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Doctor of Education in Organizational Leadership

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Exploring the Upward Transfer Advising Experience of First-Generation Latinx Community
College Students

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Education in Organizational Leadership

by

Lizette Avalos-Morales

April 2023

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my parents, Francisco Avalos and Esmeralda Rios-Perez who have been my biggest inspiration throughout my educational journey. My parents came to the United States with nothing and worked tirelessly to provide me with every opportunity. You taught me the importance of an education and that with hard work you can reach your goals. Your sacrifices never went unnoticed, and I am so grateful you supported my dreams.

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To my husband, no words describe your love and support throughout this journey. You always believed in me, even when I didn't believe in myself. Thank you for helping me reach this milestone. The support and encouragement you provided never went unnoticed. To my sister, Ana, I could not have gotten this far without your words of encouragement. You inspire me every day. I am thankful for the unconditional love and support you give me. You have been there since my first day of college up until my last, and I will never forget everything you do for me. As my big sister, I know you did not have the same opportunities that I did to pursue higher education. I did this for us.

To all my family and friends who continuously followed my journey and offered support along the way, thank you. I will forever be grateful for your encouragement. To all of the first-generation Latinx college students whom I inspired along the way, representation matters, and I am honored to represent them.

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Abstract

The purpose of this qualitative study was to investigate the student experience of Latinx first-generation community college students who graduated from a community college and transferred to a 4-year university. The research examined if intrusive advising served as a mechanism to aid academic persistence despite the challenges of first-generation Latinx students. Eleven first-generation community college students who graduated from a Hispanic Serving Institution in southwest Kansas were interviewed. The thematic analysis conducted led to five themes emerging. The themes included family, meaningful relationships, belonging, independence, and embracing uncertainty. The theme of family was separated into two subthemes: family support and pride. Participants expressed having established meaningful relationships with several people, which resulted in four sections: advisors, faculty and staff, club sponsors, and peers. The themes illustrate the experience of Latinx first-generation community college graduates who transferred to a university. The results will enhance understanding of the effectiveness of intrusive advising for first-generation Latinx students to integrate socially and academically into institutions.

Keywords: First-generation, community college, transfer, intrusive advising, Latinx

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The number of first-generation college students continues to rise in the United States. During the 2015–2016 academic year, 56% of undergraduate students identified as first-generation college students meaning their parents did not have a bachelor's degree (RTI International, 2019a). Twenty-five percent of first-generation college students were Hispanic/Latinx, making them the largest minority (RTI International, 2019a). First-generation Latinx college students experience challenges navigating higher education due to lacking capital. Chapter 1 introduces the barriers to persist of Hispanic/Latinx first-generation community college students. The chapter includes the problem statement and identifies the study's purpose. Furthermore, the introduction of research questions along with defined key terms. Lastly, the chapter summarizes the theoretical framework that guides the research.

College Persistence of First-Generation College Students

A primary concern within postsecondary education is varying persistence rates between different student populations (Bailey et al., 2015). Higher education institutions aim to create a well-educated and skilled workforce; however, the growing statistical persistence discrepancies between student groups demand the enhancement of academic support services for first-generation low-income college students through federally funded programs (Quinn et al., 2019).

The academic persistence and performance of first-generation students differ from continuing-generation students in several respects. Collectively, several studies have found that first-generation students experience lower graduation rates, more insufficient credits earned, and lower grade point averages (GPA) than continuing education college students (Lichtenberger & Dietrich, 2017; Pascarella et al., 2003; Torres et al., 2006; Wang et al., 2017). Researchers studied students' bachelor's degree graduation rates 6 years after entering higher education. They

found that only 20% of first-generation college students earned a bachelor's degree compared to 49% of continuing-generation students (RTI International, 2019b).

While the persistence of first-generation college students is a continuing concern within higher education, first-generation Latinx students are at a higher risk of not persisting. Hispanic students are the second-largest ethnic group enrolled in postsecondary education; however, they only comprise 22% of college degree attainment, including undergraduate and professional degrees (Nichols & Schak, 2018). Additionally, many Latinas who attend college maintain family obligations to care for their family, which leads to decreased academic performance (Storlie et al., 2016). The results found that Latinas' roles include caring for families, which motivated them to continue their education. However, it hindered their academic performance as their family obligations did not change.

Higher Education Pathways

Students interested in pursuing higher education have a variety of education options, such as liberal arts colleges, universities, technical institutions, professional schools, historically Black colleges and universities, tribal institutions, women's colleges, religiously affiliated institutions, community colleges, online institutions, and for-profit institutions (National Association for College Admission Counseling, n.d.). The variety of college options allows students to select a higher education pathway that best fits their academic and career goals.

A typical education pathway for first-generation college students is to attend a community college before transferring to a university (Carales, 2020). Over half of Latinx students who completed a degree within 6 years, began their educational journey at a 2-year public institution (Shapiro et al., 2017). Community college enrollment creates additional risk factors in pursuing a bachelor's degree as students navigate the transfer process.

The foundation of community colleges provided an alternative educational pathway attainable primarily to larger populations (Grubbs, 2020). The establishment of community colleges created economically and geographically accessible education for young adults to improve communities and develop local talents after high school by offering parallel courses during the first 2 years at a university (Grubbs, 2020; Stern, 2016). As community colleges increased in the United States, community colleges' mission emerged to provide technical education pathways and lower-division academic transferable courses (Barringer & Jaquette, 2018; Grubbs, 2020).

As 4-year institutions' costs have increased, state policymakers have emphasized the cost-efficient education provided at community colleges as a pathway toward university education (Barringer & Jaquette, 2018). State policymakers have urged institutions to create transfer articulation agreements between community colleges and universities to increase the transfer equivalency of credits (Stern, 2016). The drive for articulation agreements from government agencies aims to facilitate an effective transfer process for students from community colleges to universities.

Statement of the Problem

The retention and persistence of first-generation community college students (FGCCS) is an institutional concern, as FGCCS do not graduate or transfer at the same rate as students whose parents earned a college degree (Whitley et al., 2018). FGCCS transition to college is challenging when navigating through the application process, Free Application for Student Aid (FAFSA), and academic deadlines with less social capital or guidance from parents who attended college (Jabbar et al., 2019; Torres et al., 2006).

