflective component was critical to our qualitative methodological procedures and to help us reduce potential bias throughout the study.

### **Instruments**

Prior to data collection, our research team created a matrix to help us appropriately summarize, categorize, and structure all included studies (see Appendix B). The matrix followed a basic format with all components commonly included in social and behavioral science research studies. If components were not included in the study the researchers simply left that column box blank. The researchers did the same if that component was found in a different section of the

individual study and included the applicable data in the column box consistent with the study's format. Our desire was to use the matrix as a true summary of the study's layout. However, the last two columns of the matrix directly addressed (1) our research question—how CCW connected to student engagement practices—and (2) our study's comparison—practices suggested by the study's author(s) to better leverage students' cultural capital.

### **Qualitative Data Analysis**

The methodology for narrative and thematic qualitative data analysis is derived from the work of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014). These authors make the case for coding—assigning labels that carry symbolic meaning to the descriptive or inferential information—at multiple different levels (Miles et al., 2014). However, these various codes are grouped into two iterations or meta-levels: first cycle codes and second cycle codes (Miles et al., 2014). The first cycle coding involved sorting data based on findings (column O) and suggested practices (Column P). Data from these columns were placed in respective, separate workbooks. Data connected to thematic findings in Column O was further sorted based upon the six forms of cultural capital defined by Yosso (2006). After the data was appropriate sorted based on findings or suggested practices, and then separated based upon connection to the six forms of capital, the research team began to look for emerging themes. The team utilized descriptive and in vivo coding methods for this process (Miles et al., 2014). Each member of the research team conducted this analysis independently.

For the second cycle coding, the team worked collectively to agree upon the emergent themes within the data of each workbook. The research team collectively used pattern coding to narrow, refine, and sort themes (Miles et al., 2014). In the instance of disagreement between teammates or questions about emerging themes, the research team would return to the original

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study to assure that data collection and analysis aligned with the authors' findings or statements in proper context. Categorical or thematic differences were discussed as a research team to assure that each theme was agreeable across all four members of the research team. Thematic groupings and questions of inclusion or exclusion were discussed at length by the research team and all themes unanimously agreed upon. Consensus of themes served to triangulate all findings and assure of their strength.

### **Summary**

This chapter explored, the methodology of this systematic review attempted to remain adaptive where possible and yet appropriately bound by rigorous protocols and procedures. The resulting methodology and study eligibility criteria empowered our team to conduct a thorough search of the existing research literature. Data collection and analysis relied exclusively on qualitative methods and multiple cycles to assure accuracy and improve quality. The next chapter explores the findings of the study.

## CHAPTER 4

### FINDINGS

#### **Introduction**

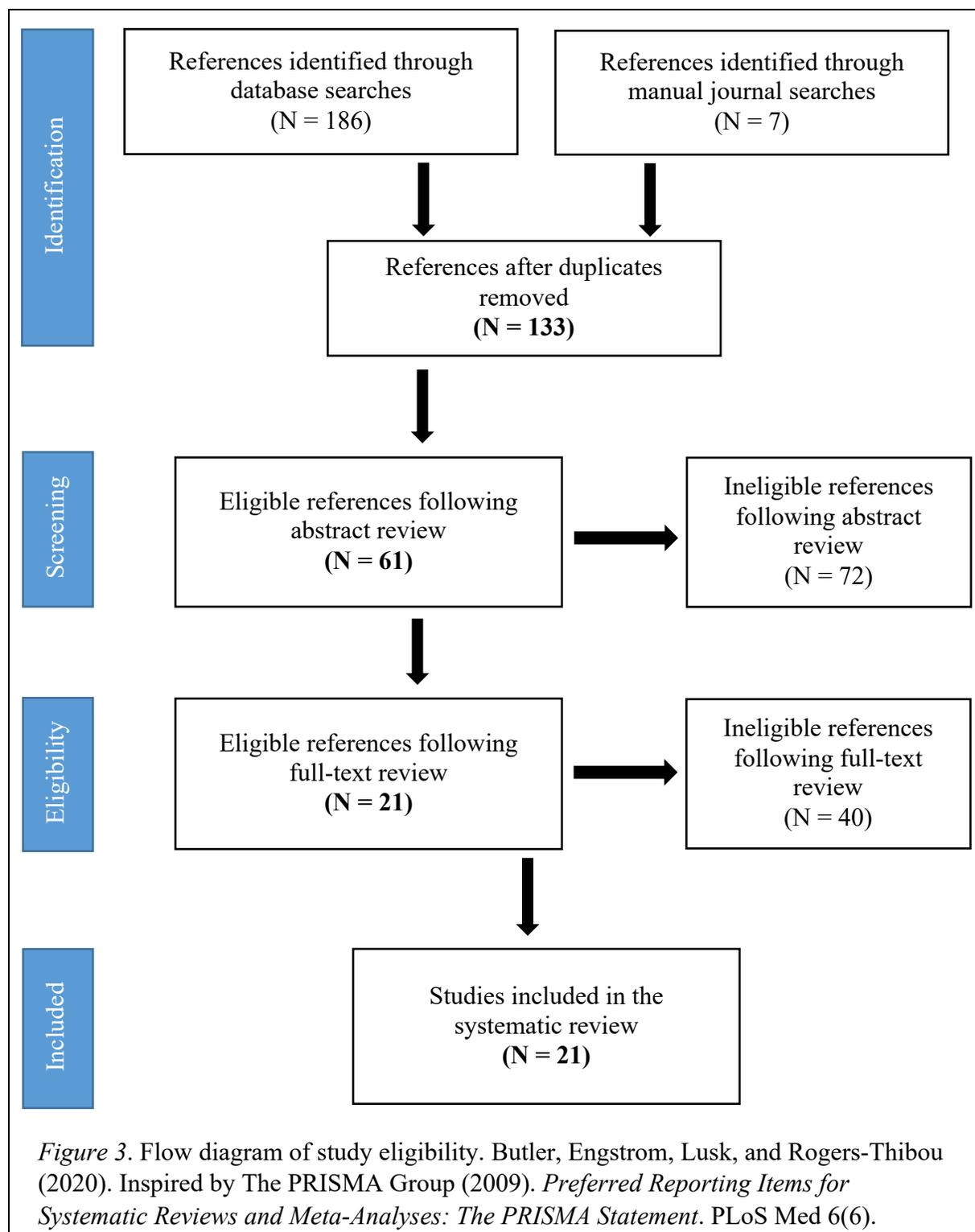
As discussed in the previous chapters, this systematic review is designed to examine the existing research on Yosso's (2006) Community Cultural Wealth (CCW) framework and explore how it is transforming, if at all, student engagement practices in the community college context. The study investigated how community colleges are leveraging Latinx students' existing cultural wealth to help them succeed and persist on to degree completion. The research questions are as follows:

1. How has Yosso's (2006) Community Cultural Wealth model been utilized in student engagement practices for Latinx community college students over the past 5 years?
2. What student engagement practices are recommended or suggested for community colleges to better leverage the existing community cultural wealth of Latinx students?

This chapter outlines the results of the study. The chapter reviews the study retrieval process and the subsequent results at each of the four stages of the process. Next, information related to the characteristics of the included studies is detailed and along with a summary of the individual studies. Finally, a synthesis of the included studies and outline of the thematic results of the systematic review will be presented.

#### **Study Retrieval**

Figure 3 highlights how the study followed the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) reference retrieval process. This process involved four stages: (1) identification, (2) screening, (3) eligibility, and (4) inclusion. Identification included the databases searches of Ebsco, JSTOR, and ProQuest, including



ProQuest Dissertation & Theses Global. This step resulted in a total of 186 references, which were added to our project management portal in RefWorks. The research team next conducted a

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manual search of the database collections of the following journals or publications: Journal of College Student Development, Review of Higher Education, Community College Review, Journal of Diversity in Higher Education, Journal of Hispanic Higher Education, American Educational Research Journal, and Journal of Race, Ethnicity, & Education. These searches resulted in discovery of 7 total references. The last step within the identification stage was to remove duplicate references. This brought the total number of references down to 133 by the end of this first stage.

For the second stage, screening, the team reviewed the abstracts of all 133 references. The search consisted of looking for something that clearly disqualified the study from inclusion. This resulted in disqualifying 72 total studies. All of the remaining 61 studies were carried into the third stage, eligibility.

The third stage involved locating and reading the full-texts of the 61 studies. Comparable to the review of abstracts, the researchers looked for criteria that would disqualify the study from inclusion. The primary reasons for disqualification at this stage were due to participants not meeting the full study criteria (i.e. 4-year colleges instead of community colleges) or studies that did not fully incorporate Yosso's CCW. Of the 61 studies in this stage, 40 were disqualified after a full-text review. At the end of the process, 21 eligible studies were considered (see Figure 3).

### **Included Studies Characteristics**

The characteristics of the 21 included studies displayed vast diversity in addition to aspects of shared commonality (see Table 1). All 21 studies utilized qualitative methods and the majority were case study design. The dominant focus was upon the experiences, stories, or *testimonios* of Latinx community college students. Individual or focus group interviews were used in all 21 studies. Some of these studies centered on community college students at

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predominantly White institutions (Orozco Villacaña, 2015; Reeder, 2017), while others involved students at majority Hispanic-serving institutions (Cahill, 2019; Castañeda, 2016; Cawley, 2018; Escamilla, 2015; Galván, 2017; Morales, 2018; Peña, 2017). Seven of the studies looked exclusively at Latinx males (Sáenz et al, 2017; Sáenz et al, 2018; Robles-Lopez, 2017; Peña, 2017; Gonzales, 2018; Galván, 2017; Castañeda, 2016), while only one study was limited only to Latinx females (Escamilla, 2015). The number of participants ranged from totals of 130 (Sáenz et al, 2018; Sáenz et al, 2017) to a study with as few as three participants (Gonzales, 2018). Two studies used the same data set from focus group interviews with 130 Latinx males at community colleges in Texas (Sáenz et al, 2018; Sáenz et al, 2017).

All twenty-one studies included in this study employed Yosso's CCW framework as a theoretical model to make sense of student experiences. Yosso's work was central to all included studies. Several studies organized their findings around the six forms of community cultural capital. These studies made our work of data extraction and analysis relatively easy. However, several other studies were more focused on a different phenomenon than students' community cultural capital. These studies were content simply pointing out the existence of cultural capital with little to no effort given to explaining how that capital impacted student success or corresponded to student success practices at the community college. It was discovered that these studies were more difficult to code and analyze, given the researcher commitment to allow the studies to speak for themselves when it came to connecting cultural capital to student engagement practices.

Table 1

*Overview of Findings*

Author(s)	Purpose	Population Sampling	Findings	Suggested Practices
Briceño-Moreno, Luz O. (2017)	Capture the experiences and stories of Latino/a first-generation students as they navigate CCs that have been recognized as a HSI.	First-generation Latino/a students from Tuck CC.  Convenience sampling; N=8 1 M, 7 F Ages=19-28	Aspirational: To find an identity that embraces diverse cultural experiences, participants utilized aspirational capital as an asset to overcome personal, financial, and academic obstacles to combat any barriers infringing on their success and engagement as a student.	<p>In partnership with community agencies, provide outreach opportunities that promote college awareness and readiness to both the parent and child throughout the K-12 education.</p> <p>Create opportunities to expose Latinx parents and children to multilingual financial literacy workshops. The workshops should include a variety of options for educational funding.</p> <p>Reach out to students as they are entering college. Assist students to meet their transfer goals. Offer service learning and internship opportunities to interested students. Routinely connect with students, especially when they are failing to meet matriculation standards. Understand why students decide to drop out of coursework as well as fail to matriculate into subsequent course sequences.</p> <p>Support and develop on-campus programs that support historically disadvantaged, low-income, or first-generation college students. Continuously connect with these students and provide them with information on programs and service that will increase opportunities for them to build community connections.</p> <p>Diversify faculty, staff, and administrators and provide adequate training to inform them on how to support a diverse student body. A culturally diverse campus will allow for the development of more courses that provide cultural awareness and pedagogy of the oppressed.</p> <p>Create safe study spaces throughout a culturally diverse campus. Allow the spaces to be available 24-hours during exam weeks and open late on weekends throughout the academic calendar. The spaces can operate as a safe place for students to meet socially or academically.</p>

(continued)

Table 1 (continued)

*Overview of Findings*

Author(s)	Purpose	Population Sampling	Findings	Suggested Practices
Cahill, G. N. (2019)	Examine the lived experiences of Latinx students who desire to transfer from CC to a 4-year institution.	Latinx, first-generation, college students of low socioeconomic status. Participants consisted two Puente (a learning community program) and three non-Puente students.  Purposive sampling; N=5 1 M, 3 F, 1 gender non-confirming	Social: Social capital can be used to find out how teachers can facilitate inclusion and access to opportunities for students. Teachers need to tap into their social networks to help students find internships and jobs.	Create a safe space for Latinx students to receive mental health care from a bilingual mental health practitioner. The space will also represent an opportunity for Latinx students to support each other's mental health and their educational pursuits.  Offer workshops to faculty, staff, and educational leaders that promotes cultural awareness and reduces unconscious biases.  Provide informational sessions to new students in multiple languages to raise awareness on the available campus programs and services at the beginning of each semester. Meet with students prior to the beginning of each semester to nurture their educational aspirations. Enhance CC support services focused on transfer programs to assist Latinx students in the transitional process.
Castañeda, G. (2016)	Explore, identify, and understand the experiences and contributing factors that affect Latino males' attainment of a CC degree or transfer to 4-year institutions.	Latino male students who completed 24 units and seeking an AA/AS or transfer to a 4-year institution.	Aspirational: A Latino male is responsible to provide for his family and knows that a college degree will help in obtaining a well-paying job.	Partner with local high schools to develop a comprehensive training protocol to provide information to students, parents, and community members on college preparation, support services, academic expectations, and academic prerequisites.

(continued)

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Table 1 (continued)

*Overview of Findings*

Author(s)	Purpose	Population Sampling	Findings	Suggested Practices
Cawley, A. (2018)	Understand the experiences that Latinx students encounter when enrolled in a developmental mathematics course at a CC.	Latinx students in developmental math offered by part-time faculty from an HSI.  Purposive sampling; N=9 1 Part-time Faculty, 3 M, 6 F	Navigational: Actions that participants took in their instructional experiences. Classroom action included engaging with the faculty and accessing campus resources.	Faculty must initiate engagement with their students. Faculty that effectively engage with their students are more likely to deliver an instructional experience that encourages students' academic persistent.  Students should be encouraged to share their experiential knowledge with their peers.
Cervantes-Gonzalez, A. (2015)	Investigate forms of capital, as well as the role of institutional and protective agents, influenced the high-achieving Latina/o students to attend CC.	Latinas/os who had been admitted to a university yet began their educational journey at a CC.  Purposive sampling; N=11 3 M, 8 F	Social and Navigational: Participants were found to rely heavily on institutional and protective agents when it came time to plan towards higher education.  Familial: Few participants included aspects that could be identified as this capital.	Local high school counselors need to create a welcoming environment where students can go to seek information on college preparation and higher educational demands.
Chavez, S. (2019)	Understand how the FYE Peer Mentor Program may have an impact on mentors and mentees' academic and goals.	TPPM recruited Queta students for the peer mentor position who had a minimum 2.5 GPA.  Purposive sampling; N=22 7 M, 15 F	Aspirational and Familial: The most pivotal capitals to academic success.  Social, Navigational, and Familial: TPMM training allowed student peer mentors to create an academic and social counterspace. Student peer mentors applied counterstorytelling as a strategy to succeed.	Train faculty and staff to apply a peer mentor model approach that validates the Latinx cultural experience. Incentives should be provided to increase peer mentors involvement among the Latinx student population.  Mentoring practices should focus on academic persistence that emphasizes accelerated programs. CC. An academic counselors influence is pivotal to the Latinx students' educational path.

(continued)

## FINAL REPORT

Table 1 (continued)

*Overview of Findings*

Author(s)	Purpose	Population Sampling	Findings	Suggested Practices
Cortes, A. (2017)	Explore how Latin@ STEM students persevere and pass calculus, even in the face institutional challenges.	Latin@ STEM Majors enrolled in a calculus class at a CC. N=12	Familial: Family supported and challenged students.  Navigational and Social: Participants did not limit their interactions to only one gender.  Resistant: Student demonstrate strength by managing difficult life situations and family obligations. Students often took calculus multiple times to succeed.	Advocate for practices that encourage students to work together. Students might consider critiquing each other's work for further academic growth and feedback.
Duncheon, J. (2018)	To better understand the transition experiences of first-generation, low-income Latinas/os who were high-achieving and motivated but received poor-quality college preparation.	A magnet program in a Southern California High School. Student selection included Latinx seniors who were college bound, low income, and first generation. This case study tracks first generation Latinx students who graduated from the same low-performing urban high school.  Purposive sampling; N=25 Student Informants 4 M, 4 F	Aspirational and Navigational: Participants all responded to academic difficulty with perseverance and skill. Many adjusted their study skills or schedules.  Social: Students felt engaged in the social aspect of college and did not perceive their race or ethnicity as a social liability.	Advocate for continuous evaluation that demonstrates how Latinx students mediate obstacles to achieve their academic goals.
Gonzalez, F. (2016)	Reveal the experiences of selected Latino pre-health CC students in the EOPS program.	Latino/a CC students that have recently transferred, enrolled, or graduated from Trinity City College.  Purposive sampling; Non-probability selection approach; N=17 8 M, 9 F Ages=20-39	Resistant: Students are able to navigate through the educational and social institution. When taking science courses, EOPS Latino students reported experiencing a leaky process as they moved across the program.  Resistant: Students experienced resistant capital when they tried to learn something new and their instructor made them feel stupid.	Encourage investigation into Latinx ethnic subgroups to determine their educational experience and improve upon programs that offer services to culturally diverse populations.

(continued)

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Table 1 (continued)

*Overview of Findings*

Author(s)	Purpose	Population Sampling	Findings	Suggested Practices
Escamilla, A. (2015)	Examine the experiences of Mexican American students enrolled into developmental education programs at a rural CC.	Mexican American female students enrolled in developmental courses at an HSI CC in Southwest Texas.  Purposeful and homogenous sampling; N=4 4 F	Social and Aspirational: Participants were optimistic about completing their educational journey. Participants reflected on their experience in the K-12 educational system.  Linguistic: The most meaningful influencer that highlights intellectual and social skills.  Resistant: Participants demonstrated a form of resistance by their determination and persistence.	Implement outreach programs focused on Mexican American students enrolled in developmental education. Implement outreach programs that are culturally relevant to Mexican American families. Provide outreach programs in multiple languages.  Facilitate a learning environment for Latinx students that prepares them for testing by offering practice test materials. Train agents to support Latinx students while operating the testing center.
Galván, D. (2017)	Investigate the ways that Latino engineering CC students identify and utilize various types of cultural capital to strengthen their educational development and persist towards degree attainment and transfer.	Latino males enrolled in HSI CC and majoring in engineering. Members of the Basin CC Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement (MESA) program and the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE).  Purposive sampling; N=10 10 M	Aspirational: Participants credit the CC's Design Technology Pathway as being their initial exposure to engineering and the reason for choosing to major in engineering.  Familial and Social: Participants expressed feelings of loyalty, responsibility, and solidarity within the Latino family unit. Participants were motivated to seek an engineering degree to alleviate the financial burdens.  Navigational and Resistant: Participants starting in remedial math experienced challenges moving forward with their engineering careers and transferring to a four-year institution.  Social and Resistant: Participants persisted due to their involvement in SHPE and MESA.	Establish a vigorous mentoring program.  Recruit Latinx students from local high schools.  Increase awareness among Latinx families regarding the engineering program. Promote opportunities for parents to develop a sense of empowerment to encourage their Latinx children to pursue a college degree.