Additionally, the barriers to persist are even more alarming for students of Hispanic/Latinx ethnicity. For instance, studies have found that Latinx students are more likely to place into developmental courses, have family expectations that hinder their academic performance, and transfer at lower rates than White peers (Acevedo-Gil et al., 2015; Storlie et al., 2016; Torres et al., 2006; Wang, 2012).

Despite Latinx first-generation students' academic and social disadvantages, some persist when graduating from a community college and transferring to a four-year institution. Thus, this study will investigate if intrusive advising and community cultural wealth contributed to the persistence of Hispanic first-generation students who attended one of two small community colleges in Southwest Kansas.

According to the community college's website, the community colleges serves nearly 2,000 students, of which 60% enroll full-time. The student body comprises a minority-majority with 46% Hispanic students, 35% White, 10% Black or African American, 2% Asian, 1% American Indian or Alaska Native, and 5% other/unknown. Furthermore, the institution's degree completion rate is 31% compared to 36% of the Kansas state average per the community college's website. Additionally, the transfer-out rate at a small community college in southwest Kansas is 26% compared to the national rate of 30%.

The second institution has over 1,500 students, with 43% enrolled in at least 12 credits according to the community college's website. Sixty percent of the students at the institution are Hispanic. Furthermore, the rest of the student body is 29% White, 3% Black or African American, 2% Asian, 3% nonresidents, 2% unknown, and 1% two or more races. The graduation at the institution from the 2017 cohort is 46%, and the transfer-out rate is 11%.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative study was to investigate the student experience of Latinx first-generation community college students who graduated from a community college and transferred to a 4-year university. I examined if intrusive advising and community cultural wealth serve as a mechanism to aid academic persistence despite the challenges of first-generation Latinx students. The research findings will provide rich data on Latinx first-generation students, a growing population in community colleges. The results will enhance understanding of the effectiveness of intrusive advising and cultural capitals for first-generation Latinx students to integrate socially and academically into institutions. Higher education institutions have explored academic advising as an organizational resource to increase student integration and increase retention; thus, exploring community cultural wealth and intrusive advising will provide valuable data on its effectiveness for the specified population.

Research Questions

To investigate the common themes among the experiences of first-generation Latinx students which contributed to graduation from a community college and transfer to a 4-year university. The following research questions were addressed in the study.

RQ1a: Do Latinx students describe academic advising resources as contributors to their upward transfer?

RQ1b: If yes, what resources do they identify, and do these resources fit the criteria of intrusive advising?

RQ2: Does intrusive advising impact the upward transfer of first-generation Hispanic/Latinx students compared to students who did not participate in intrusive advising?

RQ3: Do students experience one or more forms of community cultural wealth through the process of intrusive advising that factor into their persistence?

Definition of Terms

Academic advising. Defined as "a systematic process based on a close student-advisor relationship intended to aid students in achieving educational, career, and personal goals through the utilization of the full range of institutional and community resources" (Winston, 1984, p. 18).

Academic advisor. For this study, an academic advisor is a person whose professional role is to serve as an academic advisor by taking "a holistic view of each student to maximize that student's educational experiences in an effort to foster his or her current academic, personal, and career goals toward future success" (Grites, 2013, p. 45).

Community college. A higher education institution that offers associate degrees and technical education certifications, also referred to as 2-year institutions or junior colleges.

Community cultural wealth. According to Yosso (2005), "an array of knowledge, skills, abilities, and contacts possessed and utilized by Communities of Color to survive and resist macro and micro-forms of oppression through at least six forms of capital such as aspirational, navigational, social, linguistic, familial, and resistant capital" (p. 10).

Continuing-generation college students. Per Redford and Hoyer (2017), a continuing-generation college student is "enrolled in postsecondary education and who have at least one parent who had some postsecondary education experience" (p. 3). However, for this paper, a student who has at least one parent who earned a bachelor's degree will be considered continuing-generation.

First-generation college student. Scholars define a first-generation college student differently despite its common usage. Cataldi et al. (2018) described first-generation college

students as those whose parents have not attended college. However, for this study, the definition of first-generation college students is individuals whose parents have not completed a bachelor's degree (U.S. Department of Education, 1998).

Hispanic or Latinx. According to the U.S. Census Bureau (n.d.), the study defines "Hispanic or Latino as a person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin regardless of race." South and Central American countries use Latina to describe females and Latino for males. The development of Latinx intends to be inclusive in academia as a pan-ethnic identity label (Lopez et al., 2021). For this study, to describe the ethnic population, Latinx and Hispanics are interchanged.

Intrusive advising. Earl (1987) used the term intrusive advising to refer to "deliberate, structured student intervention at the first indication of academic difficulty in order to motivate a student to seek help" (p. 28). For this study, intrusive advising is a proactive structured intervention for first-generation students to identify the need for resources to prevent academic difficulty and enhance motivation. Faculty and professional advisors utilize intrusive advising.

Persistence. The National Student Clearinghouse Research Center (2016) describes students who return to college at any institution for their second year as persistent. In this study, persistence indicates students who persist graduate from a community college and transfer to a 4-year university the following fall semester after graduating.

Social capital. A student's social capital is "the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network" (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 248). Furthermore, the network in the context of this study describes parents who earned a university degree.

Upward transfer. The process in which "a student's transition from a community college or primarily associate's degree-granting institution to a baccalaureate degree-granting institution or program" (LaSota & Zumeta, 2016).

Theoretical Framework

Vincent Tinto's model of student departure, widely recognized in higher education as a foundational retention model, established a theoretical foundation for academic advising. According to Tinto (1975), students enter college with unique characteristics such as family dynamics, precollege schooling, and academic skills and abilities. These factors impact the commitment to students' educational goals (Tinto, 1975).

Precollege education can significantly affect a student's educational placement. Students placed in developmental coursework—not academically prepared for college-level courses have an increased dropout rate (Bailey et al., 2015). Chen (2019) found that 60% of community college students are underprepared for college-level courses. Chen and Simone (2016) reported that first-generation college students took more developmental courses than continuing-generation college students due to missing or low national placement tests such as the Academic College Testing (ACT) and Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT). Furthermore, first-generation college students have lower social capital in understanding college processes due to their parents not having college experiences. Latinx students are a population who experiences interdependence with their families. Many scholars report that Latinx students have family obligations that hinder their academic performance and report low upward transfer rates (Acevedo-Gil et al., 2015; Storlie et al., 2016; Torres et al., 2006; Wang, 2012).

Despite the barriers that first-generation Latinx students experience due to their precollege education, family dynamics, and individual attributes, according to Tinto (1975),

institutional integration can increase persistence rates. Institutional integration includes academic and social systems (Tinto, 1975). Tinto (1975) stated that a student's integration into college communities can enhance the commitment levels of students toward their education. Hence, colleges have developed advising programs to increase the retention of college students.

Academic Advising

Tinto (1975) added that students' academic and social integration levels could influence their commitment to their education; hence, high social and intellectual integration leads to persistence. Before the 1970s, academic advising displayed a limited function of class registration (Menke et al., 2020). The perception of academic advising changed after diversity in colleges increased, and the students' needs changed (Cook, 2009). Crookston (1972) shifted the view of academic advising when proposing that advising was a developmental role for students and advisors to work together to accomplish goals.

Today, academic advisors are essential for students' college campus integration (McGill, 2018). When students begin their educational journey, the institution's first consistent point of contact is their assigned academic advisor; however, many do not maximize engaging with their academic advisor as an academic resource (McGill, 2019). Intrusive advising increases the student's institutional integration leading to higher retention (Earl, 1987).

Chapter Summary

The chapter discussed the barriers to Latinx first-generation community college students as they pursue postsecondary education. The statement of the problem verifies the existing data regarding student experiences. Furthermore, the purpose of the study highlights the need to explore this sample further. Additionally, the research questions proposed and defined key terms

present the research. Finally, the theoretical framework review introduces intrusive advising to further explore in the literature review.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This study explores the experience of first-generation Latinx students who transferred from a community college to a baccalaureate-granting university. Chapter 2 provides context for the experiences which impact persistence. The chapter reviews Latinx first-generation community college students' personal and educational challenges. Furthermore, the chapter will review Tinto's theory of student departure, a theoretical perspective on retention. Additionally, academic advising is examined as it is developed to retain at-risk student populations. Lastly, community cultural wealth, a concept from critical theory, is reviewed concerning building capital for underrepresented populations.

Theoretical Framework

Vincent Tinto studied students' college experiences to understand students' decisions to depart from an institution. Tinto developed Tinto's model of institutional departure in retention research (see Figure 1; Tinto, 1993). Tinto's academic work describes how a student enters college and the experiences influencing whether to depart or persist.

Tinto's model of institutional departure was first presented in 1975, focused on aligning a person's goals and the institution's formal and informal structures (Tinto, 1975). Tinto explored student departure in 1993 to understand the differences between students who leave institutions (institutional departure) and those who leave higher education (systems departure).

Tinto stated that a student's decision to continue is a longitudinal process beginning with a student's characteristics, including their family background, individual attributes, and precollege education (1975). Per Tinto (1975), students drop out of college when they enter college academically unprepared from high school, have difficulty coordinating academic and career goals, and fail to integrate into the social and educational college environment.

For instance, the family background can include a student's first-generation status, where pursuing college is an unfamiliar experience with no guidance from parents who understand college processes (Pascarella et al., 2003). Furthermore, the family background can vary as students enter college at different life stages. Some students pursue higher education after high school; however, some enter college as adult learners. Family impacts the college experience of students such as Latina students, who are more likely to be placed into developmental courses and have family expectations that hinder their academic performance (Acevedo-Gil et al., 2015; Storlie et al., 2016; Torres et al., 2006; Wang, 2012).

Precollege schooling can also influence the commitment to their education. Researchers found a relationship between a student's academic performance in high school and their academic performance in college (Stewart et al., 2015). For instance, when students with lower GPAs and SAT and ACT scores enter college, they are placed in developmental courses (Chen & Simone, 2016). Placing in developmental courses alters a student's academic plan because attaining their degree requires additional work not required for graduation. Hence, a student's experience, such as family background, individual skills and abilities, and precollege education, will impact their commitment to their education.

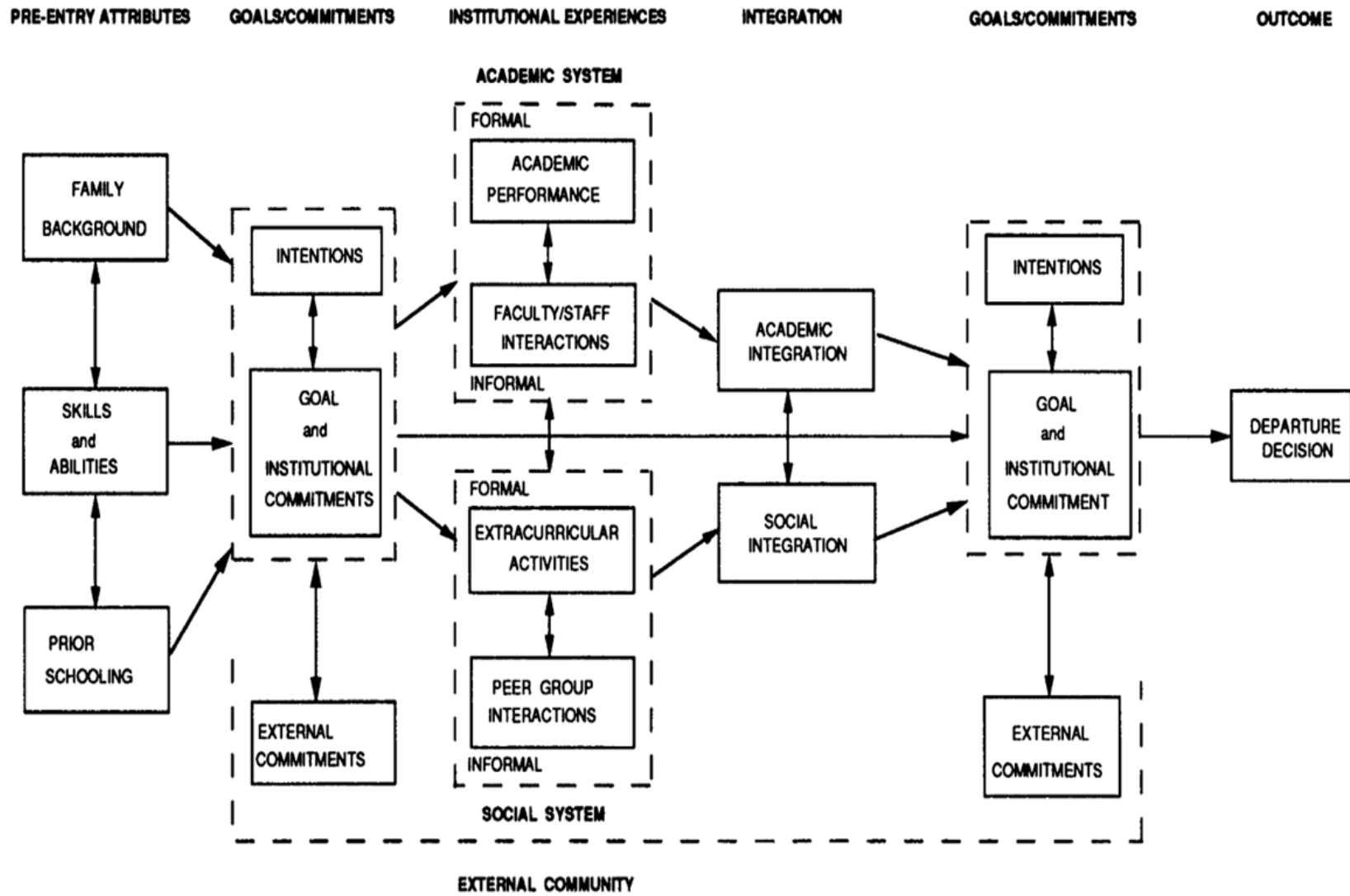
Tinto's model separated the student's commitment into the academic goal commitment and the institutional commitment (Tinto, 1993). Tinto explored the root cause of departure and classified intention and commitment as individual attributes that led to departure or persistence (Tinto, 1993). A student's commitment describes the student's internal motivation to invest the time and energy required to meet academic and social demands within an institution (Tinto, 1993). Goal commitment refers to the individual goal to pursue higher education or reach an