(continued)

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Table 1 (continued)

*Overview of Findings*

Author(s)	Purpose	Population Sampling	Findings	Suggested Practices
Gonzales, A. (2018)	Explore the educational experiences of Mexican American males who transferred from a CC to a four-year institution.	Mexican American males enrolled full-time and completed a minimum of one year at a CC. All participants had a minimum GPA of 2.0. All participants transferred to a four-year university in Texas.  Snowball sampling; N=3 3 M	Aspirational and Familial: Each participant developed aspirations to complete their education from influential family members.  Linguistic: Ability to comprehend both Spanish and English was a strength.  Social: Connections with individuals who had a stronger context of the world of higher education. Networks of people assembled by each student.  Navigational: Skills each student needed to traverse through school transfer.	Direct suggestions connecting practices to better leverage CCW were not provided in this study. However, a general recommendation was given encouraging higher educational institutions to identify and capitalize on the existing cultural capital of Mexican American males to increase educational persistence and degree completion rates.
Morales, J. C. (2018)	Develop a mid-level theory about the factors and processes that facilitated the success for the students that have completed the (EAP) program for (ELLs) and entered into the Honors College.	Latinx students in English for Academic Purposes (EAP) courses at a CC in Miami, FL. Students persisted from EAP courses to an honors program.  Purposive sampling; N = 7 4 M, 3 F Median Age = 23	Resistant and Linguistic: Limited influential evidence provided.  Aspirational: Leaving home country because of aspirations and dreams. Students were driven to complete the EAP program quickly and distinctively. Study results showed this capital strongly influenced participants' success.  Navigational: Similar to aspirational capital's impact, this capital significantly influenced participants' success.  Social and Familial: Influential to student's success.	Train faculty and staff to validate diverse cultures and give meaning to culturally diverse students' goals and create paths to help them reach those goals.  Bilingual advisors should help students navigate the transfer process, assist in applying for scholarships, and explore career opportunities. Advisors must operate in a welcoming environment, which promotes inquiry and reduces self-doubt.  Promote opportunities for Latinx students to participate in curricular and co-curricular programs. Returning Latinx students to mentor incoming students. Continue programs that utilize a cohort model to enhance peer network support.

(continued)

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Table 1 (continued)

*Overview of Findings*

Author(s)	Purpose	Population Sampling	Findings	Suggested Practices
Orozco Villacaña, M. (2015)	The purpose of this study is threefold. (1) to reconstruct Latina/o students' pre-college experiences and their influence on their current educational pursuits; (2) to understand their current academic, personal, and social engagement with a CC; (3) to generate a descriptive report that captures Latina/o students' personal experiences, barriers, and engagement at a CC.	Latina/o students at a Midwest PWI CC.  Purposive sampling: N = 16 8 M, 8 F Ages =19-26	General conclusion that all participants exercised forms of cultural capital along their journey to obtain a college education. However, findings reflect few direct connections.	Develop programs that raise awareness on various pathways to finance a college education. Target programs to include students deemed ineligible for federal aid, such as DACA students.  Create spaces on campus that allow students to develop peer networks through study group participation. Allow these spaces to be open for extended hours.  Offer Latinx parent orientations to provide strategic information that encourages families to support their children's academic pursuits.  Assure that all academic advisors and counselors are familiar with each student's goals.
Sáenz, V. B., de las Mercedes, C., Rodriguez, S. L., and Garcia-Louis, C. (2017)	Explore the influence that fathers have on the educational experiences of Latino men attending CC.	Latino male students enrolled at seven distinct CCs in Texas. All participants' fathers had some educational background and family incomes below \$40,000 per year. Participant GPAs above 3.0  Purposive sampling; N=130 130 M	Aspirational: Fathers served as strong role models as they advised, encouraged, and modeled the way toward financial freedom and academic success.  Resistant: Participants were motivated by their fathers' stories about persistence despite challenges, such as financial barriers.  Familial: Fathers wanted sons to contribute to family finances. Possessed traditional views of Latino men.	Develop programs that foster the involvement of Latinx parents to participate in the academic culture and educational decision-making processes of their college-going sons and daughters.

(continued)

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Table 1 (continued)

*Overview of Findings*

Author(s)	Purpose	Population Sampling	Findings	Suggested Practices
Peña, M. I. (2017)	Understand the experience of Latino males in FYE programs at CC and determine if these programs contribute to student success and transfer to 4-year institutions.	Latino male students, FYE coordinators, and FYE counselors from HSI CC in CA.  Purposive sampling; N=16 8 Current Students 8 Alumni 2 FYE Counselors 2 FYE Coordinators	<p>Aspirational: FYE program began by setting individual goals and communicating that to counselor(s). Referred back to goals at numerous points during the educational journey. Validating strengths and talking about pathways to achieving goals, including transfer. Tours of universities helped student picture themselves transferring.</p> <p>Linguistic: Use of testimonies/storytelling and cultural programming. Encouraging students to use native language or share how being multi-lingual has been beneficial.</p> <p>Familial: Encourage students to display investment/commitment to community—namely, towards peers and FYE program staff. Community-building activities and nurturing peer-support networks. Cohort model especially helpful.</p> <p>Social: Engaged counseling model and nurturing peer social network. Invite partners at four-year institutions to come into class. Help them get to know people at transferring institutions.</p> <p>Navigational: Meeting with counselors, campus tours, and workshops helped develop this capital. Talking about options and graduation plan early on. Workshops on transfer application and process.</p> <p>Resistant: Workshops on social justice related topics. Talking about social justice issues facing these students and helping them self-advocate. Confronting imposter syndrome especially helpful to Latinos.</p>	Suggested practices were not reported in this study.

(continued)

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Table 1 (continued)

*Overview of Findings*

Author(s)	Purpose	Population Sampling	Findings	Suggested Practices
Reeder, J. (2017)	Determine whether Latino/a students who remain enrolled in CC for at least three terms of full-time academic course work, utilize any of the capitals identified in Yosso's (2005) Community Cultural Wealth Model.	Latino/a students that completed three continuous terms at a rural CC in Oregon. Students were members of a Latino/a supporting club or organization.  Purposive sampling; N=8 2 M, 2 F Ages=18-24	All forms of cultural capital were found to be important throughout the study. Although the capitals help students remain in college, the deficits within those capitals also create barriers to retention. The deficits are informed by the institutional structures and the structures that attempt to support Latino/a students. Institutions that fail to recognize the capitals Latino students possess, will fail to capitalize on them.	Design programs that leverage each form of cultural capital. Adapt methods of providing familial orientation by addressing deficits found in each form of capital to enhance familial support and increase Latinx retention rates.  Advocate for the installation of programs, services, and classroom instruction and coursework that enhances the academic engagement of all students.
Rivera-Lacey, S. (2016)	Explore the educational and counseling experiences of these students in order to provide insight into the interplay between student aspiration and student achievement and the influence counselors have on both.	Low-income, first-generation, Latino/a students in a large urban CC setting in Southern California. Participants had completed at least two semesters at the CC, attempted at least 18 college units, and earned fewer than 70-degree applicable units.  Purposive sampling; N=105 33M, 72 F Ages=18-35	Aspirational: Participants' responses show that students arrived at the CC with a lack of social and cultural capital, which negatively impacts their aspiration without equitable school counselors' support.	Comprehend what causes the discrepancy between educational aspirations and educational obtainment among low-income, first-generation Latinx students.  Develop programs and services designed to reduce attrition rates and promote student engagement.  Explore academic counselors influence on the educational pursuits and successes relative to Latinx students.

(continued)

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Table 1 (continued)

*Overview of Findings*

Author(s)	Purpose	Population Sampling	Findings	Suggested Practices
Robles-Lopez, I. (2017)	Collect data on Latino male students at an HSI. Data will identify and allow the researcher to analyze the supports (e.g. facilitative, socioemotional, academic, etc.) that participants reported as contributors to their educational journey in the transfer process from the CC to a state university in Arizona.	Participants were educational leaders involved with a Student Success 200-level course. All student participants were enrolled in their final semester. The researcher also conducted interviews with Latino male alumni, FYE counselors, and FYE coordinators.  Purposive sampling; N=8 3 Educational Leaders 2 M, 1 F 5 Students 5 M Ages=22-29	Aspirational: Shared hopes and dreams as motivated by self-determination and fueled by a responsibility to their family and community.  Resistant and Social: All identified at least one individual program or process that provided support or guidance as they progressed through their educational journey. Participants identified an advisor/counselor who played an instrumental role in their success.  Navigational: All expressed positive experiences maneuvering through the social institution, resources gained via a Capstone course, and support provided from educational leaders.  Familial: Student participants did identify parental or familial influence as a source of inspiration when furthering their education.	Direct suggestions connecting practices to better leverage CCW were not provided in this study. However, a general recommendation was given recommending educational leaders and institutions focus on Latina/o students' achievements and academic goals by means of first recognizing the CCW with which students enter into college.
Villanueva, V. (2015)	Understand the college experiences of Latino male students at a CC in California, with a focus on retention and persistence.	Latino/as that completed 45-quarter units with a 2.0 GPA and seeking a bachelor's degree between the 2016 – 2017 academic year. All Participants completed a developmental English or math course at suburban California CC  Theoretical sampling; N=15 6 M, 9 F Ages=18-25	Social: Participants expressed struggles with social issues such as racism and classism.  Social: Participants shared hopes and dreams to motivate peers and the self.	Establish peer advising programs. The programs provide an opportunity for Latinx students to validate their peers and themselves.  Develop outreach initiatives that raise awareness of the benefits of Latinx students obtaining a college degree. Focus outreach efforts to support the parents of Latinx students.

(continued)

Table 1 (continued)

*Overview of Findings*

Author(s)	Purpose	Population Sampling	Findings	Suggested Practices
Sáenz, V.B., García-Louis, C., Drake, P.A., & Guida, T. (2018)	Understand how Latino male students balance family obligations, work, and academics while also navigating their educational pathways.	Latino male students enrolled at seven distinct CCs in Texas.  Purposive sampling; N=130 130 M	<p>Familial: First in family, first-generation status, and the apprehension around seeking help did negatively impact Latino male CC students, who had access to multiple sources of CCW. Latino males encounter difficulty in seeking support services or asking faculty or staff/administrators for assistance when navigating through CCs.</p> <p>Familial: The multiple roles and responsibilities held by Latino males within the family unit, is not a limitation through their educational pathways—instead, the family relationships both support and motivate Latino males by building on their aspirations to persist through graduation.</p> <p>Familial: Family members support Latino males as they matriculated through the CC environment.</p>	Higher educational institutions must consider diversifying their student populations to create a more inclusive campus environment that cultivates Latinx students sense of community and validates their cultural context.

*Note.* Adapted from “Community Cultural Wealth in the Community College: A Systematic Review of Latinx Student Engagement,” by A. Butler, E.R. Engstrom, G. Lusk, and S. Rogers-Thibou, 2020.

### Individual Study Results

Briceño-Moreno (2017) conducted a qualitative research study involving eight first-generation Latinx students attending a community college. The study used testimonios of the students to “bring awareness to their academic experiences, successes, and needs as first-generation college students” (p. ii). The focus of the study was on examining the obstacles and support systems that first-generation Latinx community college students encounter and what can community colleges do to better serve their students (Briceño-Moreno, 2017).

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Cahill (2019) explored the factors that Latinx students perceived as supports for and barriers to navigating higher education as they prepared to transfer to four-year colleges or universities. The qualitative study focused on the experiences of five Latinx students who were first-generation, low-income status. Cahill relied on critical race theory/LatCrit as well as CCW to arrive at her conclusions and suggestions for community colleges and instructors.

Castañeda (2016) completed a qualitative study involving ethnographic interviews of 22 Latinx males focused on identifying the challenges and barriers experienced by community college students working toward their associate's degree or a transfer to a 4-year institution. She also explored what strategies were used by these students in their pursuits. Castañeda (2016) found that study participants shared aspirations for a better life and the use of the community cultural wealth supported their success. Three sub-themes of family support, motivation, and campus resources emerged were critical to participants' academic success.

Cawley (2018) conducted a qualitative case study with nine Latinx students at a Hispanic-serving institution where she studied the interactions within developmental mathematics classrooms. Her focus was on the interactions within the instructional core between students, content, and instructors. Students in the courses reported levels of aspirational, navigational, and social capital which supported their success in their mathematics courses. Cawley (2018) arrived at suggestions for college faculty including engaging with students in meaningful ways and by supporting students by working to guide them through their college experience.

Cervantes-Gonzalez (2015) investigated the ways cultural capital influenced high-achieving Latinx students in their decisions to attend community college. She interviewed 11 students who all gained acceptance into four-year institutions but chose to attend community

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colleges closer to home. Her guiding question dealt with the ways community cultural wealth and institutional or protective agents influenced the choices of the students to attend community colleges when they were qualified to attend more selective institutions (Cervantes-Gonzalez, 2015).

Chavez (2019) explored the impact of a transformative peer mentor model on Latinx community college students. Chavez conducted focus groups and semi-structured interviews seeking information on what peer mentors and mentees identified as the most meaningful components of the peer mentor model and what forms of community cultural wealth do the mentors and mentees bring to the model. This methodology used counter-storytelling and the creation of counterspaces by students. The findings of this study “can help practitioners understand [the peer mentor model] elements and determine which might be most effective in promoting retention, persistence, college completion, and transfer success at their institution” (Chavez, 2019, p. iii).

Cortes (2017) focused her study on 12 Latinx STEM majors taking Calculus I. She interviewed students about their experiences and challenges getting through their Calculus course. She asked them about their study habits and preferences about studying alone or with others. She also used Yosso’s (2005) community cultural wealth model to explore the forms of capital students brought with them to the classroom. Ultimately, Cortes (2017) argued for better instructor preparation as to how to work with Latinx students and capitalize on their community cultural wealth.

Duncheon (2018) performed a qualitative case study with 25 Latinx students via participant semi-structured interviews and focus groups. She worked to understand how high-achieving, first generation, low-income Latinx students from an urban high school navigated the

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college transition. She examined the challenges the students faced using Yosso's community cultural wealth model and uncovered how students used aspirational, navigational, social, and familial wealth to overcome barriers and persist (Duncheon, 2018).

Escamilla (2015) completed a case study involving four Latinx women enrolled in developmental education courses in a rural community college. She explored their experiences through the community cultural wealth model and provided insight into how the participants navigated their way through the educational system and continued to confront barriers as they worked their way toward academic success. Escamilla (2015) unveiled a variety of situations where community colleges could find better ways to support their Latinx students.

Galván (2017) conducted a qualitative narrative research study with ten Latinx male students enrolled in an Hispanic-serving community college. Galván (2017) used the community cultural wealth model to explore the testimonios of the male engineering students in the study. Galván's findings indicate the importance of utilizing family and the ability to have a positive influence on their community as motivators for their continued persistence toward success (2017).

Gonzales (2018) utilized a multiple case study design with semi-structured interviews with three Latinx males. The Latinx male students in this study transferred from a community college to a four-year university. Gonzales (2018) explored their persistence and ability to navigate higher education using Yosso's (2005) community cultural wealth model.

Gonzalez (2016) completed a mixed methods case study design with 17 Latinx participants who were in pre-health pathways. Gonzalez (2016) used the community cultural wealth framework to guide his analysis of his interviews and focus groups. Five themes arose

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from his study to help community colleges remove educational barriers for Latinx students (Gonzalez, 2016).

Reeder (2017) interviewed eight full-time Latinx students in good academic standing who were members of a club that served minority populations. Reeder (2017) used a phenomenological study design which was informed by Yosso's (2005) CCW theoretical framework to analyze the results of her semi-structured interviews. Reeder's (2017) research questions centered on cultural influences on retention of Latinx community college students and how those influences relate to community cultural capital.

Morales' (2018) study centered on Latinx students who moved from English for Academic Purposes (EAP) coursework into the Honors College at Miami Dade College. Morales (2018) was interested in how these students described the challenges they faced on their educational journey and why they decided to enter the Honors College. Like many of the included studies, Morales (2018) was inspired by Yosso's (2005) CCW model and the anti-deficit framework. These approaches were especially subversive considering that EAP/EL coursework is frequently viewed through the lens of deficit when Latinx students' first language doesn't align with the primary language of the institution (Morales, 2018).

Peña (2017) conducted a qualitative study on the Latino male student experience in first-year experience (FYE) programs at a large California community college. The institution was a certified Hispanic Serving Institution with majority of the population identifying as Hispanic/Latinx (Peña, 2017). The study aimed to determine if FYE programs' processes at the community colleges adequately support Latino male students' academic success, and aid in their transfer into four-year institutions. Participants included current students, program practitioners, and program alumni. The study also sought to identify the observable cultural elements, such as

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culturally relevant activities and culturally responsive staff, within the FYE programs that help promote transfer of Latino male student to four-year institutions (Peña, 2017).

Rivera-Lacey's (2016) study took place within a community college district in Southern California which is comprised of nearly all Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSI). This multi-institution qualitative study used a mixed-methods sequential design. Research questions focused on the educational and counseling experiences of low-income, first-generation, Latino/a community college students. The study sought to also understand the academic aspirations and achievements of low-income, first-generation, Latino/a community college students, including the influence of community college counselors on those academic aspirations (Rivera-Lacey, 2016). Findings revealed that participants showed deflated aspirations and reduced achievements, which suggested that Latinx students should acculturate to the college environment and gain a better understanding of college resources and their rights to increase their college progress (Rivera-Lacey, 2016). The study concluded that counselors' understanding of diverse populations' success can be enhanced through their own theoretical counseling approach. For example, they can challenge their beliefs about students' deficit perspectives when working with diverse populations (Rivera-Lacey, 2016).

The primary research question from Robles-Lopez (2017) was about the inspiration of Latino male students to complete a degree program at the community college and go on to transfer to a four-year university. The study also sought to understand the programs and/or services identified by Latinx students as helpful in supporting their transfer from the community college to the university (Robles-Lopez, 2017). Participants included five Latino male students enrolled in the final semester at HSI in Southwestern Arizona. The findings displayed that all six forms of community cultural capital were evident in the student

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participants' narratives as they persisted at the Southwest College and satisfied the processes to transfer to State University. Key findings included that institutional and family support were an integral part of the students' college success (Robles-Lopez, 2017). Engagement with educational leaders provided access to important information and resources that participants applied and which encouraged their success (Robles-Lopez, 2017).

Both Sáenz studies came from the same data set. Sáenz et al. (2018) asked about the academic, family, and personal obligations of Latino males enrolled at community colleges in Texas. It also sought to understand the forms of community cultural wealth that these participants used to navigate their college environments. The data set included 23 semi-structured focus groups with 130 Latino male students who were enrolled at seven specific community colleges in Texas. The 2018 study showed that Latino males entered the community college well equipped with community cultural wealth (Sáenz et al., 2018). Family relationships motivated Latino males, and provided support that strengthened their persistence and aspirations to graduate (Sáenz et al., 2018). The study concluded that Latino male college students' source of familial capital factored into their social capital and their aspirational capital, which led to their college success. Thus, Latino males expressed that the college environment is unwelcoming, which created discomfort when seeking assistance.