occupational career goal (Tinto, 1993). A student's institutional commitment refers to their commitment to the institution they select for enrollment (Tinto, 1993).

Tinto (1975) studied students' experiences and found that students' decisions to depart or persist varied by their integration into college communities. Maslow introduced the need to belong, which continues to be pertinent across disciplines (Maslow, 1943). Maslow designed a hierarchy of individual needs, including physiological, safety, belongingness and love, esteem, and self-actualization needs (Maslow, 1943). According to Maslow, people must meet lower-level needs before becoming self-actualized; hence, students must experience belonging needs before reaching their full potential (Maslow, 1943). Furthermore, students who do not experience fulfilling the need to belong at their current institution will depart, according to Tinto, who stresses the importance of academic and social integration into a college community, hence, reaching belonging needs (Tinto, 1993). According to Tinto (1993), as students increased their communities in college, they became more committed to their academic goals, improving retention. As student populations diversify, exploring the importance of academic advising to persistence is essential. See Figure 1 for Tinto's model of student departure.

Figure 1

Tinto's Model of Student Departure



History of Academic Advising

In the late 18th century, the mission of higher education institutions included educating men to develop morally and intellectually, providing a glimpse of the development of academic advising (Gallagher & Demos, 1983). Johns Hopkins University was the first institution in the 1870s that permitted students to take electives for a more well-rounded education (McGill, 2019). As programs in the 20th century began to increase elective options, the advisor role became a prominent need. Faculty advisors determined course selection and registration over students during that period (Cook, 2009).

The perception of academic advising as a clerical role remained during the 1970s, with faculty conducting the primary function of course registration (Menke et al., 2020). There was little student involvement in course selection as the faculty utilized an authoritarian process telling students what courses they would enroll in (McGill, 2019). The view of academic advising changed slightly after 1972 when Crookston presented that advising was a developmental relationship between the student and advisor to collectively work towards the student's educational goals (Crookston, 1972). Furthermore, in 1977 the National Academic Advising Association was founded, later renamed National Academic Advising Association NACADA, resulting in the professionalization of academic advising (Cook, 2009; McGill, 2019).

As higher education became more diverse in its student population and curriculum, the need for students to receive specialized services grew (Cook, 2009). Today, academic advising is a professional field that significantly impacts student retention by teaching students essential skills for college success (McGill, 2018). Institutions with vital advising programs commit to students when mentoring students through their graduation and transfer plans (Drake, 2011;

Vasquez, 2017). Academic advisors serve as support networks for first-generation Hispanic students to overcome unique challenges (Cortez & Castro, 2017). However, undergraduate students often perceive academic advising as a limited resource exclusive to course registration despite developing academic advising as a professional career (McGill, 2018).

Advising Models

The advising models utilized by advisors have developed along with the profession's development—three primary models in academic advising include prescriptive, developmental, and integrated. Today, advising uses different approaches across campuses due to the changes in advising as a profession and the development of higher education programs.

Prescriptive advising aligns with the early perception of the advisors' role, directing students on course selection (Heisserer & Parette, 2002). Crookston (1972) described prescriptive advising as the advisor's authoritative role in "prescribing" or directing students with a specific academic plan. Additionally, prescriptive advising reports that students are not engaged in decision-making and rely on the advisor's directive for course selection, registration, and meeting degree requirements (Crookston, 1972). Prescriptive advising is a traditional style utilized in K-12 education, such as directing students on the courses needed to complete a high school diploma. Minority students benefit from prescriptive advising as they receive assistance from a credible professional who offers expert knowledge (Brown & Rivas, 1994).

Developmental advising describes the relationship with shared responsibility in decision-making between the student and advisor (Crookston, 1972). The developmental advising style aims to provide students with resources by answering questions but allows the student to take the initiative in making decisions (Heisserer & Parette, 2002). The developmental advising model identifies the need for students to be involved in their academic planning.

The integrated advising styles incorporate directive and development styles (Heisserer & Parette, 2002). Hence, the style recognizes that specific student populations require more assistance in making decisions on their academic plan and remaining involved in creating schedules and progress decisions.

Intrusive Advising

Higher education professionals introduce new approaches to enhance student experiences as the academic advising climate develops. The perceived advising role varies as some believe students are responsible for connecting with their advisors. In contrast, others state that students do not know when to meet with an advisor, and the best approach includes practicing intrusive advising (Donaldson et al., 2016; Earl, 1987; Glennen, 1976).

Earl (1987) developed the theoretical intrusive advising model in response to Tinto's retention model. Intrusive advising presented an action-oriented response to addressing the student's need to integrate into institutions' educational and social systems to increase retention (Earl, 1987). College students enter a period of unfamiliarity as they adapt to college and seek their "fit" or feel they belong in their selected academic major and social networks (Earl, 1987).

Furthermore, the intrusive advising model indicates that students need assistance adapting and identifying problems; therefore, they must regularly meet with their academic advisor (Donaldson et al., 2016; Earl, 1987). Thus, students who effectively participate in intrusive advising can increase their social and academic integration with the institution and improve retention rates (Earl, 1987). Previous studies found that student retention increases with frequent visits with academic advisors (Choy, 2001; Glennen et al., 1985; Vander Schee, 2007). According to Swecker et al. (2013), retention increased by 13% for every student meeting with an academic advisor.

Studies have investigated the effectiveness of intrusive advising for at-risk students. One study examined the impact intrusive advising had on students on academic probation and reported an increased GPA for students who met with their academic advisor on three to eight occasions (Vander Schee, 2007). Another study found that utilizing intrusive advising to increase the retention of academically underprepared STEM students is effective (Rodgers et al., 2014). Glennen (1976) implemented an intrusive advising program that decreased attrition rates among first-year students, increased the percentage of honor roll students, improved academic performance, and reduced probation and suspension rates.

According to studies, intrusive advising is an effective method for at-risk and underprepared students. Thus, it is beneficial to research intrusive advising in the context of Latinx first-generation community college students who experience significant barriers to persist. (Rodgers et al., 2014; Vander Schee, 2007). Effective intrusive advising views the students through a holistic approach. Museus and Ravello (2021) found that proactive academic advising, also known as intrusive advising, was a practical approach to generating the academic success of students of color at a predominantly White institution.

First-Generation College Students

With the increasing rates of first-generation Hispanic students, researchers have explored the persistence and retention of these students. Data reports that first-generation and minority students are less likely to graduate and transfer (Long & Kurlaender, 2009; Stern, 2016; Wang, 2012, 2016). Furthermore, those who accomplish transferring are less likely to earn a bachelor's degree during a 9-year frame (Long & Kurlaender, 2009). According to a study by Choy (2001), first-generation students were twice as likely to drop out after their first year of college as continuing-generation students.

First-generation students experience academic challenges when entering postsecondary education. Chen and Simone (2016) found that many first-generation college students take developmental courses elongating their educational journey. Students in developmental courses can experience discouragement as classes do not count towards their degree requirements. However, academic challenges are not the only barriers students face in pursuing higher education.

First-generation college students receive less family support than continuing-generation students (Bradbury & Mather, 2009; Saenz & Barrera, 2007). The pressure of being the first in the family to attend college and having to figure out college processes independently impacts students' academic performance. The lack of social capital affects students' academic performance by earning fewer credits and lower GPAs than continuing-generation students (Pascarella et al., 2003; Torres et al., 2006).

One study found that only 6% of first-generation college students attended a highly selective 4-year institution in 2012 compared to 26% of continuing-generation college students (Redford & Hoyer, 2017). Additionally, 52% of first-generation students attended community colleges compared to 28% of continuing-generation students (Redford & Hoyer, 2017). Thus, community colleges are more likely to have first-generation college students as a large percentage of their student population.

When investigating academic placement, the research found that 54% of first-generation college students reported taking developmental college courses, reportedly more than continuing-generation students, due to missing or low ACT scores and SAT scores (Chen & Simone, 2016). Previous studies have focused on the external factors affecting students' transfer process, including financial limitations, lack of support, and being academically unprepared

(Rubio et al., 2017). However, data fails to report what components of a student's college experience significantly impacted their graduation and transfer success. With first-generation students being less academically prepared and having less family support, they must rely on the institution's advisors to guide them through their college experience.

Latinx and Hispanic Students

The term Latinx intends to be inclusive in academia as a pan-ethnic identity label (Lopez et al., 2021). To describe people of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origins, interchangeably using Latinx and Hispanic in the study (U.S. Census Bureau, n.d.). The Hispanic or Latinx population grew by 23% in the United States from 2010 to 2020 (Jones et al., 2021). As the population increases, the number of Latinx students pursuing higher education also rises, making them the second-largest ethnic group to pursue undergraduate education (Postsecondary National Policy Institute, 2021). Twenty-seven percent of Latinx students pursue associate degree programs compared to only 20% pursuing bachelor's degree programs (Postsecondary National Policy Institute, 2021).

Cultural values greatly influence individual behaviors. A student's culture and family dynamics can impact a student's decision to pursue higher education. Researchers studied social dynamics by comparing collectivistic and individualistic cultural values (Jandt, 2016). Individualistic cultures prioritize individual needs by seeking freedom of choice, autonomy, and fulfilling personal goals (Jandt, 2016). Data reports that the United States has an individualistic culture (Jandt, 2016). Collectivistic cultures prioritize building cohesiveness, maintaining social roles, and being interdependent (Jandt, 2016).

Latinos in the United States are group-oriented and classified as a collectivistic culture despite living in an individualistic nation (Rinderle & Montoya, 2008). Thus, Latinx students

experience interdependence with their families, making it difficult to leave for college. Latinx students serve essential functions at home, like caring for younger siblings, making financial contributions, and maintaining household responsibilities (Marrero, 2016; Storlie et al., 2016). Latinx students experience cognitive dissonance when pursuing higher education due to feeling responsible for family needs and perceiving college attendance as an individual goal (Marrero, 2016). The traditional family expectations of putting family first leave Latinx students feeling that college is not the right choice despite their career goals (Marrero, 2016). Thus, many Latinx students begin their education at community colleges; however, even with aspirations to continue, Hispanic students are less likely to transfer from a community college to a university than White students (Wang, 2012).

Thus, Latina students were required to care for younger siblings, contribute to family needs, and have additional family responsibilities expected to be honored by the collectivistic Latin culture. The results reported the challenge of Latina students to fit into an individualistic college campus and participation in a collectivist family culture, as each had conflicting demands (Storlie et al., 2016).

Community College as a Higher Education Pathway

Attending a community college continues to be a common educational pathway for first-generation Latinx students. Community college students benefit from lower tuition than 4-year universities (Lichtenberger & Dietrich, 2017). However, although students benefit from cost-saving tuition rates at a community college, some researchers have found that attending a community college can create academic disadvantages. Data found that community college students experience poor credit mobility, delayed graduation, and lower grade point average, and

earn fewer credits than students who initially attend a university (Lichtenberger & Dietrich, 2017; Pascarella et al., 2003; Torres et al., 2006; Wang et al., 2017).