The 2017 study used the same data set from the 23 focus groups with 130 Latino male community college students. The research questions centered upon the perceived influence Latino males attribute to their fathers in their educational pursuits (Sáenz et al., 2017). Sticking with the CCW frames, the study was also designed to see what forms of CCW were passed down from Latino fathers to their sons (Sáenz et al., 2017). Findings revealed that the role of familial, aspirational, and resistant capital were evident in the student participants' shared narratives

(Sáenz et al., 2017). The participants expressed that their fathers were instrumental in supporting and motivating them towards academic success.

Villacaña (2015) conducted a case study which examined the challenges faced by 16 Latinx students at Midwest Community College. Each participant was interviewed three times over the course of seven months, with a focus on their lives before and during college, and their future endeavors. The data collected focused on the participants' account of their challenges, available resources to overcome their challenges, and their resiliency. Findings showed that participants who engaged more in the college experience also displayed stronger awareness of campus resources and information helpful to academic success.

Lastly, Villanueva (2015) centered his study on Latino community college students and the institutional factors needed for these students to transfer to four-year institutions. Participants included 15 Latinx students between the ages of 18 – 25 at a California community college. Yosso's (2005) CCW framework was a central theoretical model. The study found that all the student participants characterized the six forms CCW (Villanueva, 2015). The researcher concluded that the suggested framework from this study be applied to develop a socially responsive career theory through a critical consciousness model (Villanueva, 2015).

### **Synthesis of Results**

Findings in this section are organized based on the six forms of community cultural capital in Yosso's (2005) theory: aspirational, familial, linguistic, navigational, resistant, and social. Each type of cultural capital will have its own subsection where resulting thematic practices that appeared to leverage the respective form of community cultural capital and result in student engagement are revealed. Table 2 displays a summarized version of the findings and the supporting references. At the end of each of the six subsections, the researchers also shared

Table 2

*Practices to Leverage Community Cultural Wealth*

Type of cultural capital	Thematic finding	Number of studies	Studies with theme
Aspirational	Mentoring	7	Briceño-Moreno, 2017; Castañeda, 2016; Chavez, 2019; Duncheon, 2018; Morales, 2018; Peña, 2017; Rivera-Lacey, 2016.
	Goal-setting and program mapping	5	Briceño-Moreno, 2017; Castañeda, 2016; Escamilla, 2015; Morales, 2018; Peña, 2017.
	Storytelling	6	Chavez, 2019; Escamilla, 2015; Gonzales, 2018; Morales, 2018; Robles-Lopez, 2017; Sáenz et al., 2017.
	Exposure to possibilities	3	Galván, 2017; Morales, 2018; Peña, 2017.
Familial	Mentoring	2	Chavez, 2019; Peña, 2017.
	Community-based programs	4	Chavez, 2019; Galván, 2017; Morales, 2018; Peña, 2017.
	Encourage family support	7	Cortes, 2017; Galván, 2017; Gonzales, 2018; Morales, 2018; Robles-Lopez, 2017; Sáenz et al., 2017; Sáenz et al., 2018.
Linguistic	Cultural programming	4	Escamilla, 2015; Gonzales, 2018; Morales, 2018; Peña, 2017.
	Storytelling	2	Gonzales, 2018; Peña, 2017.
Navigational	Tutoring and study groups	3	Cawley, 2018; Cortes, 2017; Duncheon, 2018.
	Relationship with institutional agent(s)	7	Cawley, 2018; Cervantes-Gonzalez, 2015; Chavez, 2019; Cortes, 2017; Morales, 2018; Peña, 2017; Robles-Lopez, 2017.
	Goal-setting and program mapping	5	Cawley, 2018; Galván, 2017; Gonzales, 2018; Morales, 2018; Peña, 2017.

(continued)

Table 2 (continued)

*Practices to Leverage Community Cultural Wealth*

Type of cultural capital	Thematic finding	Number of studies	Studies with theme
Resistant	Storytelling	6	Cortes, 2017; Escamilla, 2015; Galván, 2017; Gonzalez, 2016; Peña, 2017; Sáenz et al., 2017.
	Confronting imposter syndrome	3	Gonzalez, 2016; Peña, 2017; Robles-Lopez, 2017.
Social	Relationship with institutional agent(s)	12	Cahill, 2019; Cawley, 2018; Cervantes-Gonzalez, 2015; Chavez, 2019; Cortes, 2017; Duncheon, 2018; Escamilla, 2015; Gonzales, 2018; Morales, 2018; Peña, 2017; Robles-Lopez, 2017; Villanueva, 2015.
	Storytelling	3	Chavez, 2019; Escamilla, 2015; Gonzales, 2018.
	Internships	2	Cahill, 2019; Galván, 2017.

*Note.* Adapted from “Community Cultural Wealth in the Community College: A Systematic Review of Latinx Student Engagement,” by A. Butler, E.R. Engstrom, G. Lusk, and S. Rogers-Thibou, 2020.

the results from the analysis of suggested practice. Thematic practices that leveraged community cultural capital and the practices suggested within these included studies were evaluated. Deeper comparison and discussion on the differences between thematic findings and suggested practices are offered in the following chapter. Table 3 displays a summarized version of the suggested practices and supporting references.

Table 3

*Recommended or Suggested Practices*

Type of cultural capital	Suggested practice	Number of studies	Studies with suggested practice
Aspirational	Community outreach	6	Briceño-Moreno, 2017; Castañeda, 2016; Cervantes-Gonzalez, 2015; Duncheon, 2018; Escamilla, 2015; Galvan, 2017.
	Community-based programs	5	Briceño-Moreno, 2017; Cawley, 2018; Chavez, 2019; Morales, 2018; Orozco Villacaña, 2015.
	Sufficient financial aid and assistance	5	Briceño-Moreno, 2017; Chavez, 2019; Morales, 2018; Orozco Villacaña, 2015; Rivera-Lacey, 2016.
	Diversity and inclusion	7	Briceño-Moreno, 2017; Cahill, 2019; Cervantes-Gonzalez, 2015; Chavez, 2019; Escamilla, 2015; Rivera-Lacey, 2016; Sáenz et al., 2018.
	Mentoring	2	Briceño-Moreno, 2017; Chavez, 2019.
	Goal-setting and program mapping	5	Briceño-Moreno, 2017; Cahill, 2019; Chavez, 2019; Morales, 2018; Orozco Villacaña, 2015.
Familial	Community outreach	8	Briceño-Moreno, 2017; Castañeda, 2016; Cervantes-Gonzalez, 2015; Escamilla, 2015; Galván, 2017; Orozco Villacaña, 2015; Sáenz et al., 2017; Villanueva, 2015.
	Focus on cultural awareness	4	Briceño-Moreno, 2017; Cahill, 2019; Chavez, 2019; Morales, 2018.
	Family orientation	6	Cahill, 2019; Castañeda, 2016; Cervantes-Gonzalez, 2015; Galván, 2017; Orozco Villacaña, 2015; Sáenz et al., 2017.
	Goal-setting and program mapping	2	Briceño-Moreno, 2017; Castañeda, 2016.
Linguistic	Community outreach	2	Briceño-Moreno, 2017; Escamilla, 2015.
	Bilingual services	5	Briceño-Moreno, 2017; Cahill, 2019; Escamilla, 2015; Gonzalez, 2016; Morales, 2018.

(continued)

Table 3 (continued)

*Recommended or Suggested Practices*

Type of cultural capital	Suggested practice	Number of studies	Studies with suggested practice
Navigational	Goal-setting and program mapping	2	Briceño-Moreno, 2017; Cervantes-Gonzalez, 2015.
	Supportive community	9	Briceño-Moreno, 2017; Castañeda, 2016; Cervantes-Gonzalez, 2015; Cortes, 2017; Escamilla, 2015; Galván, 2017; Morales, 2018; Reeder, 2017; Sáenz et al., 2018.
	Family orientation	2	Castañeda, 2016; Sáenz et al., 2017.
	Tutoring and study groups	3	Briceño-Moreno, 2017; Cawley, 2018; Cortes, 2017.
Resistant	Mentoring	2	Galván, 2017; Orozco Villacaña, 2015.
Social	Community outreach	5	Briceño-Moreno, 2017; Cahill, 2019; Castañeda, 2016; Escamilla, 2015; Galván, 2017.
	Cohort and group learning opportunities	5	Cawley, 2018; Cortes, 2017; Morales, 2018; Orozco Villacaña, 2015; Villanueva, 2015.
	Welcoming facilities for social interaction	3	Briceño-Moreno, 2017; Cahill, 2019; Sáenz et al., 2018.
	Relationship with institutional agent(s)	7	Briceño-Moreno, 2017; Cahill, 2019; Cawley, 2018; Chavez, 2019; Galván, 2017; Morales, 2018; Sáenz et al., 2018.

*Note.* Adapted from “Community Cultural Wealth in the Community College: A Systematic Review of Latinx Student Engagement,” by A. Butler, E.R. Engstrom, G. Lusk, and S. Rogers-Thibou, 2020.

Findings were unanimously agreed upon by the four members of the research team.

During the second cycle coding, where pattern coding was specifically employed, the research

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team met to discuss and debate individually identified themes. Cross-validation was seamless for most thematic findings and suggested practices (Miles et al., 2014). When disagreements occurred, the research team would locate the texts in question and explore the data in its original context. This process helped the research team settle all disagreements and disconnects in first cycle coding. All themes were triangulated when possible, and corroborated and cross-validated by the collective research team. The research team referred to the literature review to further ground discussions and implications for practice. Ultimately, the research team sought and achieved consensus for all thematic findings and suggested practices. We will now further discuss these results beginning with aspirational capital.

**Aspirational Capital**

Aspirational capital was the dominant form of capital evidenced in the eligible studies. Twelve studies revealed practices that leveraged the aspirational capital of student participants. Thematic practices included (a) mentoring; (b) goal-setting and program mapping; (c) storytelling; and (d) exposure to possibilities.

Briceño-Moreno (2017) used testimonials to gather data from first-generation Latinx students to capture their experience at Tuck Community College, a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI). Briceño-Moreno (2017) described the testimonials as an opportunity for Latino/a students to voice the challenges they may have encountered as they navigated the programs and services provided by their community college. Despite encountering challenges that may have impacted their college experience, such as immigration status, financial obligations, and family responsibilities, participants remained committed to accomplishing their educational and career aspirations (Briceño-Moreno, 2017). Briceño-Moreno (2017) described aspirational capital as particularly influential to the participants based on their capacity to remain optimistic despite

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encountering challenges. After sharing stories of numerous barriers, one participant told the interviewer, “Tuck needs to know that we’re really determined” (Briceño-Moreno, 2017, p.100).

Castañeda (2016) also showcased the influence of aspirational capital in her study. Castañeda (2016) utilized an ethnographic interview design to place an emphasis on a Latino male’s strong sense of determination in the face of obstacles. Castañeda (2016) added the importance of family when describing aspirational capital. According to Castañeda (2016), aspirational capital is the encouragement parents provide to their children to get a college education and seek a better life. These findings lined up almost identically with the aspirational capital discovered in Galván (2017).

Chavez (2019) further demonstrated how aspirational capital was an asset to student engagement. In this study, although peer mentors and student participants demonstrated all six forms of cultural capital, the majority of participants credited aspirational capital for their academic success (Chavez, 2019). The following participant’s statement supports Chavez’s (2019) claim, “I believe aspirational capital is very important because it helps you have a vision of the future, but also realize I have to do something in order to make that happen” (p. 89). Chavez (2019) found that 17 of 22 participants encountered an institutional inequity when placed into developmental math courses. This placement often resulted in participants struggling to progress through required math sequences. Though developmental courses were intended to help prepare students, they often result in increased attrition rates (Chavez, 2019). The peer mentor model allowed the participants to access their aspirational capital by remaining resilient in the face of real or perceived inequities (Chavez, 2019).

Duncheon (2018) discovered that aspirational capital was useful to students when facing academic challenges, but not as helpful when it came to campus integration. Duncheon (2018)

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claimed a female participant leveraged her aspirational capital to focus her attention despite being recently placed on academic probation. Another participant leveraged it when having to take a chemistry class over again (Duncheon, 2018). Duncheon (2018) noted that all the participants remained positive and thankful for the chance to participate in college classes.

Morales (2018) displayed that aspirational capital was evident in the participants' steadfast determination and tenacity to dream about the future. One participant told Morales (2018), "I'm proud that I haven't surrendered. I kept fighting for what I want. Since I was in Cuba, it has now been 18 years because I decided to become a paleontologist when I was three. And now, I'm 21" (Morales, 2018, p. 141).

Peña (2017) also highlighted the influence of aspirational capital to help Latinx students accomplish their educational goals. Peña's (2017) study focused on the experiences that Latino male students encountered when they participated in a first-year experience (FYE) program at an HSI. According to Peña (2017), the FYE programs were effective in encouraging Latino male students to utilize their aspirational capital by seeking campus counseling services. Peña (2017) also describes many of the participants as being highly determined to obtain a college degree through the aspirational capital their parents helped them cultivate.

Gonzales (2018) analyzed the educational experiences of Mexican American male students. He found that all six forms of cultural capital influenced the student engagement and success of study participants (Gonzales, 2018). However, he placed emphasis on the importance of students having a supportive family member who encouraged their educational pursuits and advocated for their persistence.

Sáenz et al. (2017) utilized an interpretive phenomenological approach to analyze the influence Latino fathers have on their sons' educational aspirations. As described in the study's

findings, the participants indicated that their fathers were a pivotal influence in motivating them to succeed in their educational endeavors (Sáenz et al., 2017). Their fathers' use of aspirational capital increased the participants' determination to succeed, regardless of their current circumstances (Sáenz et al., 2017).

Aspirational capital was the most prevalent form of community cultural capital leveraged by Latinx students within the eligible studies. Many Latinx students employ this form of capital in their quest to acquire a degree or certificate from the community college. The next sections will review each of the student engagement practices that appeared to optimize aspirational capital: mentoring, goal-setting, storytelling, and exposure to possibilities.

**Mentoring.** Mentoring was the most prevalent thematic finding that emerged when analyzing aspirational capital. Briceño-Moreno (2017) demonstrated the importance of Latino/a students having access to a mentor that facilitates their learning and cultivates their ability to succeed in the program. The value of mentoring is expressed in the following participant's statement regarding Puente, a program offered to educationally disadvantaged Latinx students:

I feel like we really need a system like Puente, I feel like Puente does help a lot where it's connecting different classes, networking with professionals who are Latino or who have gone through college. I feel like we as Latino students, we need to build more confidence within ourselves. (Briceño-Moreno, 2017, p. 83).

Castañeda (2016) provided evidence of the importance of mentoring throughout her study as well. Castañeda (2016) indicated that all students need the involvement of a mentor, especially Latinx students. Mentorship was necessary prior to even enrolling in college as many Latinx students encounter challenges that often hinder their educational access (Castañeda, 2016).

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Students who received mentorship were more likely to accomplish their academic goals than students without the same resource (Castañeda, 2016).

Peer mentorship programs were also an effective method to deliver assistance to Latinx students. Peer mentors brought culturally relevant skills and experiences to support struggling Latinx students (Castañeda, 2016). Chavez (2019) also found that peer mentorship was helpful to student engagement. Peer mentoring served as a source of academic support and helped the mentee to persist (Chavez, 2019). In fact, nine of ten participants continued successfully from first term to second term (Chavez, 2019). Reciprocity was also a benefit of the peer mentor model. Chavez (2019) explained that peer mentors encouraged the aspirations of their mentees and were consequently invited to reflect upon their own educational goals. 90% of the mentees in Chavez's (2019) study sought to become a peer mentor the following year. Mentoring encouraged the participants to contribute to the community college and leverage their aspirational capital along the way (Chavez, 2019).

Duncheon's (2018) study provided further evidence of the importance of mentoring for Latinx students. Duncheon's (2018) student participants all indicated campus resources were essential to their academic success and resilience. Many participants sought out mentoring resources available on campus. One participant provided the following statement which shows value of mentorship in connecting students to campus resources:

And I asked them, "Do you guys have a program for mentors?" Because I knew I was going to need a mentor. And then from there I met up with my mentor and we became really great friends. And then I was talking to her about my essays and then she told me about the writing center, and then she guided me there, and then I would go there often (Duncheon, 2018, p. 364).

Morales (2018) revealed the influence mentoring relationships have on Latinx students' capacity to persist in their educational journey. According to Morales (2018), mentoring that was accessible in a casual environment often led to higher retention rates. Comparable to Chavez (2019), the participants in Morales' (2018) study articulated a desire to give back to their community through mentoring fellow students.

Rivera-Lacey (2016) recognized mentorship as an influential element to build on to Latinx students' aspirational capital to meet their academic goals. Rivera-Lacey (2016) showed that students who received mentorship from special program counselors, such as in extended opportunity program services (EOPS), said their mentors had a significant impact in helping them stay motivated. One participant framed his mentee experience this way:

I am really fortunate that I connected with a really good counselor. I am able to be genuine with her and she's able to be genuine with me. She did not discourage me... I met her when I joined EOPS, and although I'm not in EOPS, she still helps me a lot... (Rivera-Lacey, 2016, pp. 108-110).

In each of the case studies where mentoring connected to aspirational capital, Latinx students described how mentoring nurtured their aspirations and provided a context where someone at the institution not only believed in them, but helped them believe in themselves. Finding a person who invests their time, displays individualized care or support, and takes an interest in the student's future undoubtedly inspires student engagement. Whether mentoring leverages existing aspirational capital or nurtures it into existence was an interesting dynamic that was unclear after careful review of the research studies. Nevertheless, there was a constructive relationship between mentorship, student engagement outcomes, and aspirational capital in Latinx community college students.

**Goal-setting and program mapping.** Goal-setting and program mapping were overlapping themes that emerged within aspirational capital. Community colleges have long been urged to help students map out the necessary steps to graduation and display how the degree aligns with long-term aspirations (Bailey, Jaggars, & Jenkins, 2015b). The included studies reinforced this philosophy and displayed that the practices of goal-setting and program mapping were helpful to Latinx students with established aspirational capital. Due to frequent intersection of these two practices, they were grouped into a single theme.

Comparable to mentorship and how it appeared to enhance student engagement, Briceño-Moreno (2017) placed a high value on goal-setting and program mapping for first-generation Latinx students. Her participants provided testimonials that highlighted the profound impact Puente counselors had on their academic engagement by discussing and formalizing their goals of transferring to a four-year institution (Briceño-Moreno, 2017). Goal-setting enabled the Puente counselor to develop a step-by-step process to help the student ultimately transfer out of Tuck College (Briceño-Moreno, 2017). One of her participants stated,

The Puente program at Tuck Junior College helps prepare you for transferring. So doing this programs definitely helps, not even just the Latino community, just anyone who feels like they're lost within the education system. Puente definitely helped me, because it was that extra step of having someone guide you through college and letting you know step-by-step on how to get through college and transferring was so helpful (Briceño-Moreno, 2017, p. 83).

Briceño-Moreno (2017) connected the practices of goal-setting and program mapping directly to aspirational capital of her participants.

Castañeda (2016) revealed an identical finding. She highlighted the influence of goal-setting and program mapping as vital components to capitalize on Latinx male students' aspirational capital (Castañeda, 2016). Campus resources, such as academic advising, registration, and first-year programs, appeared to facilitate and track a student as they progressed further along the path to graduation. The following participant's statement demonstrates how they've utilized campus resources to help them reach their educational goals and stay on track:

At least once every semester, I'll meet with a counselor. Especially like the first semester, I met with my counselor and they develop an educational plan. So, depending on which plan, A—Associates, B, or C, they'll have one on file for you and they'll tell you, "Okay, so these are the classes you're in right now. You're going to want to take these next semester, this in the summer." And I just meet with them every semester to like make sure I'm on track (Castañeda, 2016, pp. 97-98).