Due to the accessibility of community colleges, the increasing enrollment includes a large percentage of disadvantaged student populations that would not have otherwise pursued higher education (Stern, 2016). Per Bailey et al. (2015), community college enrollments have increased among racial and ethnic minority students, low-income students, immigrants, and first-generation students.

Community Cultural Wealth

Many barriers persist for first-generation Latinx community college students; however, this study seeks to understand how students persist despite obstacles. Hence, a review of community cultural wealth to understand the holistic student experience and capitals contributing to students' persistence in upward transferring.

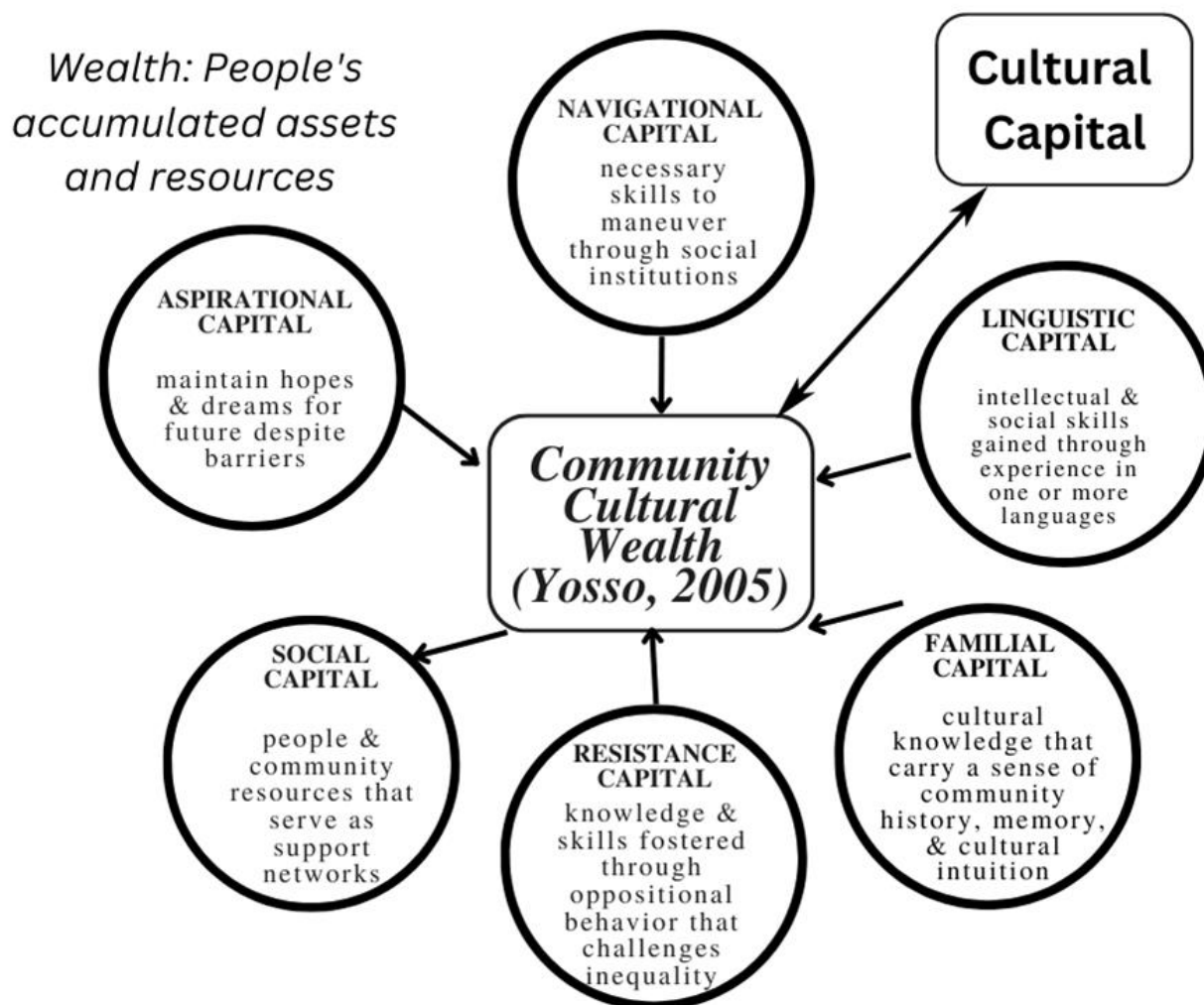
The term cultural capital was coined in 1977 by Bourdieu and Passeron. According to Yosso (2005), "Cultural capital refers to the cultural knowledge, skills, and abilities possessed and inherited by privileged groups in society" (p. 76). Bourdieu argued that formal education and one's family could gain cultural, social, and economic capital (Yosso, 2005). The groups privileged with capital can maintain power and experience social mobility, whereas those who lack capital experience inequities (Yosso, 2005).

Yosso (2005) critiqued cultural capital by expanding on different types of capitals that communities of color possess to enable social mobility. Yosso challenges the traditional perspective where the perception of lacking capital is a deficit instead of exploring the different types of cultural knowledge, skills, and abilities of marginalized groups. Community cultural

wealth includes aspirational, navigational, social, linguistic, familial, and resistant capital (Yosso, 2005). Figure 2 displays a model of community cultural wealth.

Figure 2

A Model of Community Cultural Wealth



According to Yosso (2005), "Aspirational capital refers to the ability to maintain hopes and dreams for the future, even in the face of real and perceived barriers" (p. 77). Guzmán et al. (2021) studied the perception of Latinx immigrant parents utilizing community cultural wealth. The study found that Latinx immigrant parents used aspirational capital to encourage their children to persist academically (Guzmán et al., 2021). Parents stated the importance of instilling

the value of academic achievement in their children early to increase future job opportunities and better working conditions (Guzmán et al., 2021). Sandoval-Lucero et al. (2014) studied the experience of Latinx and African American students at a community college to identify factors that contributed to their academic success. The study found that participants experienced personal and professional barriers; however, their aspirational capital helped them, perseverer through their academics and inspired them to pursue leadership opportunities in their future careers (Sandoval-Lucero et al., 2014). Jabbar et al.'s (2019) study mirrors the results of previous studies reporting how Latinx students at community colleges credited their aspirational capital as an influencing factor to their goal to transfer to a university.