Morales (2018) further supported the relationship between goal-setting and program mapping on Latinx students' aspirational capital. For Morales (2018), goal-setting and program mapping were also used to communicate course objectives and learning outcomes to students. Defining goals and mapping out term-by-term trajectory helped students understand expectations and make sense of the present coursework (Morales, 2018). This practice was especially useful in developmental education or prerequisite coursework, such as English for Academic Purposes (Morales, 2018). Visualizing how these courses fit helped them accomplish their educational goals. Morales (2018) noted that regardless of how participants chose to navigate the EAP program, their aspirational capital appeared to be engaged and even grow during the process of goal-setting and program mapping.

Escamilla (2015) acknowledged the importance of goal-setting and program mapping to enhance Latinx students' aspirational capital. Escamilla (2015) described one participant's determination to become a chemical engineer because she loved science and math. Despite the participant being placed into the lowest level of remedial math, she was still determined to reach her career aspirations by allowing herself more time to study.

Lastly, Peña (2017) also contributed to the current research findings by highlighting that goal-setting and program mapping were used to leverage Latinx aspirational capital. Peña (2017) demonstrated that all study participants, via participation in the FYE program, navigated necessary steps to understand the transfer process and set themselves up successfully. Peña (2017) provided the following participant statement to characterize how the FYE program motivated him:

When I started with the FYE program, they already were trying to plug in that mindset, "What's your next step? Where are you gonna transfer? What are your plans?" So I felt like they were already thinking more long-term like, "What's your plan? Five-year? Ten year?" . . . which I think was cool, was good, 'cause you wanna think further down the line. And then, that helped motivate me and believe in my goals (p. 89).

The connection to aspirational capital was quite apparent in the practices of goal-setting and program mapping, especially when the exercises were infused with optimism and validation (Briceño-Moreno, 2017; Morales, 2018; Peña, 2017). Connecting the academic advising process with goal-setting and a clear matriculation pathway to graduation appeared to help Latinx students stay on track and motivated to persist. Referring to goals at multiple points during the student's college journey and renegotiating them if something has changed was a helpful

engagement practice. Study participants appreciated the continuity and positivity of regular advising sessions, paired with the integration of goals and program mapping (Peña, 2017).

**Storytelling.** Acknowledging the diversity of the Latinx students lived experience was fundamental to understanding, analyzing, and developing program-specific changes throughout the included studies. Storytelling appeared to be an effective method of sharing experiential knowledge and leveraging aspiration capital of Latinx students. Mentoring was the most prominent thematic practice within aspirational capital, appearing in seven of the included studies. However, storytelling was close second, appearing in a total of six studies (Chavez, 2019; Escamilla, 2015; Gonzales, 2018; Morales, 2018; Robles-Lopez, 2017; Sáenz et al., 2017)

Chavez (2019) classified this practice under counterstorytelling and demonstrated that it was a vital component to the peer mentor program at his case study location. Counterstorytelling was a tool for Latinx students to share their educational experiences with other Latinx students and focus on achievement despite barriers such as racism and oppression (Chavez, 2019; Yosso, 2006). Chavez (2019) argued for the importance of peer mentors utilizing counterstorytelling to highlight their own aspirational capital by sharing with their mentees how they persisted during their educational journey. Though the student doesn't outright acknowledge the practice of counterstorytelling, it was evidently beneath the surface as a peer mentor participant shared the following story:

I told [my mentee] it was fine that I had to drop that class before. So, it is a difficult class to take, so she shouldn't be too hard on herself about not being able to pass it during her first try, that I didn't pass it either and I am still not getting the hang of it, but hopefully next semester. I know she'll be able to learn from this experience and hopefully pass the class (Chavez, 2019, p. 60).

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Chavez's (2019) counterstorytelling example demonstrated how participants utilized aspirational capital to persist in community college.

Morales (2018) utilized an anti-deficit framework to guide his study. He focused on a desire for the study participants to offer diverse insights into the Latinx community college experience. Therefore, counterstorytelling played a central role in how Morales (2018) collected data. The participants shared counterstories of how they modeled their aspirational capital to remain motivated to navigate the inevitable challenges they faced during their community college experience.

Escamilla (2015) also placed emphasis on the importance of storytelling to motivate the participants to continue their educational journey despite perceived hardships. Family and financial hardships were repeated challenges experienced and expressed by the participants. Many of the participants acknowledged the encouragement of their parents in getting an education and working toward a better life. It is important to note that Escamilla's (2015) participants utilized storytelling to model their aspirational capital and express their academic goals. The participants were motivated by stories of both educational success and failures. One participant witnessed the experiences and hardships her sister endured as a direct result of not completing her high school degree:

My sister, the one before me, she got pregnant and she didn't go back to school. She got her GED and it was just a really hard time seeing her go through all of that. Whenever I realized I didn't want to be like that I decided to get focused on a goal and do better (Escamilla, 2015, p.144).

Sharing stories of hardship was not a means to vent frustration or request pity, but to express perseverance and create opportunity for aspirational capital to shine through. This was true in

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Gonzales (2018) as well. All his participants reported being influenced to attend college based on the collective stories of their families. These stories often showcased a strong work ethic, dreams of a better future, and how to cope with misfortunes (Gonzales, 2018).

Robles-Lopez (2017) found that storytelling was an important construct when exploring aspirational capital and its influence on Latinx student engagement. The participants in her study were motivated and encouraged to go to college based on the stories their families shared. The following statement reflects this finding:

My mom said, “Coming out of high school you have two options. You can get a job or you can get your degree.” That was kind of a weighted question, but all my life she’s been very hard on the idea that you need a degree to succeed in life in this day and age. That’s her main regret is not getting a degree and so she says, “You need to get a degree.” I think my sister and my mom because it was our story for a long time, so they helped me out... (p. 69).

According to Sáenz et al., (2017), the shared experiences and stories fathers shared with their Latinx male sons, especially stories involving their underpaid and often physically demanding working conditions, motivated the participants to earn a college degree as a means of obtaining a lucrative career and providing for the family. Inviting these stories to be shared in the community college context appeared to motivate Latinx students and reveal their community cultural wealth, especially the aspirational capital.

Helping students make sense and meaning of their lived experiences is certainly an important step on the path to degree completion. Students will face barriers and obstacles to academic success. That is assumed and expected. However, storytelling appears to be a promising practice that encourages engagement and resilience as opposed to disengagement and

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defeatism. Further, it was clear in these studies that students want to connect their studies to their vocational or familial aspirations. The more they struggle to make the connection between their education and their ultimate life goals, the more likely they are to feel or become disengaged. Inviting the practice of storytelling creates space for meaning-making and purpose-driven curricular engagement. For students with strong, established community wealth, especially aspirational capital, sharing stories appears to be a most useful practice to drive student engagement.

**Exposure to possibilities.** The final thematic finding within aspirational capital was exposure to possibilities. This theme included opportunities for Latinx students to gather information on services, fields of study, and even career paths that students were not necessarily aware of as a feasible option prior to exposure.

Morales (2018) found this practice was helpful for EAP students who never considered admission to the Honors College as an option. Some participants were unaware of the existence of the Honors College. One study participant explained how his goals changed once he was introduced to new possibilities, “In that moment like my possibilities went right from zero-point one percent to like twenty percent. I have to put my effort to go [to the Honors College]...(Morales, 2018, p. 101). Possibilities also included opportunities for scholarship (Morales, 2018). Introducing students to opportunities leveraged their aspirational capital to pursue new goals and means to affording higher education.

Peña (2017) claimed that exposure to possibilities was an additional form of support utilized within FYE programs to enhance aspirational capital. The FYE program introduced Latinx students to the four-year university, both in terms of program offerings and the physical environment via campus tours. As one participant stated:

I think [the university tours] opened my eyes even more to possibilities, 'cause I thought I probably won't get accepted to this university. I'll probably just end up going to Cal State, but it actually opened up my eyes, like damn, I could actually get into these universities if I try. FYE would tell me, "If you do your work you could actually get into it." So it opened up my eyes, and I'm more awake in class, I'm more focused on the lessons and everything. It was actually a big help (Peña, 2017, p. 90).

Galván (2017) also discovered the importance of introducing students to possibilities, especially students from an underprepared educational background to build on their existing aspirational capital. According to Galván (2017), his participants were motivated to seek out additional STEM opportunities because of their limited exposure to engineering during their K-12 education. Community colleges could not assume that Latinx students had received prior exposure to these possibilities.

*Exposure to possibilities* described opportunities for Latinx students to gather information on services, fields of study, and even career paths that they may not have been aware of or perceived as viable options prior to the community college introducing them to their existence or potential. Students were exposed to the possibility of honors program (Morales, 2018), transfer opportunities to four-year institutions (Peña, 2017), and STEM majors (Galván, 2017). Campus tours, information sessions, introductions to vocational opportunities through first-year experience curriculum, and guest lectures were also used within this practice. *Exposure to possibilities* was clearly an impactful practice for students with aspirational capital. Inviting them to dream about the future, challenging perceived limitations to their potential, and introducing them to the wide variety of vocational options appeared to further student engagement, especially for first-year students (Morales, 2018; Peña, 2017; Galván, 2017).

**Suggested practices to leverage aspirational capital.** A variety of student engagement practices were suggested within the studies as a means of building off the aspirational capital of Latinx students in a community college setting. As a reminder, these were not findings of the studies, but appeared in the study's recommended practices. From the studies, 15 offered suggested practices to leverage aspirational capital. The following suggested practices were offered by at least two of the included studies: (a) community outreach; (b) community-based programs; (c) sufficient financial aid and assistance; (d) diversity and inclusion; (e) mentoring; and (f) goal setting and program mapping. The following sections will examine the six suggested practices and how they imply community colleges can better leverage aspirational capital.

***Community outreach.*** Community outreach was the second most prevalent theme that emerged when analyzing the studies for suggested practices to leverage aspirational capital. Briceño-Moreno (2017) recommended increasing outreach initiatives that promote college awareness to Latinx families throughout their child's K-12 education. She also encouraged the development of programs that provide outreach to students as they enter their first year (Briceño-Moreno, 2017). This early intervention exposed students to the on-campus programs and services that support Latinx students and motivated them to persevere throughout their educational journey. Castañeda (2016) emphasized the importance of distributing information on college preparation, support services, and admission requirements to students long before they enroll. The community college was encouraged to create partnerships with local high schools and community organizations (Castañeda, 2016; Cervantes-Gonzalez, 2015). Duncheon (2018) and Escamilla (2015) focused on the development of community outreach programs that are culturally representative of Latinx students and familiar with Latinx communities in the area. Finally, Galván (2017) also encouraged the implementation of community outreach programs

that target parental involvement and awareness. Galván (2017) suggested that these outreach efforts will enhance familial support of their students' pursuit of higher education.

***Community-based programs.*** Community-based programs represented an additional emerging theme discovered during the analysis of studies that suggested practices to leverage aspirational capital among Latinx students. Briceño-Moreno (2017) provided recommendations for community agencies to partner together to prepare K-12 students for higher educational opportunities to increase retention rates among underserved students. Cawley (2018) offered community-building suggestions which included faculty initiating thoughtful interactions with students. Building a sense of community among the faculty and Latinx students was offered to increase the students' motivation to succeed (Cawley, 2018). Chavez (2019) suggested educational leaders build a community around their Latinx students that is culturally relevant and includes specialized programs that honor the Latinx experience. Morales (2018) advocated for advisors to build connections with Latinx students that encouraged financial resourcefulness and exploration of career pathways.

***Sufficient financial aid and assistance.*** Financial obligations were frequently a deterrent to many of the participants included in this review. Sufficient financial aid and assistance emerged as suggested practice to build on Latinx students' ability to overcome financial barriers. According to Briceño-Moreno (2017), financial programs should increase awareness about the variety of options to consider when determining how to finance an education. Financial literacy programs should target both Latinx parents and students (Briceño-Moreno, 2017). Chavez (2019) suggested that adequate mentoring programs could help Latinx students return to community college after withdrawing from a four-year university due to financial hardships. Mentors may be able to expose students to financial pathways to help fund their education rather than giving up

on higher education entirely (Chavez, 2019). Morales (2018) recommended advisors inform Latinx students about scholarship opportunities as they prepare for transfer. Orozco Villacaña (2015) emphasized the need for community colleges to establish avenues to help Latinx students finance their education. This suggestion was particularly poignant for undocumented students who do not have access to much state or federal aid.

***Diversity and inclusion.*** Diversity and inclusion was the most dominant theme uncovered when examining suggested practices that cultivate Latinx students' aspirational capital. Multiple studies suggested that practices should be implemented which include programs and services operated by a diverse and culturally relevant faculty and staff (Briceño-Moreno, 2017; Cahill, 2019; Cervantes-Gonzalez, 2015; Chavez, 2019; Escamilla, 2015; Rivera-Lacey, 2016). Faculty and staff must be able to provide resources that are sensitive to the cultural needs and backgrounds of Latinx students (Briceño-Moreno, 2017; Cahill, 2019; Cervantes-Gonzalez, 2015; Chavez, 2019; Escamilla, 2015; Rivera-Lacey, 2016). Sáenz et al. (2018) provided the suggestion that practitioners leverage the existing aspirational capital of Latinx students by intentionally diversifying the student body, rather than focusing on faculty diversification. Sáenz's et al. (2018) focus on diversifying the student population was supported by his findings that Latinx students often find it difficult to integrate into a campus environment that lacks Latinx cultural relevance or shared student experiences.

***Mentoring.*** Mentoring was the least reoccurring suggested theme connected to aspirational capital. It appeared in only two of the included studies (Briceño-Moreno, 2017; Chavez, 2019). Each study recommended counselors and advisors participate in continuing educational courses to facilitate their development when mentoring diverse student populations. Further, both studies emphasized the importance of the mentorship relationship on Latinx

students' academic trajectory. They implored educational leaders to provide mentorship services for Latinx students that focus on their educational development by establishing high expectations and routinely revisiting their educational goals (Briceño-Moreno, 2017; Chavez, 2019).

***Goal-setting and program mapping.*** The final theme that emerged following the analysis of suggested practices connected to aspirational capital was goal-setting and program mapping. Briceño-Moreno (2017) suggested that educational leaders assist Latinx students in determining their educational goals, including transfer to a four-year university. Once the student's goals were formalized, educational leaders should be able to help the student develop a path to reach their educational aspirations. Chavez (2019), Morales (2018), and Orozco Villacaña (2015) provide similar suggestions as recommended by Briceño-Moreno (2017). Cahill (2019) argued that effective goal-setting and program mapping were a team effort. Cahill (2019) suggested administrative staff, department chairs, and counselors come together to connect Latinx students to services that will most likely support their educational goals.

### **Familial Capital**

Familial capital was frequently considered one of the most salient forms of community cultural capital used by community colleges to encourage Latinx student engagement. It was evidenced in nine of the included research studies. Three primary practices leveraged familial capital: (a) mentoring, (b) community-based programs, and (c) encouraging family support. The following sections will explore how familial capital was connected to student engagement throughout the nine studies.

**Mentoring.** Only two studies identified mentoring as an effective tool to promote familial capital. From one study, Chavez's (2019) participants emphasized the impact mentoring relationships had on building up their existing familial capital. According to Chavez (2019), 18

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out of 22 participants indicated their mentoring relationship had evolved into a closeness often reserved for immediate family members. Chavez (2019) found that familial capital was significantly tied to the participant's ability to meet educational goals. All study participants, whether they were providing mentorship or receiving mentorship, attributed their academic success to the encouragement they received from their families. One of Chavez's (2019) study participants described familial encouragement as follows:

I always knew that I would be going to college since I was a little kid. My parents were always encouraging. Since I was in elementary school, they would get us in programs after-school. They would take us to programs in the library. Anything that we needed that was school related. They would go with us on field trips. Then as I went onto middle school and high school, they would always do their best to provide with supplies and tutors, but in high school it's when I started talking more about college and they would help me. Honestly, they couldn't like help with the process, but they were there for moral support. There wasn't any question whether I was gonna go to college, it was just which one I was gonna go to (p. 92).

Peña's (2017) study was the other study to discover the importance of mentoring programs in leveraging familial capital of Latinx male students. Specifically, the FYE program helped Latinx male students create bonds among their peers as well as the FYE program staff, especially around shared family backgrounds and cultural expectations. With these bonds, Latinx male students developed a deeper commitment to their peers, community, and family, which in turn enhanced their academic engagement (Peña, 2017). Mentors were encouraged to share about their own family background and talk about the importance of family—both in current day-to-day life and in long-term career aspirations (Peña, 2017).

The relationship between mentoring and familial capital was a bit more subtle than the relationship to aspirational capital. Interestingly, the research team only identified familial capital in studies involving peer mentoring relationships (Peña, 2017; Chavez, 2019). Despite the limited number of connections to familial capital, it should be noted that the aspirational capital of Latinx students largely centered on making a better life for their families. Even Yosso (2006) acknowledges the apparent overlap between these two forms of cultural capital. Familial capital appears to be optimally leveraged in the peer mentoring context due to small group sharing, storytelling, cultural affirmation, and an overall focus on collective and communal achievement over individualized achievement (Peña, 2017; Chavez, 2019).

**Community-Based Programs.** The thematic practice of community-based programs emerged in four of the included studies. Peña (2017) featured the effectiveness of the FYE programs in capitalizing upon Latinx students' familial capital. Peña (2017) described the FYE program's utilization of a cohort model to create a community environment and shared experience for Latinx students. Per the study's findings, 14 out of 16 participants attributed the cohort community to their academic accomplishments. The following participant's statement supports Peña's (2017) findings:

We have like a cohort that consists of, say, 25 to 30 kids that we have classes with for the first year. So I think with that, like building friendships from the beginning, I think it just helps it. Helps me keep motivated. We get each other's number, and we help each other with homework, or even study for tests (p. 93).

A FYE coordinator explains how these programs are designed to enhance community ties among the Latino male students:

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They [FYE students] do a challenge course as well, before the start of the fall semester. They do field trips throughout the semester. We do a lot of group work, so that's the other thing that FYE students, that I kind of warn them before they come into our program, there's no room in our program where you could be a loner (Peña, 2017, p. 93).

Students with established familial capital appeared to thrive in Peña's community-based FYE programs.

Chavez (2019) also provided findings connected to the influence of community-based programs to build upon existing familial capital in Latinx students. Chavez's (2019) findings demonstrated the importance of counterspaces to advocate for an anti-deficit viewpoint and increase community connections among the Latinx student population. According to Chavez (2019), participants that utilized counterspaces often reported increased levels of academic engagement and a sense of belonging both on and off campus.

Morales (2018) also found a connection between familial capital and community-based programs. Although Morales' (2018) study focused predominately on participants' Honors College experience, the program demonstrated how community-centered programs can influence all community cultural wealth, including familial capital to promote Latinx student engagement.

Utilizing cohort models (Peña, 2017), counterspaces or group settings designed for sharing testimonios (Chavez, 2019; Galván, 2017), and intimate shared experiences such as honors programs (Morales, 2018) all fall under the category of *community-based programs*. These programs appeared to help students share and lean into their familial capital. Latinx students recognized shared family values, expectations, and hopes. They felt affirmed in possessing a collectivist cultural background that ran counter to the typical American individualism. Most important, students found community through these programs and felt

connected to their community college (Peña, 2017; Chavez, 2019; Morales, 2018). This real and perceived feeling of connection appeared to drive student engagement and persistence throughout these studies.

**Encourage family support.** Encouraging family support was a central thematic practice discovered when exploring findings of Latinx student engagement connected to familial capital. Galván's (2017) study demonstrated this by providing participants narratives that indicate their family support was vital to remain focused on their academic goals. Further, both Cortes (2017) and Galván (2017) suggested that many of their participants did not receive any other form of support outside of their family's encouragement to get an education. Galván (2017) emphasized the importance of an extended family to cultivate community connections at the institution. According to Galván (2017), all participants expressed their rationale for pursuing an engineering degree as a direct result of the sacrifices their parents have made on their behalf.

Robles-Lopez (2017) provided additional findings that support familial capital's ability to drive a Latinx student's engagement. All of the participants in Robles-Lopez (2017) identified familial capital as a key contributor to reaching their academic goals. Robles-Lopez (2017) highlighted the influence of familial capital in the following participant's statement:

Families played an important role in support. My mother works and she has monitored my classes. Me transferring, she won't be there (at the University), but in any way, shape, or form they say that if they can, don't hesitate to call, any help, you just will, just do better. They gave me my compliments. They know I care about education. Before I went to the military, I was here. I decided to help my country, then return. They knew since I returned that I really cared about it and wanted it (my education) more than anything in the world (p. 67).

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Robles-Lopez (2018) found that family support positively encouraged the academic determination of Latinx students. According to Robles-Lopez (2018), familial relationships, in partnership with institutional relationships, developed as the pivotal factors that built on participants' existing familial capital to motivate students to reach their educational goals. As familial and institutional relationships progressed throughout the Latinx students' academic journey, they were more likely to achieve their educational goals.

Gonzales (2018) provided additional evidence to support the impact of familial capital. Gonzales (2018) noted that participants who felt adequately supported by their families carried that into peer relationships at the community college.

Morales' (2018) findings demonstrate the importance of participants accessing extended family support networks to enhance their familial capital. For many of Morales' (2018) first-generation participants, they were unable to obtain tangible parental support due to their parents' lack of awareness in how to navigate American higher education. For immigrant students, parental and familial encouragement was also hard to come by when family was primarily living in another country. Nevertheless, first-generation Americans and students on visa, still found a way to leverage support from extended family or immigrant communities. In the following participant's statement, they received support which was paramount to their motivation to persist despite facing many challenges as a new immigrant:

My cousin [was my main influence]. He gave me a lot of advice. He guided us a lot. He arranged a little place in Little Havana. We rented a house with one of his friends. I got my own room. He was very helpful in those first months (p. 93).

Familial capital of Latinx students appeared to span beyond parents and into extended family (Morales, 2018).

The final two studies showcased the benefit of community colleges encouraging family support. Both studies support the notion that familial capital allowed Latinx male students to overcome obstacles and remain motivated to reach their educational goals (Sáenz et al., 2018; Sáenz et al., 2017). The studies indicated that study participants were highly motivated to reach their academic goals to provide a better life for their families. Although participants' familial devotion often limited the amount of time they had to allocate to their studies due to shared financial obligations, Latinx students remained motivated to achieve their academic goals. Both studies suggested that familial capital allowed Latinx students to overcome most challenges and persevere in their academic pursuits.

Encouraging family support was a central thematic practice when it came to Latinx student engagement connected to familial capital. Seven studies highlighted the importance of family support towards the goal of student success outcomes (Cortes, 2017; Galván, 2017; Gonzales, 2018; Morales, 2018; Robles-Lopez, 2017; Sáenz et al., 2017; Sáenz et al., 2018). Cortes (2017) and Galván (2017) found many Latinx students did not receive any other form of external encouragement or support apart from that of their family. Latinx males were especially reliant upon family emotional support and encouragement to persist, and those who lacked that support were far less likely to persist and succeed (Sáenz et al., 2017; Sáenz et al., 2018).

**Suggested practices to leverage familial capital.** A plethora of student engagement practices were suggested in the included research studies related to leveraging familial capital of Latinx students in a community college setting. Of the included studies, 11 offered suggested practices to leverage familial capital. None of the suggested practices directly aligned with our thematic findings. Suggested practices to leverage familial capital included (a) community

outreach, (b) focus on cultural awareness, (c) family orientation, and (d) goal setting and program mapping. The following sections will examine each of the four suggested practices.

***Community outreach.*** Community outreach was a central theme that emerged when analyzing suggested practices to leverage familial capital. Briceño-Moreno (2017) suggested that educational leaders implement financial literacy courses that increase parents and children's exposure to educational funding options. Castañeda (2016) recommended practitioners execute outreach opportunities that advocate for increased college awareness targeting the local Latinx communities. Cervantes-Gonzalez (2015) offered training of counselors who encourage college planning services to Latinx high school students and their families in an unthreatening atmosphere. Escamilla (2015), Galván (2017), Orozco Villacaña (2015), Sáenz et al., 2017, and Villanueva (2015) also suggested community outreach as a promising practice. Each of these last five studies suggested community college focus on promoting culturally relevant outreach initiatives that empower Latinx parents, especially those with no experience of higher education (Escamilla, 2015; Galván, 2017; Orozco Villacaña, 2015; Sáenz et al., 2017; Villanueva, 2015). They appear to suggest that parents of first-generation students will be able to meaningfully encourage and validate the educational aspirations of their children with proper support and communication from the community college.

***Focus on cultural awareness.*** The second suggested practice was focusing on cultural awareness and training of community college employees. Briceño-Moreno (2017) recommended developing courses that advocate for the cultural awareness and best practices in supporting Latinx students. Cahill (2019) provided similar suggestions to cultivate practices that increase the awareness of services which are culturally relevant to Latinx students. Chavez (2019) and Morales (2018) also supported these practices and connected them to familial capital. Both

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researchers advocated for increased opportunities for Latinx students to encounter relevant campus services and knowledgeable faculty that validate their cultural experiences and backgrounds.

***Family orientation.*** Family orientation was another common theme that appeared following the study analysis of suggested practices focused on leveraging familial capital. The studies that recommended family orientation all argued for educational leaders to implement programs that specifically focus on Latinx parents and their unique needs. Cahill (2019), Galván (2017), Orozco Villacaña (2015), and Sáenz et al. (2017) suggested that community colleges consider training and information sessions that empower Latinx parents and students to take ownership of their educational journey by accessing available resources. These suggested parent orientations focused on empowering Latinx parents and helping them increase capacity to encourage their child's educational pursuits. Finally, Castañeda (2016) and Cervantes-Gonzalez (2015) promoted workshops that prepare both Latinx students and parents for the demands students will encounter during educational journey.

***Goal-setting and program mapping.*** Goal-setting and program mapping was the least recurrent theme discovered as a suggested practice related to familial capital. Only two studies suggested this practice to leverage familial capital. However, both studies offered similar initiatives which focused on Latinx parental engagement in the program mapping process. Both studies suggested that community colleges outline the full pathway to degree completion to parents and students. The researchers believed the exposure will motivate families to engage in a conversation and begin to develop educational goals and the steps needed to meet students' goals (Briceño-Moreno, 2017; Castañeda, 2016).

**Linguistic Capital**

Of the six forms of cultural capital within the CCW model, linguistic capital and resistant capital had the fewest thematic practices. Linguistic capital was minimally attributed to influencing Latinx student engagement throughout the studies included in this review. Only four studies appeared to display a connection between linguistic capital and student engagement among Latinx community college students. Four studies were the fewest evidenced in any one of the six forms of cultural capital. This resulted in two thematic findings: (1) cultural programming and (2) storytelling. The following sections will explore how linguistic capital was connected to student engagement throughout the four studies. The two emerging themes will further be examined, offering direct connections to linguistic capital.

Escamilla's (2015) study findings supported the notion that linguistic capital influences the academic pursuits of Latinx students. According to Escamilla (2015), although her participants identified as Mexican American and resided within the same community context, only two participants were bi-lingual. The participants that were fluent in Spanish and English helped their parents become knowledgeable about their educational goals, and in turn were more supportive of their academic pursuits. The participants in this study also expressed a sense of pride at being fluent in more than one language. One participant was documented as saying, "you can make your own way wherever, if you speak two languages" (Escamilla, 2015, p. 105). Another participant added her thoughts noting, "a person who speaks both languages is worth two" (Escamilla, 2015, p. 105).

Gonzales' (2018) study findings further demonstrated the importance of linguistic capital as a motivator to enhance Latinx students' academic pursuits. Gonzales' (2018) participants viewed being multi-lingual as an asset that empowered them to meet their educational goals. Further, Gonzales (2018) explained that participants who are fluent in both English and Spanish

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frequently had encouraging family members supporting their educational pursuits. Several of Gonzales' (2018) participants expressed Spanglish phrases they heard growing up that would help remind them to remain focused on their dreams.

Morales' (2018) study further purports linguistic capital's influence on the academic persistence of Latinx students in a community college environment. Per Morales' (2018) evidentiary findings, participants who demonstrated intellectual confidence had an easier transition integrating into the Honors College environment. Participants who exhibited limited linguistic capital experienced self-doubt and failed to develop ties with their peers and the faculty of the Honors College (Morales, 2018).

Peña (2017) provided an alternative view of linguistic capital as dependent on the participants' ability to speak more than one language. Escamilla (2015) and Morales (2018) emphasized findings that support the notion that participants felt they held an academic advantage as bi-lingual Latinx students. However, a student's ability to leverage linguistic capital to sustain their academic success was not necessarily connected to their ability to speak multiple languages.

**Cultural programming.** Cultural programming emerged as the central thematic practice following the analysis of included studies. This practice appeared to connect Latinx students' established linguistic capital to student engagement opportunities. All four studies within linguistic capital demonstrated the importance of cultural programming as a practice.

In the first study to suggest cultural programming practice, Escamilla's (2015) participants demonstrated the importance of programs that are individualized and culturally relevant to the Latinx students' current circumstances and experiential knowledge. Escamilla's (2015) participants all came from a rural community where they were limited in their exposure to

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coursework that prepared them for higher education, either because of institutional discrimination or lack of previous educational resources. As mentioned throughout Escamilla's (2015) study, only two of her participants spoke English and Spanish fluently. The bilingual participants demonstrated a sense of pride and considered their linguistic abilities an advantage within an educational context. They were also able to capitalize on their existing linguistic capital to influence their academic pursuits (Escamilla, 2015).

Gonzales (2018) also supported the impact culturally relevant programs have on Latinx student engagement. Gonzales (2018) found cultural programming helped Latinx students prepare to transfer to a four-year university. Morales (2018) demonstrated similar study findings. Participants who successfully utilized their existing linguistic capital to make connections with their peers, demonstrated higher levels of academic fulfillment compared to participants who failed to develop these support networks within their community (Morales, 2018). According to Morales (2018), participants who meaningfully integrated into their specialized program were more likely to be motivated to promote academic resilience via mentorship and guidance to the students with comparable linguistic capitals.

Peña's (2017) study on the impact of FYE programs highlighted the pivotal nature of cultural programming that builds on Latinx students' existing linguistic capital. According to Peña (2017), 10 of 16 participants felt more engaged in the FYE program as a direct result on interacting with the program's staff in Spanish. The following participant's statement showcased how he felt more connected to a FYE program coordinator because he could interact with her in a way he could not with an English-speaking staff member:

I feel that Patricia was more relatable. Even though Mrs. Abernati was an excellent person, and I had a great time with her, but there was something about Patricia that

sometimes you make jokes in Spanish, or you laugh about something that only Latinos would understand. It's nice to have that connection (Peña, 2017, p. 91).

Community colleges in the included studies leveraged the linguistic capital of Latinx students through incorporating culturally-informed programs. Latinx students shared their heritage, background, and native language with classmates and professors. These programs helped Latinx students feel affirmed and validated (Morales, 2018; Peña, 2017). They offered bilingual students the opportunity to showcase their grasp of another language and have that linguistic capital affirmed as valuable, something that is often perceived by academic institutions as detrimental to Latinx student success (Escamilla, 2015; Gonzales, 2018). Cultural programming also afforded Latinx students the opportunity of learning more about their own culture or the cultures of others. Creating space for multicultural programs, including in co-curricular programs such as student clubs and organizations, appeared to be highly productive.

**Storytelling.** Storytelling was a recurring practice that appeared to leverage aspirational, linguistic, and resistant capital. However, it was weakest in linguistic capital, appearing in only two studies. The first was Peña (2017). He explained that the FYE program utilized a form of linguistic capital identified as “testimonios”, or testimonials to draw out the learned experiences of the Latino male students (Peña, 2017). The FYE program coordinators intentionally utilized opportunities for testimonios to be shared between the students and staff to build deeper relationship (Peña, 2017). One FYE coordinator explained the centrality of storytelling for Latinx persons this way, “I'm really big on testimonials because my family, my mother is a storyteller. I'm a storyteller. Storytelling is critical because it creates trust. I share my testimonial, my personal testimonial which might be their [the students'] testimonial” (Peña, 2017, p. 92).

In the only other study connecting storytelling to linguistic capital, Gonzales (2018) demonstrated participants' reliance on Spanish phrases to motivate them to continue on their educational path. The phrases were snippets of stories their family members relayed to them as children. Gonzales (2018) identified these phrases as a form of Spanish teaching deemed critical in helping the participants overcome educational obstacles through strong will and self-determination. Gonzales (2018) explained further that each participant's linguistic capital was directly tied to their intellect and ability to connect with others. Linguistic capital was an asset to utilize for all Latinx students to remain devoted to their educational journey (Gonzales, 2018).

**Suggested practices to leverage linguistic capital.** A limited amount of student engagement practices were suggested by the researchers as a means of building onto the existing linguistic capital of Latinx students at a community college. Five studies offered suggested practices to leverage linguistic capital. Comparable to the thematic findings, only two themes emerged: (1) community outreach and (2) bilingual services. The following sections will examine the emerging themes and the suggested practices to better leverage linguistic capital.

***Community outreach.*** Only two studies fell into the thematic category of community outreach. In the first study, Briceño-Moreno (2017) suggested programs and services be offered in multiple languages, allowing Latinx parents and students to be aware of resources available on campus. This was especially important, according to Briceño-Moreno (2017), to understanding the financial aid process and terms. Escamilla's (2015) suggestions to leverage linguistic capital were comparable to those offered by Briceño-Moreno (2017). Escamilla (2015) urged community colleges to implement outreach programs that empower and affirm Mexican American students, especially if developmental educational courses will be required. Some students feel defeated and placed at a disadvantage from the start. Outreach can help

communicate a different narrative of resilience and perseverance (Escamilla, 2015). Both Briceño-Moreno (2017) and Escamilla (2015) suggested meeting Latinx students and their families where they are, and speaking their preferred language, to leverage linguistic capital and foster a meaningful conversation and relationship.

***Bilingual services.*** Bilingual services emerged as a thematic suggestion in all five studies that focused on practices to leverage linguistic capital. Escamilla (2015) emphasized the importance for educational staff and faculty, especially those involved in programs that are geared toward a culturally diverse student population, know how to speak the language of those they intend to serve. Briceño-Moreno (2017) and Cahill (2019) suggested diversifying faculty and staff to include bilingual educators and administrators. Cahill (2019) further emphasized the importance of counterspaces where Latinx students can receive mental health support from a bilingual health professional. These bilingual counterspaces can also empower Latinx students to offer encouragement and support to one another in a safe and welcoming environment (Cahill, 2019).

### **Navigational Capital**

Navigational capital was evidenced in 10 of the included studies. Yosso (2005) defined navigational capital as the skills of maneuvering through social institutions that were not created with Communities of Color in mind. In the educational context, this certainly includes navigating the social, economic, and emotional stressors one experiences that interferes with their potential academic success (Yosso, 2006).

Morales (2018) supported the notion that navigational and aspirational capital were the most necessary forms of capital for student success. For Morales (2018), aspirational capital kept a student motivated, and navigational capital empowered them to maneuver through the

community college resources and systems (Morales, 2018). This understanding aligned verbatim with Cawley (2010), who defined navigational capital as the “skills needed in order to maneuver through social institutions such as college” (p. 210). According to Cawley (2010), community colleges must “acknowledge individual agency within institutional constraints and acknowledge that due to structural injustices in schooling, an underrepresented minority student may need strategies to sustain success in such a system” (p. 210). Navigational capital appeared to be a major difference between students who successfully navigates the college environment and those who do not.

Thematic findings from eligible studies indicated that three main practices leveraged navigational capital of Latinx students in the community college context: (1) relationship with an institutional agent; (2) goal-setting and program mapping; and (3) tutoring and study groups.

**Relationship with an institutional agent.** Of the three thematic practices within navigational capital, relationship with institutional agent(s) was the most pronounced. It was evidenced in seven studies in total. Cawley (2018) found that navigational capital was critical to Latinx student success in the classroom. Cawley (2018) claimed,

The students who demonstrated applications of their navigational capital knew ways to advocate for themselves describing different instructional experiences than their peers. For example, some students knew how to interact with [their instructor] to maximize the short amounts of time they had with her (p. 228).

Navigational capital appeared to impact relational dynamics for Latinx students, especially the relationship with their instructors. Cortes (2017) affirmed this finding as well with Latinx students in development education courses. Simply by being placed in development education

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courses was deflating and demoralizing to many students (Cortes, 2017). However, according to Cortes (2017),

If their instructor is a validating professor, then it seems that they will likely succeed in the course. On the other hand, if the instructor is not validating, then it appears as though students may not succeed, and they will either withdraw from the course or not earn a passing grade, which will lead them to take the course once again, and the cycle [of development education courses] is continued. (pp. 166-167)

In both Cortes (2017) and Cawley (2018), validating and affirming instructors helped Latinx students lean into their navigational capital, among other forms of cultural capital, to persist and display resilience during college.

In a third study conducted by Cervantes-Gonzalez (2015), most of the institutional agents who supported Latinx students and encouraged their college aspirations were from their high schools, not their colleges. Several participants mentioned these relationships encouraged them to attend community college outreach programs and attendance influenced their ultimate decision to enroll (Cervantes-Gonzalez, 2015). One participant stated,

My counselor, she usually would pick me out of class, and she had like these questionnaires and surveys of what kind of campus would be the ideal campus for you. I remember a lot of those questions were class size. What's your ideal class size? Campus, location, and stuff like that (Cervantes-Gonzalez, 2015, p. 66).

It was apparent that connection with a community college institutional agent was something these students sought to establish from the beginning of their journey (Cervantes-Gonzalez, 2015). Students appeared to utilize relationship with institutional agent(s) to support their

success and leverage their navigational capital (Cawley, 2018; Cervantes-Gonzalez, 2015; Chavez, 2019; Cortes, 2017; Morales, 2018; Peña, 2017; Robles-Lopez, 2017).

**Goal-setting and program mapping.** The next most common theme supporting navigational capital was goal-setting and program mapping. It appeared in five total studies. Students were usually asked to formulate goals and shown subsequent steps in their postsecondary journey, including term-by-term course sequencing and options for transfer. Galván (2017) found 60% of Latinx male participants credited their program mapping experience as the initial exposure to engineering and the reason they choose it as a major. Peña (2017) learned that meeting with counselors and talking about graduation plans during the first-year experience leveraged navigational capital and inspired students to stay on-track. The same was said by Morales (2018) when it came to EAP coursework that was a pre-requisite for credit-earning courses. Students who were given the opportunity to see how these courses fit within their long-term educational goals of degree completion were more motivated to complete the EAP courses (Morales, 2018). Goal-setting and program mapping appeared to go hand-in-hand with navigational capital, especially because it made the pathway to program completion tangible and clear.