Although students may aspire to persist, understanding the transfer process can be challenging for first-generation students. According to Yosso (2005), having navigational capital provides the skills to maneuver through social institutions. First-generation college students experience a lack of navigational capital due to their family's unfamiliarity with college processes; however, colleges have tried to bridge the gap by offering first-year courses and programming to assist students in building their navigation capital. Doran and Hengesteg (2020) found that first-year programming experiences increased persistence among college students.

Previous scholars have studied the impact of first-generation college students' lack of social capital (Pascarella et al., 2003; Torres et al., 2006). Yosso (2005) referred to social capital as the people and community resources that serve as support networks. Thus, first-generation college students may lack the expertise of family members who have attended higher education but may benefit from other support groups. Espinoza (2013) researched the experience and persistence of Engineering Latinx students and found that peer networks and a positive departmental climate were vital to students' overall experience. Arana et al. (2011) reported

similar findings with a supportive university climate, including faculty, staff, and administrators, as a factor that encouraged persistence.

According to Yosso (2005), "Linguistic Capital includes the intellectual and social skills attained through communication experiences in more than one language and/or style" (p. 78). Many scholars have explored the academic disadvantages of English Language Learners or students whose first language is not English. Hence, students classified as academically unprepared for college-level courses have a higher dropout rate (Bailey et al., 2015). However, Yosso (2005) states the benefits minority students gain from their linguistic capital, such as cross-cultural awareness, teaching, and tutoring.

A study conducted with STEM Latinx students reported that family supports motivated students to succeed and persist academically toward graduation (Espinoza, 2013). According to Yosso (2005), "Familial capital refers to those cultural knowledges nurtured among [family] that carry a sense of community history, memory, and cultural intuition" (p. 79). Sáenz et al. (2018) studied the student experience of Latinx community college male students and found that the extensive family roles and responsibilities did not hinder the student's academic progress. Furthermore, students' inspiration to persist toward graduation increased as the responsibilities fostered a sense of support from family (Sáenz et al., 2018). Another study explored the impact linguistic capital had on students studying abroad and found that students could quickly connect with locals and engage more profoundly in the overseas experience by drawing from their linguistic capital (Wick et al., 2019).

Yosso (2005) stated that "resistance capital refers those knowledges and skills fostered through oppositional behavior that challenges inequality" (p. 80). Revelo and Baber (2018) studied the experience of Latinx engineering students. The results reported that students engaged

in role modeling, expanded community outreach, and collectively resisted creating a social transformation in the culture of engineering programs. Revelo and Baber (2018) conducted a study that observed students' results in a pedagogy activity where they were encouraged to engage in resistant capital through a structured exercise. The data found that students resisted using experiential knowledge to counter-story-tell their identity and transform social injustices (Martin-Beltrán et al., 2018). The different capitals encompass the cultural wealth gained by students of color from their community and families, even when deficient in social and economic capital.

Chapter Summary

First-generation Latinx community college students experience unique challenges that impact their persistence to transfer to a university. While exploring retention among college students, Tinto studied a student's decision to depart from an institution. A student's preschooling education, family background, skills, and abilities impact their decision to commit to their academic goals and integrate into college campuses (Tinto, 1993). The development of educational advising practice evolved to incorporate an intrusive advising approach where college advisors utilize proactive strategies to assist students in integrating social and academic systems (Earl, 1987).

Furthermore, community cultural wealth, a concept from critical theory, was reviewed concerning building capital for underrepresented populations such as Latinx first-generation students. The chapter explores the literature to seek how advisors supporting students to transfer upward utilize intrusive advising approaches and reference community cultural wealth capitals to understand the holistic student experience.

Chapter 3: Methodology

The study investigates the experience of first-generation Latinx and Hispanic college students who graduated from a community college and transferred to a university. The research utilized a qualitative approach to study the lived experiences of first-generation Latinx students through a phenomenological lens. The 11 participants' interviews included graduates from Southwest Kansas community colleges who transferred to seven different universities. The literature review in the previous chapter explored the existing research on Latinx students' experience in pursuing higher education. This study examines the experiences contributing to the student's successful upward transfer. The chapter includes the research design, population and sample, procedures, and the study's limitations.

Research Design

A qualitative approach aided in exploring the experiences of first-generation Latinx students who transferred from a community college to a university. A quantitative approach can provide numerical trends of first-generation students. Furthermore, a qualitative approach will give in-depth, rich data on the advising experience of first-generation students who persisted from a small community college in Southwest Kansas. Qualitative research investigates the natural social life of human subjects through different methods, including ethnography, case study, grounded theory, phenomenology, content analysis, action research, evaluation research, and autoethnography (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018).

The study utilizes a phenomenological approach to understand the lived experiences deeper through participant interviews (Qutoshi, 2018). A phenomenological study is "interested in human consciousness as a way to understand social reality, particularly how one 'thinks' about experiences" (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011, p. 19). The study explores the shared experiences of

Latinx first-generation community college students who persisted; furthermore, a deeper understanding of how community cultural wealth impacts students' college experience.

Research Questions

This qualitative study investigates the experiences of first-generation Latinx students who graduated from a community college and transferred to a 4-year university. The following research questions guide the study.

RQ1a: Do Latinx students describe academic advising resources as contributors to their upward transfer?

RQ1b: If yes, what resources do they identify, and do these resources fit the criteria of intrusive advising?

RQ2: Does intrusive advising impact the upward transfer of first-generation Hispanic/Latinx students compared to students who did not participate in intrusive advising?

RQ3: Do students experience one or more forms of community cultural wealth through the process of intrusive advising that factor into their persistence?

Population

The study population is Latinx first-generation students who have persisted by graduating from a small community college in southwest Kansas and transferring to a university. The college enrollment at a small community college in southwest Kansas in 2019–2020 included 1,868 students, of which 63% enrolled full-time. The percentage of students enrolled by race/ethnicity reported a minority-majority with 46% Hispanic students, 35% White, 10% Black or African American, 2% Asian, 1% American Indian or Alaska Native, and 5% other/unknown. Additionally, 83% of students were 24 years old and under, and 17% were over 25. The graduation rate for the 2015 cohort reported only 30% of students graduating within the standard

time of completion and a transfer-out rate of 26%; however, it is not clear how many students graduated and transferred.

Sample

The sample includes 11 participants ($N = 11$), five men and six women between 19 and 33 years old. The study participants graduated from community colleges in Southwest Kansas. Furthermore, students attended Hispanic Serving Institutions based on federal requirements.