**Tutoring and study groups.** The final thematic practice that appeared to leverage navigational capital toward the goal of student engagement was tutoring and study groups. Three studies indicated that study groups and tutoring programs served to greatly support student learning (Cawley, 2018; Cortes, 2017; Duncheon, 2018). Specifically, Duncheon (2018) found that study groups improved student study skills overall. With exception to only one participant in her study, all students “took advantage of tutoring, office hours, the writing center, or all three” and felt better about their success (Duncheon, 2018, p. 368). Though it is often assumed that

these practices are highly technical and course-specific, they do appear to leverage students' navigational capital and possess broader impact. Study skills developed and strengthened in one course can carry over into other learning contexts (Duncheon, 2018). Instructor emphasis upon study groups empowered students to form groups in future courses as well.

**Suggested practices to leverage navigational capital.** Following the analysis of the findings, the researchers discovered that each of the included studies also suggested practices to maximize navigational capital. The suggested practices were (1) goal-setting and program mapping, (2) fostering a supportive community, (3) family orientation, and (4) tutoring and study groups. As previously displayed, two of these practices—goal-setting and program mapping, and tutoring and study groups—were evidenced in the established thematic findings as well.

***Goal-setting and program mapping.*** Briceño-Moreno (2017) and Cervantes-Gonzalez (2015) both suggested that community colleges could better support Latinx students by developing programs that support career planning and by ensuring that academic advisors help students stay on the right track. Many students complained about scheduling and taking courses that did not address vocational or transfer goals:

Resources and information about college are part of what students need in order to feel more prepared, which extends beyond the academic and course taking preparation... Ideally, such type of support could be available to students to and through college that can help them navigate the resources they need to utilize in order to be successful as they move into and through their first two years at college and prepare for yet another transition in their transfer year. (Cervantes-Gonzalez, 2015, pp. 102-103)

***Fostering a supportive community.*** The second suggested practice, fostering a supportive community, was evidenced in nine studies and the strongest theme in this category. A

variety of organizational practices comprised this theme. Briceño-Moreno (2017) suggested creating various spaces throughout the campus where students could congregate to meet socially or academically which would support the transmission of information. Briceño-Moreno (2017) further recommended providing peer mentors to guide other students through their college experience. These connections could be made in the classroom for students rather than force students to seek them out on their own. Colleges were also encouraged to support working in study groups rather than discouraging these kinds of practices, as they often led students to networks of peer support (Cortes, 2017).

Fostering supportive community involved employing staff at various sites that students would encounter during their entry experience where they would be given in depth information and access to the next steps that would guide them through the processes of admission, testing, registration, and financial aid (Escamilla, 2015). The critical need to have staff who create a welcoming atmosphere was an essential component mentioned in multiple studies to help students navigate the community college environment (Briceño-Moreno, 2017; Castaneda, 2016; Cervantes-Gonzalez, 2015; Cortes, 2017; Escamilla, 2015; Galván, 2017; Morales, 2018; Reeder, 2017; Sáenz et al., 2017; and Sáenz et al., 2018).

***Family orientation.*** Only two studies appeared to offer family orientation as a promising practice for leveraging navigational capital. Both studies connected family orientation and cultural awareness (Castañeda, 2016; Sáenz et al., 2017). External-facing programs, including outreach and family orientation, were encouraged to cater to Latinx cultural norms and needs. “Increasing the capacity of a welcome center for incoming students to include persons who are aware of the cultural barriers of students and/or families or who have the abilities to serve

students and their families in their primary languages when possible” (Cervantes-Gonzalez, 2015, p. 102).

***Tutoring and study groups.*** The last suggested practice connected strongly to the findings in Cawley (2018) and Cortes (2017). It was obvious why these two studies recommended this practice. Briceño-Moreno (2017) did not find this practice to leverage navigational capital, but appeared to recommend it for that purpose nevertheless.

Between the research team’s findings and suggested practices for navigational capital, two major themes arose to leverage navigational capital. The first was to continue to foster relationship with institutional agent(s) to support Latinx student success. Although instructors were the most impactful of those mentioned as institutional agents, it was also surprising how many of the institutional agents were support staff of an institution such as counselors, advisors, and program coordinators. This leads into the next major finding and suggested practice theme of goal-setting and program mapping. Without the support of goal-setting and program mapping, degree completion for Latinx students appears less likely. As the research team will articulate more clearly in chapter 5, these two strategies connect navigational capital to aspirational capital. Program mapping appears under navigational capital and gives direction to the aspirations of Latinx students. It is an essential component needed to guide students toward their next educational steps toward degree completion (Briceño-Moreno, 2017; Cawley, 2018; Galván, 2017).

### **Resistant Capital**

Galván (2017) defined resistant capital in his study as “knowledges and skills fostered through oppositional behavior that challenged inequality” (p. 143). He continued to comment about the participants in his study,

The majority of the group at one point or another during their one-on-one interviews mentioned the subject of math being a barrier, but choosing to resist and persist towards earning their engineering degrees. Kody started the conversation about resistant capital by discussing the topic of learning disabilities, ‘a lot of time when you have a learning disability you have to hold your pride back and acknowledge that you might have a disability and may need to seek help’ (Galván, 2017, p. 143).

Another study conducted by Gonzalez (2016) demonstrated that “Latino students can empower themselves by drawing upon their own resistant capital and, in some cases, transform institutions” (p. 58). Participants in the Gonzalez study spent a great deal of time drawing from their own resistant capital as they experienced a lack of understanding from professors who did not treat Latinx students with understanding or validation (Gonzalez, 2016).

Resistant capital emerged in seven studies and connected to two thematic practices: (1) counter-storytelling and (2) confronting imposter syndrome. Each theme will be discussed below.

**Counter-storytelling.** Counter-storytelling is a specific type of storytelling strongly intertwined with community cultural wealth (Yosso, 2006). However, counter-storytelling as a thematic practice is unique in how it connects to resistant capital. Counter-storytelling and resistant capital appear to possess a shared purpose in encouraging “oppositional behavior that challenges inequality such as racism, capitalism, and patriarchy” (Yosso, 2005). Therefore, the team grouped this theme in with storytelling, but also desired to capture the nuance as it relates to resistant capital.

The stories that each participant came to community college with and shared with Cortes (2017) demonstrated dramatic examples of resistant capital. Cortes (2017) focused on

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experiences of Latinx students who declared their intent to be STEM Majors and were enrolled in Calculus I. One participant was an aspiring physician assistant whose sister was tragically killed and her grades plummeted as a result. She became homeless and lived out of her car, surviving exclusively on financial aid during that time. Despite these obstacles, and taking calculus twice, the student eventually passed and moved on to other PA coursework (Cortes, 2017). All of the students in the Cortes (2017) study worked outside the home in order to support themselves financially during their community college efforts. Each student shared with Cortes (2017) a story of resistant capital and how they overcame barriers to persist and pass Calculus I. Even with all of the amazing stories of resistant capital, however, all of the students in the Cortes (2017) study had the opportunity to attend more prestigious institutions, but something stood in their way, thus they remained close to home and attended community colleges instead. Sharing stories of persistence and resistance empowered the students in the Cortes (2017) study.

As comparably evidenced in counter-storytelling, resistant capital was a strong finding especially in case studies where students shared their life situations and family obligations. Often, they expressed their motivation to find a better way to improve the lives of their family members as their underlying reason for their resistant capital (Cortes, 2017). In Cortes (2017), students often took calculus multiple times in order to succeed. Many felt that their K-12 education did not set them up for success at the college level and were disadvantaged from the time they enrolled (Cortes, 2017). These students persisted due to strong aspirational and familial capital, viewing the calculus course as the gateway to their STEM careers and their goals of making life better for their families, but were also empowered by the practice of sharing their stories and how the system may have failed them (Cortes, 2017).

Galván (2017) found a similar form of resistant capital in his case study of students determined to persist in their engineering studies despite being placed in developmental math, sometimes even required to take multiple terms of pre-college level math courses. Galván (2017) found that the college was not leveraging resistant capital in their practice, but that this form of capital helped students persist despite the college. Galván (2017) was not the only one. Gonzalez (2018) found that students displayed resistant capital even though their instructor made them feel stupid. They stayed in the class despite the poor instruction they received. “Unfortunately, the instructor did not meaningfully engage and seek for validation of understanding from the students who looked perplexed...instead the instructor sought validation of understanding from the students who were doing well” (Gonzalez, 2018, p. 159). If these are the experiences of some Latinx students, providing students the space to share their stories and how they persisted can leverage their resistant capital and empower them to continue their education.

In another study conducted by Escamilla (2015), participants leveraged resistance capital to persist in higher education despite their enrollment in developmental education courses. Their counter-stories motivated them to continue their education even in the face of sometimes overwhelming odds (Escamilla, 2015). One of the participants worked 30 hours a week at a local steakhouse, held a work-study position, raised two daughters, and continued to work toward a degree in criminal justice. She was a first-generation college student whose parents had no formal schooling beyond sixth and seventh grade. The other three participants had equally challenging counter-stories of first-generation college student experiences persisting through classes that they needed to pass in order to move forward toward their ultimate career goals (Escamilla, 2017). Sharing their stories appeared to remind these students that they were strong and capable, even in the face of injustice or perceived barriers.

**Confronting imposter syndrome.** The second thematic practice that leveraged resistant capital was confronting imposter syndrome. This theme was evidenced in three studies and took on dynamic form, which is described below and discussed in further depth in the following chapter.

Gonzalez (2016) along with Peña (2017) and Robles-Lopez (2017) found evidence of the imposter syndrome alive and well in their studies. Solórzano and Yosso (2001) defined the imposter syndrome as feeling as a fraud, attributing success to luck instead of intelligence, and having self-doubt. Imposter syndrome is a demonstration of something the Latinx community can overcome through storytelling and resistant capital. Gonzalez (2016) had the strongest evidence of participants demonstrating resistant capital in overcoming the imposter syndrome although it is likely that this theme could have been found in all twenty-one studies if each researcher went back and asked the right questions. One of the participants from the Gonzalez (2016) study felt lonely because she was the only Latina left in upper-level science coursework. All other Latinas dropped out. This participant reflected,

I feel like me being a Latina in science, uh, sometimes it feels lonely, you have to kind of figure it out, I wish I could write all of the things that I am going through. Well, my first impression was, it was kind of astonishing since in most of my classes, there is only three or four Hispanics, and the rest of my classmates are Asian or White. That, for me, was a pretty big impact when I first started to take courses in the science field (Gonzalez, 2016, p. 63).

Another participant shared that he felt like he didn't belong at the community college. The student mentioned, "Even though nobody classifies you directly, you kind of feel a little different

because you are like the only Hispanic in the class... It kind of makes you start to doubt yourself whether you belong there or you deserve to be there” (p. 67).

Peña (2017) found that the participants in his study also experienced imposter syndrome. The [community college] FYE [First Year Experience] program specifically helps reinforce a student’s resistance capital by offering workshops on social justice-related topics. But both FYE programs help build on Latino males’ resistance capital by showing them how to advocate for themselves despite systems of inequality, such as a lack of financial aid, that may hinder their academic success. Latino males in both programs also learned how to identify and combat certain contexts in higher education, such as the imposter syndrome, that attempt to marginalize them in higher education settings...FYE program staff deliberately create spaces and activities to discuss social justice-related issues as a way to empower students and help them combat issues of inequality they may face in higher education. (p. 98)

The above examples demonstrate the need for strong resistant capital to combat imposter syndrome. As Gonzalez (2016) stated in his study, “The effect of imposter syndrome among students of color is well documented, but there has been little research at the community college level” (p. 67). It was apparent that confronting imposter syndrome can take on multiple programmatic forms. However, thematically, it was an essential practice for community colleges to leverage resistant capital.

**Suggested practices to leverage resistant capital.** Resistant capital was one of the weaker forms of community cultural capital when it came to thematic findings. It was discovered in only two thematic practices. Unfortunately, the included studies were limited on suggested practices to leverage resistant capital. Across the 21 included studies, it appeared that students

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seemed to either arrive on campus with this capital or not. Helping students develop resistant capital was also not a strong theme. The lone suggested practice used to leverage resistant capital was mentoring. Galván (2017) found that “students identified two of the main reasons they continue to persist in their engineering studies, despite real and perceived barriers were due to their involvement in both the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE) and Mathematics, Engineering and Science Achievement (MESA) program” (p. 154). These programs had built-in supports such as peer mentors and club advisors (Galván, 2017). The merger of cultural/social clubs with an academic discipline appeared to help students leverage community cultural capital, especially resistant capital. It also provided them with a social network, including mentors, who were forced to confront comparable barriers. In these contexts, resistance capital could be developed by the students or affirmed as valuable by students or mentors with similar cultural backgrounds.

Although resistant capital did not arise as a finding throughout the studies, it proved to be a major factor in student success. Latinx students leveraged their resistant capital to overcome numerous barriers they experienced as they worked their way through their post high school educational experience. They were often forced to overcome battles with the imposter syndrome which they often fought through the use of storytelling and potentially by finding a mentor. Those Latinx students who experienced success often credited their trajectory to a background that prepared them to leverage not only their resistant capital, but use their social capital as well.

**Social Capital**

Social capital was evidenced in 13 of the included studies. The thematic findings included three primary practices: (1) relationship with institutional agents, (2) storytelling, and (3) internships. Functionally, social capital took on many forms. One of the studies claimed a

peer mentor program increased Latinx student social capital (Chavez, 2019). However, this specific peer mentor model was designed with CCW as a theoretical underpinning to the program (Chavez, 2019).

Another study found that one of the participants, “built the social capital she needed that is acknowledged by higher education and became adept at using the ‘culture of power’ ...She learned the codes and rules to navigate [the community college] and is more likely to use them at her new university” (Cahill, 2019, p. 118). This aligned with the example of social capital in Gonzales’ (2018) study. In this study, she found that social capital was used to develop navigational capital. The two forms of capital worked together to strengthen the two study participants’ ability to navigate their higher educational institutions and succeed (Gonzales, 2018).

Another study conducted by Morales (2018), found that social capital was one of the most important forms of capital when it came to student success. Evidence indicated that participants built social capital “quickly by creating ‘networks of people and community resources’ by creating community with their peers or by finding validation from agents of the College, especially professors and Honors College directors” (Morales, 2018, p. 142).

**Relationship with institutional agent(s).** For the first thematic practice in this category, the definition of institutional agents included the following groups: classroom instructors, academic counselors, tutors, student affairs personnel, program coordinators, and financial aid advisors. Course instructors were the most prominent institutional agents identified in the included studies. Cawley (2018) pointed out that Latinx students often leaned into their social capital and came to college with the intention of developing strong relationships with their

instructors. They learned this early in their educational career from their parents which supported these students through much of their educational experience (Cawley, 2018).

It became clear in many of the case studies that there was at least one person who became a critical agent of support at the institution who could answer critical questions for the student, even when the question was outside of that professional's operational responsibilities (Cahill, 2019; Cawley, 2018; Cervantes-Gonzalez, 2015; Cortes, 2017; Escamilla, 2015; Gonzales, 2018; Morales, 2018; Peña, 2017; Robles-Lopez, 2017; Villanueva, 2015). These relationships helped the student navigate the college environment and improve their chances for success. Overall, it did not appear to matter if the institutional agent was a staff member or peer mentor, as long as that agent was a consistent person who could provide accurate information and offer support for the student at critical times.

In the Cahill (2019) study, all five of the study participants found classes they took with culturally responsive instructors free of microaggressions and supported their overall feeling as though they, "belonged in college, which was different from what they felt in high school due to the life adversities they faced" (p. 99). These instructors engaged the students and motivated them to continue their education (Cahill, 2019). "The participants emphasized that taking classes with innovative, culturally responsive professors made them feel acknowledged, safe, empowered, and validated because they felt they were part of a community that cared" (Cahill, 2019, p. 100). The above example of an institutional agent is not necessarily one where the professor guided the participants in their career pathway. Nonetheless, they played a critical role in determining their next educational steps through validating their belonging and ability to succeed. The participants in Cahill (2019) all connected with programs within their institution that supported them early in their college journey. Some of the programs involved working with

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counselors within the programs where others networked with other people and resources. All five study participants found institutional agents at their community college which led to their success in obtaining the information they needed to succeed (Cahill, 2019).

Cervantes-Gonzalez (2015) discovered that many high-achieving Latinx students attend community colleges when they were otherwise qualified to attend more selective four-year institutions. As Cervantes-Gonzalez (2015) found,

Participants of the study described their protective agents, their families, and their aspirations as a great source from which they received encouragement and motivation to attend college, yet their lack of experiences with higher education limited parents' abilities in offering specific advice and information about preparing or and applying to college. Latina/o students' narrative demonstrated that although their high schools and institutional agents could impart the college knowledge and supports that their families could not, that oftentimes participants' experiences about accessing such resources was limited or available to only select groups of students who were in programs with a particular focus on college preparatory curriculum such as with AVID or Advanced Placement courses (p. 94).

Each of the four female Mexican American participants in the Escamilla (2015) study mentioned a person they could turn to when they had questions about the college process. Although Escamilla (2015) hoped the participants would identify more individuals than they did, she also acknowledged that the participants were able to access enough information to find success thus far. Interestingly, of the people identified as supports to give them information about the college process, only two of the four participants mentioned an institutional agent as

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their source of information, the other two turned to family members who had some college experience as their resource (Escamilla, 2015).

Similar to Escamilla (2015), Gonzales (2018) discovered in his case study of three Mexican American male participants, that only one,

...developed a significant relationship at his community college. In comparison to the other cases, Ivan's story was different because he formed a connection with his advisor and a faculty member at the community college. He was able to name several faculty that offered him support and guidance to help him throughout his coursework and into his transfer experience. This connection established a clear pathway in his coursework and helped him develop a defined plan to attain his undergraduate degree in biochemistry. This relationship seemed crucial to sustaining his educational journey (Gonzales, 2018, p. 139).

Relationships of this sort with institutional agents, formally or informally established, appeared to be essential to the student engagement and success of many Latinx students. For students with strong social capital, creating an organizational climate that was relational and hospitable helped them employ this capital.

**Storytelling.** The second most evident thematic practice within social capital was storytelling. In the Chavez (2019) study, Chavez found that, "Peer mentor participants shared with their mentees how and why they persisted with their educational goals despite confronting many barriers. TPMM [Transformative Peer Mentor Model] participants addressed the many environmental and institutional barriers they had to overcome" (p. 101). As Chavez (2019) interviewed participants, she unveiled how vital stories of academic persistence and resilience were to students as they, "learned to navigate an educational system that was not intended for them to succeed" (p. 102). Chavez (2019) described how even when first-year Latinx college

students were presented with situations where they should not have found success, the counterstories from their peer mentors provide them support. She continued,

The findings suggest that because peer mentors offered support by sharing their own stories of resilience; mentees were able to connect to their peer mentors and reframe their narrative to one of empowerment. More importantly, as peer mentors and mentees engaged in the mentoring relationship, they were able to build community and create counterspaces of resistance (Chavez, 2019, p. 102).

Narratives like this one speak to the integration of all six forms of community cultural capital and how difficult it can be to compartmentalize the framework. Nevertheless, social capital was leveraged through the practice of storytelling. It appeared to help students leverage and build social capital during their community college experience (Escamilla, 2015; Gonzalez, 2018).

**Internships.** The last thematic practice within social capital was internships. In the Galván (2017) study, one of the participants, Zachariah, spoke about how hard he worked for an internship opportunity that he and another participant received. Zachariah continued on to describe how another student received a similar internship because his parents worked at the company. Rather than be disheartened, Zachariah decided that the “. . . struggle brings character. And for me as I shoot for the stars, I am going to keep going farther and farther. I am going to continue to have this drive until I achieve my engineering degree” (Galván, 2017, p. 145). Receiving practical experience in the workforce that was provided via internships allowed students to leverage their social capital and build a professional network (Cahill, 2019).

**Suggested practices to leverage social capital.** When it came to suggested practices, four primary themes emerged: (1) community outreach; (2) cohort and group learning opportunities; (3) welcoming facilities for social interaction; and (4) creating a campus climate

where relationships are valued. Interestingly, only the practice of relationship with institutional agents overlapped with the findings from our included studies.

***Community outreach.*** Many community outreach ideas appeared to connect to social capital. The ideas ranged from collaboration with community agencies, to a focus on college readiness, to improving institutional relationships with Hispanic/Latinx communities, to creating a safe campus culture where all students feel valued (Briceño-Moreno, 2017; Escamilla, 2015; Galván, 2017). One of the most tangible community outreach solutions came from Cahill (2019). Cahill (2019) suggested creating a space that allows Latinx students to come together and talk about issues relating to school and mental health with a mental health professional. Cawley (2018) suggested that faculty should integrate student engagement and student care. By displaying care for each student, the faculty member is also providing the student with a meaningful college experience, which encourages student engagement and reveals to the broader Latinx community that the college is equipped to help Latinx persons (Cawley, 2018).

***Cohort and group learning opportunities.*** In five of the studies, researchers suggested that group work may improve success for Latinx students while leveraging their social capital. Cawley (2018) found that multiple student recommendations during her interviews were that they wished their instructors would incorporate group work into their instruction. One of the participants, Teresa, stated, “Let’s say um [*pauses*] she stops and has us do problems like she usually does. Instead of us working it out ourselves, just form groups real quick and then, yeah” (p. 122). Another student, Santiago, described that,

...Group work was important for everyone in the class to feel connected. He wanted more structured opportunities to work with his peers as it seemed most of his classmates

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were too shy to reach out and work with someone new when given the opportunity, and instead tended to work individually (Cawley, 2018, p. 123).

A final student, Layanna, “preferred working in pairs; she felt that if she were assigned to work in groups of three or more students, she would have felt overwhelmed and would not have engaged” (Cawley, 2018, p. 126). Each of these examples in Cawley (2018) displayed the importance of social capital and the practice of group work for Latinx student success.

Cortes’ (2017) study involving 12 Latinx first-generation STEM majors intending to transfer to a 4-year university focused a great deal on the value of study groups. Cortes (2017) claimed,

Forming study groups outside of class and making new friends in class extended students’ social networks. An example is a friend of DJ’s who was a semester ahead in his math courses but who could provide DJ and his study group with PDF versions of the calculus textbook and solutions manual. Study group peers also provided valuable information not just regarding how to solve problems, but also about how to relax before a test by doing breathing exercises (p. 90).

Cortes’ (2017) work highlighted the difference between instruction which utilized group work and instruction that was individually focused. One such example was Professor Puente:

Along with study tips Professor Puente offered on the first day, he made a validating comment that was very different from what other instructors mentioned; he announced to his students that there were “a lot of smart people in the class” and that “it’ll be good to work together”. By making this powerful statement, not only did he let his students know that they should form study groups and collaborate, but he also acknowledged their

academic capital by telling them that he believed in their intellectual capabilities (Cortes, 2017, p. 109).

Cortes (2017) also found that study group members shared important information with one another, including “information they needed to know about the class and upcoming exams, as well as study tips, information about where to purchase needed materials at a cheaper price, and coupons for food” (p. 153).

Orozco Villacana (2015) also found that of the 16 Latinx participants in her study, those who were engaged in their college life, viewed peer networks as an “essential element in ensuring their success, not only at Midwest Community College, but their future academic and professional aspirations” (pp. 177-178). Reinforcing cohorts and study groups was one way community colleges could help Latinx students develop such a network.

***Welcoming facilities for social interaction.*** Another suggestion that arose out of the studies was to provide more welcoming facilities for social interaction for Latinx students. Briceño-Moreno (2017) suggests that community colleges need to, “Create a campus culture where students feel safe and valued for their differences...and various spaces throughout the campus where students can congregate to meet socially or academically” (pp. 110-111).

Both suggestions were validated by the study conducted by Cahill (2019) who discovered that participants, “found programs and student resource services where they felt comfortable not only because the faculty acknowledged their presence and helped them, but also because the staff at those locations were welcoming and kind” (p. 98). Cahill (2019) also found that there were multiple programs designed to support underserved students. One of the items participants consistently referred to when discussing the supports provided by each program was that, “They offered students a space to study and community where they felt safe and were able to network

with one another. Also, that sense of safety and belonging experienced in the centers was felt in some of the classes the participants took” (p. 98). Late night study spaces, including access to computers and campus resources, were recommended given the work and family demands of many Latinx students (Briceño-Moreno, 2017; Cahill, 2019).

*Relationship with institutional agent(s).* The most prominent suggested practice connected to social capital dealt with emphasizing relationship. Briceño-Moreno (2017) found through interviewing her participants “that the college needs to connect its students to the services available that can help them reach their degree and transfer goals” (p. 80). Another participant spoke highly about another program. She described her experience as such:

A program at Tuck that has helped me figure out college has been the EOPS [Equal Opportunity Programs Services] office for the tutoring and counseling. That was very helpful. I feel like they are super helpful. It’s not only business with them they, they get to know you and they’re very friendly. They always tell us that we can go in whenever we want and just talk or complain or whatever we want to do (Briceño-Moreno, 2017, p. 81).

Similar to these examples, Cahill (2019) found, “The five participants stated that they found programs and student resource services where they felt comfortable not only because the faculty acknowledged their presence and helped them, but also because the staff at those locations were welcoming and kind” (p. 97). Beyond counselors and advisors, important relationships that supported social capital for Latinx study participants were the professors who demonstrated cultural awareness. “The participants emphasized that taking classes with innovative, culturally responsive professors made them feel acknowledged, safe, empowered, and validated because they felt they were part of a community that cared” (Cahill, 2019, p. 100).

Chavez (2019) recommended that participants will gain social capital through their mentoring relationships. Mentoring provided participants with a connectedness to the campus and a feeling that they were cared about (Chavez, 2019). The study used the trained peer mentor model (TPMM) to “create an active learning setting in which [participants] became co-learners with their mentees to develop an approach for mentor-mentee dyads to dialogue, collaborate, and reflect” (Chavez, 2019, p. 77). According to Chavez (2019), peer mentorship is “a mechanism where social capital will be exchanged” (p. 126).

### **Summary**

This chapter explored the findings and synthesized results of this systematic review. The retrieval process netted 186 references, but resulted in only 21 eligible studies. Each form of community cultural capital—aspirational, familial, linguistic, navigational, resistant, and social capital—was clearly evidenced when the eligible studies were reviewed in the aggregate. Promising practices used to leverage cultural capital of Latinx students include: mentoring, goal-setting, program mapping, exposing students to possibilities, community-based programs, encouraging family support, cultural programming, storytelling, culturally-informed tutoring, confronting imposter syndrome, internships, and emphasizing relationship with institutional agents. These student engagement practices were used to directly leverage student cultural capital and categorized in our findings based on the corresponding form of capital. The 21 studies explored suggested practices community colleges implement, as these practices may or may not relate to the findings. In the next chapter, a discussion and comparison between the studies’ findings and suggested practices will be articulated.

## CHAPTER 5

### DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

#### **Introduction**

This systematic review was designed to deepen understanding of and measure the extent to which existing research on Yosso's (2006) community cultural wealth (CCW) framework could be synthesized and explored to determine how it has transformed student engagement practices in the community college context. Specifically, the study investigated how community colleges are leveraging Latinx students' existing cultural wealth to help them succeed and persist on to degree completion. The research questions were as follows:

1. How has Yosso's (2006) community cultural wealth model been utilized in student engagement practices for Latinx community college students over the past 5 years?
2. What student engagement practices are recommended or suggested for community colleges to better leverage the existing community cultural wealth of Latinx students?

#### **Discussion of the Findings**

The discussion of findings is centered upon student engagement practices in community colleges. Since many of these practices cross into multiple forms of cultural capital, the following discussion is focused on student engagement practices that pragmatically assist community college scholar-practitioners to rethink policy, programs, and pedagogy. Therefore, this section explores the four primary thematic practices that emerged across multiple forms of cultural capital: (1) mentoring, (2) goal-setting/program mapping, (3) storytelling/*testimonios*, and (4) an emphasis on relationship with institutional agents. A brief discussion on minor thematic practices is included at the end of this chapter.

## **Mentoring**

Mentoring was one of several practices that appeared to leverage multiple forms of Latinx student cultural capital. It emerged as a thematic finding that leveraged aspirational and familial capital. It shares many common features with another prominent thematic practice: relationship with institutional agent(s). However, the research team identified this latter practice in two different forms of capital: navigational and social. These two practices clearly overlap. However, the researchers differentiated mentoring from relationship with institutional agent(s) due to the intentional and programmatic nature of *mentoring* and the informal, organic, and/or transactional dynamic of *relationship with institutional agent(s)*. Mentoring was deemed programmatic because it was an institutional expectation of advisors, faculty, and student affairs personnel (Castañeda, 2016; Rivera-Lacey, 2016), or built-in to programs like the first-year experience (Peña, 2017; Chavez, 2019) or ELL (Morales, 2018). Contrast this with *relationship with institutional agent(s)* which appeared to be more informal, coincidental, or organic. While these features served to differentiate the two practices in most cases, it should be acknowledged that these differences were less pronounced in four studies, hence why they overlapped into both practices (Chavez, 2019; Duncheon, 2018; Morales, 2018; Peña, 2017).

In each of the case studies where mentoring connected to aspirational capital, Latinx students described how mentoring nurtured their aspirations and provided a context where someone at the institution not only believed in them, but helped them believe in themselves. Finding a person who invests their time, displays individualized care or support, and takes an interest in the student's future undoubtedly inspires student engagement. Whether mentoring leverages existing aspirational capital or nurtures it into existence was an interesting dynamic that the research team could not fully explain even after careful review of the research studies.

Mentoring appeared to be a struggle for students at predominantly White institutions (Orozco Villacaña, 2015; Reeder, 2017), while it also appeared to be a strength for community colleges with majority Latinx populations (Castañeda, 2016; Morales, 2018; Peña, 2017). The team could not determine if these mentors were also Latinx persons in every example, but it did appear that shared cultural experiences and backgrounds, including comparable cultural capital, were advantageous to the mentoring relationship between Latinx students and their faculty (Morales, 2018).

Mentoring was not exclusively defined as an employee-student relationship. Mentorship also involved peer mentor programs, primarily within the context of first-year experience programs (Peña, 2017; Chavez, 2019). The peer mentoring model appeared highly successful by tapping into the aspirations of first-year students and providing them a tangible model of student success (Peña, 2017; Chavez, 2019).

The relationship between mentoring and familial capital was a bit more subtle than the relationship to aspirational capital. Interestingly, familial capital was only identified in studies involving peer mentoring relationships (Peña, 2017; Chavez, 2019). Despite the limited number of connections to familial capital, aspirational capital of Latinx students largely centered on making a better life for their families. Even Yosso (2006) acknowledges the apparent overlap between these two forms of cultural capital. Familial capital appears to be optimally leveraged in the peer mentoring context due to small group sharing, storytelling, cultural affirmation, and an overall focus on collective and communal achievement over individualized achievement (Peña, 2017; Chavez, 2019).

Several studies that did not possess strong findings of connection between mentoring and aspirational or familial capital still suggested mentoring practice. Galván (2017) and Briceño-

Moreno (2017) connect the practice to resistant capital by encouraging counter-storytelling, and helping students persevere in the face of racism and injustice. On many fronts, mentoring appears to be a promising practice for community colleges to employ in order to leverage and develop the community cultural wealth of Latinx students.

### **Goal-Setting and Program Mapping**

The research team debated the integration of these two seemingly separate practices. Goal-setting was occasionally course-specific and disconnected from the practice of program mapping (Galván, 2017; Morales, 2018). However, the team did not find a single instance of program mapping separated from goal-setting. While goal-setting resonates most with aspirational capital, the practice of program mapping appeared to optimally connect with navigational capital. A case could be made for separating these two practices and their associated forms of capital. At the same time, the overlap of the two practices, especially in the context of advising (Cervantes-Gonzalez, 2015) and first-year experience programs (Peña, 2017; Robles-Lopez, 2017), was compelling. For that reason, the two practices were grouped to a single thematic finding.

Goal-setting and program mapping were of critical importance to three populations of Latinx students: (1) first-generation students (Briceño-Moreno, 2017), (2) students placed in developmental education (Cawley, 2018; Galván, 2017), and (3) students placed in a prerequisite ELL program (Morales, 2018). In all of these studies, talking about aspiring to degree completion and how it will help the student accomplish their ultimate goals helped them make meaning of immediate coursework. Though these studies did not use the term student engagement momentum (Kuh, Kinzie, Cruce, Shoup, & Gonyea, 2006), it was evidenced based on the testimonies and interview accounts of Latinx study participants.

The connection to aspirational capital was also quite apparent in the practice of goal-setting and program mapping, especially when the exercise was infused with optimism and validation (Briceño-Moreno, 2017; Morales, 2018; Peña, 2017). For example, Peña (2017) looked at a community college where each Latinx student enrolled in the FYE program began by setting individual goals and communicating them to academic advisors. The advisors referred back to these goals at numerous points during the student's educational journey and as the student progressed along the pathway to program completion. During these program mapping sessions, the advisor would validate the student's strengths and remind them of their previously stated goals, which often times included transferring (Peña, 2017). Study participants appreciated the continuity and positivity of these regular advising sessions, paired with the integration of goals and program mapping (Peña, 2017).

Multiple studies discovered that students utilized their navigational capital to successfully navigate the cumbersome and overwhelming pathway to degree completion at the community college (Cawley, 2018; Galván, 2017; Gonzales, 2018; Morales, 2018; Peña, 2017). Students found program mapping and goal-setting helpful in all of these studies, especially when the program map communicated a simplified, clear pathway to completion (Morales, 2018; Galván, 2017). However, the researchers found it interesting that several studies made no mention of the importance of goal-setting and program mapping until it came time to offer recommendations (Cortes, 2017; Duncheon, 2018; Escamilla, 2015). In these instances, all the studies seemed to appeal to the established navigational capital of Latinx students. Briceño-Moreno (2017) and Castañeda (2016) also connected these practices to familial capital due to how many Latinx students talk about their family as the motivation during the goal-setting. Undoubtedly, the practice of goal-setting and program mapping could leverage multiple forms of community

cultural capital. However, based on the research included in the study, these practices only appeared to leverage aspirational and navigational capital.

### **Storytelling/*Testimonios***

It is worth acknowledging that the CCW model has a natural gravitation to the practice of storytelling or *testimonios*. Yosso (2005/2006) utilized storytelling/*testimonios* as a methodological means of data collection in her original study, and employed counterstories to share results and connect the theory to real life scenarios. Therefore, it should have been no surprise that most of included studies used qualitative case study methodology and focused on the lived experiences of Latinx students. Stories were a critical part of data collection and sharing results. Furthermore, these studies compellingly displayed the importance of storytelling as a student engagement practice which leverages Latinx student community cultural capital.

In many of the included studies, researchers invited students to share stories of resilience and how they had to face various obstacles along their journey. This included the perceived failures of previous educational experiences (Escamilla, 2015), and what they or their family had to overcome to pursue higher education (Morales, 2018; Robles-Lopez; Sáenz, 2017; Peña, 2017). Yet, this practice seemed especially successful when students were asked to connect these stories to their hopes and dreams of the future (Escamilla, 2015; Morales, 2018; Robles-Lopez, 2017). In this way, storytelling clearly leveraged the aspirational and resistant capital of Latinx students.

Storytelling was not simply an exercise in sharing personal or familial hopes and dreams. Students also shared *testimonios* that communicated the hopes and dreams for their communities and peer networks (Villanueva, 2015; Chavez, 2019). Helping students make sense and meaning of their lived experiences is certainly an important step on the path to degree completion.

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Students will face barriers and obstacles to academic success. That is assumed and expected. However, storytelling appears to be a promising practice that encourages engagement and resilience as opposed to disengagement and defeatism. Further, it was clear in the included studies that students want to connect their studies to their vocational or familial aspirations. The more they struggle to make that connection between their education and their ultimate life goals, the more likely they are to feel or become disengaged. Inviting the practice of storytelling creates space for meaning-making and purpose-driven curricular engagement. For students with strong, established community wealth, especially aspirational, familial, and resistant capital, sharing stories appears to be a most useful practice.

Storytelling also proved to leverage social and linguistic capital, especially within the context of co-curricular, multicultural programming. Students felt liberated in these programmatic contexts and used these opportunities to share in English and Spanish (Gonzales, 2018; Peña, 2017). While the curricular environment was exclusively English-speaking in these two studies, students found co-curricular social programs that accommodated bilingual, Spanish-speaking students. Chavez (2019) found that peer mentor programs could also create “counterspaces” for students to tell stories and collectively navigate the demands of academic pursuits. Storytelling both leveraged and developed social capital in these contexts. Peña (2017) also found that storytelling by both students and staff was important to student resilience:

Testimonios helped staff connect with first-year Latinx males. The FYE program coordinator discovered that by “offering her own testimonial and having staff tell their own stories [it bridged] any divide students may feel with program staff, thereby creating a greater sense of belonging and trust among Latino male students in the program (p. 92).

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Faculty and staff could further inspire community cultural capital by sharing their own testimonials of overcoming barriers and fighting injustice (Peña, 2017). This was not limited exclusively to Latinx faculty and staff, though it was certainly more relatable when these identities were shared between employee and student (Peña, 2017). Sharing stories of resilience or of having to overcome something like imposter syndrome within the context of higher education appeared to help Latinx students persist and remain engaged.

One interesting finding was that storytelling or counterstorytelling did not appear as a thematic suggested practice in the studies reviewed. Only one study, Peña (2017), listed it as a recommended practice for community colleges. There was a clear disconnect here between findings and suggested practices. The researchers wondered if this might be because storytelling is often discouraged or labeled a distraction to more important academic purposes and learning objectives. The researchers would encourage community college educators to not so easily or flippantly dismiss storytelling as a promising student engagement practice. The research appears to display that it is a promising practice that leverages multiple forms of community cultural capital.

**Relationship with Institutional Agent(s)**

As a reminder, though there is clear overlap between the practices, the researchers are differentiating *relationship with institutional agent(s)* from *mentoring* for several reasons. First, *mentoring* appeared to be more intentional and programmatic, while *relationship with institutional agent(s)* was largely informal, organic, and/or coincidental in nature. Second, clear dividing lines appeared to be drawn in different forms of capital. These themes never appeared in the same form of capital—*mentoring* connected to aspirational and familial capital, and *relationship with institutional agent(s)* connected to navigational and social capital. Despite

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some dividing lines between these two practices, they appeared to overlap in four of included studies: Chavez (2019), Duncheon (2018), Morales (2018), and Peña (2017).

Cawley (2018) found that Latinx students had a strong foundation of community cultural wealth, yet that did not mean they knew “how to initiate engagement with faculty” (p. 231). Students looked to faculty to take the lead and define the nature of the relationship. However, Cawley (2018) found that a “caring and concerned instructor could make students’ instructional experiences more meaningful” and help students especially leverage social and navigational capital (pp. 232). According to Cawley (2018), Latinx students appeared to learn from their family that positive relationships with instructors or people in authority was expected. Extending care and expressing commitment to the student’s success appear to go a long way in helping students leverage their capital.

Cervantes-Gonzalez (2015) found that many students came to the community college with high aspirations due to the encouraging and supportive relationships with institutional agents in high school. These previous institutional agents included teachers, college outreach specialists, club advisors, coaches, and college counselors (Cervantes-Gonzalez, 2015). Most of the students possessed strong relationships with more than one institutional agent in high school and they defined the student’s expectations of the community college environment prior to enrollment (Cervantes-Gonzalez, 2015). Creating a campus culture with hospitable staff who can utilize transactional encounters such as academic advising, financial aid counseling, registration, and orientation into an opportunity to get to know the student appeared to help Latinx community college students leverage their navigational and social capital.

Robles-Lopez (2017) connected these same forms of community cultural capital to the relationship Latinx students have with institutional agents. As she states,

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Participants discussed how they utilized social capital, navigational capital and resistance capital in learning how to maneuver through the higher education setting. Educational leaders, identified as a faculty member, counselor or advisor, also played an integral role in supporting students toward completion and transfer. (Robles-Lopez, 2017, p. 88).

In terms of what contributed to the supportive relationship and student success outcomes, Robles-Lopez (2017) says it was “availability and active listening, especially given the unique needs that Latino men present as college students, [that] were the most important facets of institutional support” (p. 89). These dynamics were not formalized or programmatic, but simply relational and interpersonal in nature. They helped the faculty member establish rapport and prove to be trustworthy and caring in the eyes of the student.

These interpersonal dynamics also align with Peña’s (2017) description of the engaged counseling model. The model possessed both internal and external components. Counselors were defined as community college career and academic counselors, and admissions counselors at prospective transfer institutions (Peña, 2017). All these counselors encouraged student persistence and helped students navigate the complex transfer process (Peña, 2017). Relational rapport and trust played a vital role for these students. The same held true with participants in Villanueva’s (2015) study. She described the relational dynamic as “demonstrated sensitivity to the student’s consciousness [which] earned their trust” (p. 99). Institutional agents who established a relational impact were consistently acknowledged as essential to student engagement and success throughout the included research. Overwhelmingly, these relationships with institutional agents leveraged the navigational and social capital of Latinx students.

It was somewhat surprising how prominent a role support staff played in the academic success of Latinx students. Though faculty were still the most impactful and frequently

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mentioned institutional agent, the researchers found it interesting that support staff, such as counselors, advisors, and program coordinators made such pronounced impact in helping Latinx community college students leverage their community cultural wealth towards the goal of student success.

**Minor Thematic Findings**

Seven thematic practices were limited to only a single form of cultural capital: (1) exposure to possibilities, (2) community-based programs, (3) encourage family support, (4) cultural programming, (5) confronting imposter syndrome, (6) internships, and (7) tutoring and study groups. Each of the six forms of capital had at least one practice that was not represented in any other form of capital. Only familial capital possessed two stand-alone practices: *community-based programs* and *encourage family support*. These seven thematic practices that did not emerge in multiple forms of cultural capital were considered minor themes. However, of the seven minor thematic practices, four were named as suggested practices by the included studies. Only (1) *exposure to possibilities*, (2) *confronting imposter syndrome* and (3) *internships* failed to appear in the suggested practices. Each of these seven minor themes below.

**Exposure to possibilities.** This thematic practice never directly appeared as a recommended practice. However, it was strongly connected and often assumed with the suggested practice of *community outreach*. Both practices attempted to leverage aspirational capital by helping students dream about the future and possible careers. However, these practices possessed a significant distinction. Where *community outreach* was often used to get students thinking about enrollment at the community college and the various vocations associated with degree or certificate offerings, *exposure to possibilities* was not concerned about prospective students, but exclusively about current students. *Exposure to possibilities* described opportunities

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for Latinx students to gather information on services, fields of study, and even career paths that they may not have been aware of or perceived as a viable option prior to the community college introducing them to their existence or potential. Students were exposed to the possibility of honors program (Morales, 2018), transfer opportunities to four-year institutions (Peña, 2017), and STEM majors (Galván, 2017). Campus tours, information sessions, introductions to vocational opportunities through first-year experience curriculum, and guest lectures were also used within this practice. *Exposure to possibilities* was clearly an impactful practice for students with aspirational capital. Inviting them to dream about the future, challenging perceived limitations to their potential, and introducing them to the wide variety of vocational options appeared to further student engagement, especially for first-year students (Morales, 2018; Peña, 2017; Galván, 2017).

**Community-based programs.** One practice that appeared to leverage familial capital was community-based programs. Utilizing cohort models (Peña, 2017), counterspaces or group settings designed for sharing testimonios (Chavez, 2019; Galván, 2017), and intimate shared experiences such as honors programs (Morales, 2018) all fall under the category of *community-based programs*. These programs appeared to help students share and lean into their familial capital. Latinx students recognized shared family values, expectations, and hopes. They felt affirmed in possessing a collectivist cultural background that ran counter to the typical American individualism. Most important, students found community through these programs and felt connected to their community college (Peña, 2017; Chavez, 2019; Morales, 2018). This real and perceived feeling of connection appeared to drive student engagement and persistence throughout the included studies. While this practice primarily appeared to leverage familial capital in the findings, it was a suggested practice by multiple studies that connected it primarily

to aspirational capital (Briceño-Moreno, 2017; Cawley, 2018; Orozco Villacaña, 2015). It may also leverage linguistic and social capital due to the overlap of this thematic practice with *community outreach*.

**Encourage family support.** Encouraging family support was a central thematic practice when it came to Latinx student engagement connected to familial capital. Seven studies highlighted the importance of family support towards the goal of student success outcomes (Cortes, 2017; Galván, 2017; Gonzales, 2018; Morales, 2018; Robles-Lopez, 2017; Sáenz et al., 2017; Sáenz et al., 2018). Cortes (2017) and Galván (2017) found many Latinx students did not receive any other form of external encouragement or support apart from that of their family. Latinx males were especially reliant upon family emotional support and encouragement to persist, and those who lacked that support were far less likely to persist and succeed (Sáenz et al., 2017; Sáenz et al., 2018).

Community colleges can do several things to encourage family support. The suggested practices were especially helpful and complimentary when it comes to this thematic practice. Creating a family orientation program (Castañeda, 2016; Sáenz et al., 2017) and local community outreach (Briceño-Moreno, 2017; Castañeda, 2016; Cervantes-Gonzalez, 2015; Escamilla, 2015; Galván, 2017; Orozco Villacaña, 2015; Sáenz et al., 2017; Villanueva, 2015) were the two most prominent suggested practices. Encouraging students to continually communicate with their family about academic demands and expectations appeared to be important, especially for first-generation students (Castañeda, 2016; Sáenz et al., 2017). Little was said about ongoing communication between the community college and families after the orientation experience. It would appear this is an opportunity for community colleges to rethink their missed opportunities for continued family outreach and develop ongoing parent/family

communication strategies. If family support is helpful to Latinx student engagement and success, viewing families as partners in ongoing student support and care warrants philosophical and programmatic consideration.

**Cultural programming.** Community colleges leveraged the linguistic capital of Latinx students through incorporating culturally-informed programs. Latinx students shared their heritage, background, and native language with classmates and professors. These programs helped Latinx students feel affirmed and validated (Morales, 2018; Peña, 2017). They offered bilingual students the opportunity to showcase their grasp of another language and have that linguistic capital affirmed as valuable, something that is often perceived by academic institutions as detrimental to Latinx student success (Escamilla, 2015; Gonzales, 2018). Cultural programming also afforded Latinx students the opportunity of learning more about their own culture or the cultures of others. Creating space for multicultural programs, including in co-curricular programs such as student clubs and organizations, appeared to be highly productive.

Cultural programming, as a thematic practice, appeared to be connected with the suggested practice of *diversity and inclusion*, the most dominant theme uncovered when examining suggested practices to cultivate Latinx students' aspirational capital. Creating a hospitable environment and climate on campus where Latinx students are culturally validated and included was essential to seven of the 21 included studies (Briceño-Moreno, 2017; Cahill, 2019; Cervantes-Gonzalez, 2015; Chavez, 2019; Escamilla, 2015; Rivera-Lacey, 2016; Sáenz et al., 2018). Diversity among the staff and faculty was also paramount. However, even if the employees are not Latinx, they should possess cultural humility and willingness to engage cultural ideas beyond the dominant discourse (Briceño-Moreno, 2017; Cahill, 2019; Cervantes-Gonzalez, 2015; Chavez, 2019; Escamilla, 2015; Rivera-Lacey, 2016).

**Tutoring and study groups.** Three studies indicated that study groups and tutoring programs served to greatly support student learning (Cawley, 2018; Cortes, 2017; Duncheon, 2018). Specifically, Duncheon (2018) found that study groups improved student study skills overall. Though it is often assumed that these practices are highly technical and course-specific, they do appear to leverage students' navigational capital. Students can develop and strengthen study skills in these contexts and extend beyond just one course or subject matter. Making tutoring resources available and encouraging students to form their own study groups appeared to leverage navigational capital and help students chart a pathway to completion. Multiple studies offered these suggested practices as well. Briceño-Moreno (2017) was the only study to suggest the practices without finding that they leveraged community cultural wealth.

**Remaining thematic practices.** The last two minor thematic practices did not appear in the suggested practices of the included studies. *Confronting imposter syndrome* and *internships* appeared to respectively leverage resistant and social capital.

As previously discussed, resistant capital was the weakest form of capital in terms of thematic findings and suggested practices. Nevertheless, confronting imposter syndrome appeared to be a necessary and promising practice for Latinx student engagement. Gonzalez (2016), Peña (2017) and Robles-Lopez (2017) claimed imposter syndrome stood as a barrier to Latinx student success, which aligned with the work of Solórzano and Yosso (2001). These internalized feelings of being a fraud or lucky rather than intelligent (Solórzano & Yosso, 2001) appeared to plague students in these three studies. Fortunately, this emotional condition appeared to be contested through sharing stories of resilience and standing up to injustice. Sharing counterstories and testimonios appeared to help Latinx students overcome imposter syndrome and discover empowerment during their college experience.

Gonzalez (2016) possessed the strongest evidence of Latinx students developing resistant capital as they overcame imposter syndrome. The study participants were frequently the only Latinx person in their upper-level courses and mentioned the loneliness they felt right alongside their feelings of being imposters (Gonzalez, 2016). One must wonder if diversity and inclusion are critical efforts to challenging imposter syndrome for Students of Color, especially Latinx students. However, these efforts are not the only possible solution. Peña (2017) found that staff who “deliberately created spaces and activities to discuss social justice-related issues as a way to empower students and help them combat issues of inequality they may face in higher education” were essential to Latinx students confronting imposter syndrome (p. 98). Community college employees, spaces, curriculum, and activities should emphasize social justice and combating inequality to help Latinx students confront imposter syndrome and remain committed to their academic pursuits.

The last minor thematic practice was internships. It appeared to leverage social capital and was evidenced in Galván (2017) and Cahill (2019). Receiving practical experience in the workforce that was provided via internships allowed students to leverage their social capital and build a professional network (Cahill, 2019). Given the prior theme of *exposure to possibilities*, the researchers argue that internships also help Latinx students get comfortable with their desired vocation. Not only do internships help them expand their professional network and get valuable work experience, but it also enables them to challenge their imposter syndrome or fear of the unknown associated with their desired career field. The pragmatic aspect of internships appear to greatly benefit Latinx students.

In contemplating the results of this systematic review, the research team sought to define what was specifically different for the Latinx student when compared to the rest of the

community college student population. The findings circled us back to the literature review when Gaitan (2013) pointed out that there is an overwhelming institutional failure to affirm cultural capital which impedes Latinx student success. Gaitan (2013) argued the need for support once Latinx students arrive on campus along with an institutional agent. The research team agrees with her discussion and would add that the findings speak toward the need for community colleges to design practices that build up the cultural awareness of Latinx communities.

Unfortunately, community colleges may not necessary understand the true value and importance of the described practices that address the challenges Latinx students encounter as offered by Gaitan (2013). For instance, storytelling was a primary thematic finding that leveraged multiple forms of community cultural capital including, aspirational, linguistic, resistant, and social. As a suggested practice, storytelling was found to significantly impact Latinx student engagement through the sharing of lived-experiences that highlighted personal triumphs through persistence despite encountering hardships and limited support (Chavez, 2019; Morales, 2018; Escamilla, 2015; Gonzales, 2018; Robles-Lopez, 2017; Sáenz et al., 2017). Despite this, storytelling was only offered as a suggested practice for community college practitioners to leverage the cultural capital of Latinx students in a single study by Peña (2017).

Storytelling was found to be a practice that allowed Latinx students to share how they've utilized their community cultural wealth to overcome oppressions to reach their academic goals (Yosso, 2005). It is the researchers hope that practitioners will realize the relevance of storytelling as demonstrated throughout this systemic review and apply it to practices intended to be culturally relevant to the Latinx community.

### Implications for Practice

The focus of this systematic review was inherently pragmatic. The researchers provided implications for practices in depth throughout this entire chapter, believe that the findings are relevant to all community college professionals who are interested in leveraging the community cultural wealth of Latinx students towards the goals of student engagement and success. All the practices identified possess promise and potential. However, the researchers would like to strongly emphasize the power of relationship. Two themes—*mentoring* and *relationship with institutional agents*—center upon relationship. As a guiding framework, community cultural wealth is strongly social and interpersonal, having drawn much inspiration from the work of Pierre Bourdieu and his definition of social capital (Yosso, 2005; Swartz, 1997). Nevertheless, relationships are central to proper educational pedagogy and student development (hooks, 2013). It appears especially critical to Latinx student engagement. Keeping that at the forefront of any discourse on community college student engagement practices should be paramount.

The researchers recommend that community colleges consider adapting the practices discovered in the study findings. Specifically, the researchers suggest community colleges design practices that leverage aspirational, navigational, and social capitals to reach Latinx students, as these capitals were predominately leveraged by the primary thematic practices: (1) mentoring, (2) goal-setting/program mapping, (3) storytelling/*testimonios*, and (4) an emphasis on relationship with institutional agents.

Community colleges can effectively leverage these forms of capital by offering counterspaces where Latinx students feel safe to study, share experiences, and build community together. Counterspaces must be available for extended hours rather than shut down early before working people can use them. Community colleges must also stop providing business as usual in

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their classrooms and must learn to connect with students. If instructors do not build trusting, validating relationships with Latinx students, they will not reach them academically. They must mix academics and personal connection. Instructors must affirm that Latinx students have positive contributions to make to classroom conversations and important things to say. They must validate the Latinx social structure and provide opportunities for students to work together. This will combat the imposter syndrome Latinx students face in the classroom. Allowing students to work together will also create additional opportunities for students to share their *testimonios*, resulting in a stronger sense of campus community support.

Finally, community colleges must work to hire more Latinx employees and offer cultural awareness training to all staff. They must teach staff how to use not just cultural sensitivity, but cultural celebration practices to engage with Latinx students. These student engagement practices must be applied from admissions to financial aid to instructors and their curriculum. With the implementation of these practices, Latinx students will gain a sense of belonging and take greater ownership of the coursework necessary to accomplish their educational goals. Further exploration and explanation for each of the promising practices and recommendations included in thematic findings have an implication for community college practice.

### **Implications for Future Research**

This systematic review displayed numerous opportunities for future research. First, it was apparent that many studies were content simply pointing out the existence of community cultural capital in Latinx students, but few went so far as to explore the implications for practice and how cultural capital might influence practice, policy, and pedagogy. Future research should be pragmatic and offer strong insight for how educational institutions, not merely community colleges, can tangibly redesign. Understanding the existence of cultural capital is the first step.

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Educational institutions need to know how to make meaning of cultural capital and how to appropriately shift practice, policy, and pedagogy to best serve Latinx students.

Second, the researchers acknowledge that the research questions narrowed the scope of the systematic review. Community cultural wealth was a very specific variable in this study and promising practices should not be limited exclusively to those discovered in this study. However, the researchers could not find any meta-analysis or systematic review on Latinx student engagement in the community college context conducted within the past five years. Opportunity certainly exists to not only to conduct such a meta-analysis or systematic review, but also to compare those findings with the present study.

Third, further research is needed on how community cultural wealth can be leveraged throughout the entire educational pipeline, not merely higher education. Yosso (2006) modeled this via a series of counterstories along the various stages of the pipeline for Chicana/o students. However, further research at all levels of the pipeline is nevertheless warranted. The same could also be said about specific forms of cultural capital. Resistant, linguistic, and familial capital were too often viewed through a lens of deficit, which is counterintuitive to the CCW framework. The researchers would implore scholar-practitioners to invest time researching these three specific forms of cultural capital and explore how they might be better leveraged in education, especially for emerging adults who are moving from high school to college.

Lastly, research opportunity exists to further explore the relationship between cultural capital and educational practice. The theory could easily imply an operational fixed-mindset whereby it is assumed that students have already established cultural capital and the purpose of education is diminished. However, surely education can also help students develop their cultural capital. This is not to advocate for the deficit approach, but simply to empower educators to see

their work as meaningful in the process of a student's development, including with community cultural wealth. Further exploration on the relationship between education and community cultural wealth would therefore be valuable.

### **Conclusion**

This systematic review of studies over the past five years uncovered numerous student engagement practices in the community college context that could leverage the community cultural wealth of Latinx students. Practices such as mentoring, goal-setting, program mapping, storytelling/*testimonios*, and an emphasis on relationship with institutional agent(s) were among the primary thematic findings that crossed multiple forms of cultural capital. Other practices such as exposure to possibilities, community-based programs, encouraging family support, cultural programs, tutoring, study groups, confronting imposter syndrome, and internships were also identified as promising practices. The dissertation explored how these practices compared to the suggested practices of the 21 eligible studies. Latinx community college students bring many skills, capacities, and forms of cultural capital with them to their higher education institutions. The researchers hope that this systematic review will help community colleges in America better understand and leverage that cultural capital to improve their support of Latinx students.

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## APPENDIX A

**Data Collection Protocol: Reference Notes**

7	Report	<u>Reference</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Journal Article <input type="checkbox"/> Book/Chapter <input type="checkbox"/> Dissertation	<u>Status</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Published <input type="checkbox"/> Refereed / Peer Reviewed <input type="checkbox"/> Electronic only <input type="checkbox"/> Other . . .	<input type="checkbox"/> Primary Source <input type="checkbox"/> Quantitative <input type="checkbox"/> Qualitative
		Reference—APA (6 <sup>th</sup> ed.) format		
1	Question	<u>Introduction</u> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Problem <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Purpose <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Question <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hypothesis <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Definitions		
2	Design	<u>Method</u> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Primary Source: Type of Study/Design		
3	Sample	<u>Participants</u> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sample Size <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Selected/Assigned <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Demographics <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Setting <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Location <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Population		
4	Data Collection	<u>Measures</u> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IQDOT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Valid/Reliable <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Coding/Scoring <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Training/Pilot <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Interraters <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Procedures		
5	Data Analysis	<u>Results</u> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Findings		
6	Interpretation	<u>Discussion</u> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Implications <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Applications <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Importance		

## FINAL REPORT

<b>Strengths</b>	
<b>Limitations</b>	
<b>Quotations</b>	

Note: Adapted from Laurie Stevahn (2010) *Reference Notes Template*.