All participants reported being English learners, with the primary language spoken at home being Spanish. Additionally, all participants were first or second-generation immigrants. Three participants lived a portion of their youth in Mexico, ranging from 2 to 11 years old. Ten participants have Mexican origin, and one reported Salvadorian and Honduran heritage.

A total of seven participants have earned their bachelor's degree, and one has their master's degree. Three participants are still pursuing their bachelor's degrees, and two are in graduate programs. Lastly, four participants expressed interest in pursuing a graduate degree. Table 1 lists the participants' demographics, including pseudonyms, sex, age, area of study, and the race or ethnicity which they self-identified as.

Table 1*Participant Demographics*

Pseudonym	Sex	Age	Area of study	Race/ethnicity
Isabella	Female	24	Elementary Education	Hispanic
Guadalupe	Female	33	Respiratory Care	Hispanic/Latina
Diana	Female	25	Healthcare Administration & Management	Hispanic
Maria	Female	30	Nutrition	Hispanic/Latina
Cristina	Female	19	Musical Theater and Nursing	Hispanic/Latina
Victoria	Female	30	Social Work	Hispanic/Mexican
Max	Male	21	Kinesiology	Hispanic/Latino
Alejandro	Male	29	Animal Science	Hispanic
Anthony	Male	23	Organizational Psychology	Hispanic/Latino
Bryan	Male	23	Architecture	Latino
Ernesto	Male	23	Construction Management	Hispanic/Chicano

Data Collection Procedures

To begin, Abilene Christian University Institutional Review Board (IRB) processed the application to conduct research. Once IRB granted permission to conduct the study, the recruitment of participants began (see Appendix F). For participants to qualify for the study, they had to meet the criteria, including being first-generation college students per the definition provided in this study, identifying as Hispanic or Latinx students, graduating from a community

college in Kansas, and transferring to a 4-year university. There were no criteria regarding the student's completion at the university or the location of the transfer institution.

The recruitment tools used included online posts primarily via social media, flyers, and emails that described the study qualification criteria (see Appendix C). To begin phase one of recruitment, a Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Snapchat post was made with the recruitment flyer (see Appendix D for the flyer). Facebook was an effective recruitment tool, as the flyer exposure included 1200 Facebook friends. Additionally, the Facebook post was shared by 31 people reaching a more extensive network. People also shared the recruitment flyer through their social networks, including Linked In, Snapchat, Instagram, and Twitter.

Lastly, higher education advising professionals recommend eligible participants. The TRIO Student Support Service department was a recruiting resource, as the program objectives include serving first-generation college students. TRIO Student Support Services shared the recruitment post with over 300 social media followers, many of them former students. Additionally, utilizing a snowball sample, participants recommended potential eligible participants (Wrench et al., 2008).

The participant limit for this study was eight to 12 Latinx first-generation community college graduates who transferred to a university to reach saturation. Nineteen potential participants reached out regarding interest in the study. Interested parties received follow-up communication to verify the study's eligibility criteria, including identifying as first-generation Latinx/Hispanic students per the definition provided in this study and having graduated from a community college in Kansas and transferred to a 4-year university (see Appendix E). Four participants did not meet the study criteria.

The first 12 eligible participants received a formal message including details regarding the study and an electronic consent form to review. The information provided included the purpose of the study, research procedures, anticipated risks, participation benefits, and participant confidentiality (see Appendix A). A total of six participants agreed to participate in the study and signed the consent form. After a few days, the other six received a follow-up message regarding their interest in the study, of which two opted out of the research, and four ceased to communicate. The following three participants who were interested in participating received the formal message and consent form. After receiving the signed consent forms from nine people, two referrals via snowball sampling also agreed to participate in the study. Hence, a total of 11 participants were selected for the study.

The data for the study were collected via semistructured interviews (Wrench et al., 2008). Interviewing students provides an opportunity to explore the student's experiences in-depth. The interviews occurred via a virtual video call on Zoom that included verbal and nonverbal communication. The semistructured interview process allows the researcher to adjust throughout the interview by incorporating follow-up questions and clarifying interview questions. The semistructured interviews consist of inquiries about the student's college experience, such as experienced barriers while attending a community college and the factors contributing to the student's persistence (see Appendix B). Furthermore, interview questions included the academic advising experience of students. Before beginning the study, the questions were pilot tested with three individuals who met the eligibility criteria to mirror similar characteristics.

The interviews were scheduled for at least 90 minutes to allow adequate time to conduct interviews. All interviews occurred in a locked private office to ensure participant confidentiality by the interviewer. Due to interviews being conducted electronically via Zoom, the participants

selected their preferred private location, most occurring in their homes. Before beginning the interview, participants received the consent form introducing the purpose of the study. The participants had the opportunity to ask any questions regarding the research. All participants received the electronic consent form in the email they provided. The participants received the consent form via Dropbox Sign, previously named HelloSign. Dropbox Sign tracks agreements with legally binding eSignature online (Dropbox, n.d.).

After receiving the signed consent forms, the scheduling of interviews occurred. Before beginning the interview, to reiterate important information from the consent form, the participants were reminded that their participation was voluntary. Additionally, they could drop out of the study at any time or skip any questions they did not feel comfortable answering. Furthermore, the interviewer verbally repeated the study's confidential procedures. The interviews were video and audio recorded to allow the opportunity to observe and evaluate data accurately. The data collected included written notes and electronic recordings.

Furthermore, electronic data are secured in a password-protected computer to ensure meeting confidentiality procedures. Additionally, all physical data were locked in a secure file cabinet in a locked office. Additionally, I duplicated electronic data to account for the potential of failed technology, locking it in a filing cabinet located in a locked office.

Data Analysis

Before analyzing the data, I reviewed the information, including interview notes and video-recorded interviews. Next, the information was prepared to transcribe data for analysis. The interviews were transcribed utilizing the automatic Zoom transcription feature. After the Zoom transcription was retrieved, it was reviewed and verified to ensure accurate transcription. The necessary edits were made to reflect the interview transcripts accurately. Next, member-

checking occurred by sending the transcript to each participant to review for any discrepancies (Wrench et al., 2008). Each participant had the opportunity to clarify or alter the information gathered by making changes or adding more information. The data were coded by assigning words or phrases with commonalities in data segments (Leavy, 2017). The data were coded utilizing NVIVO coding, a software program that uses participants' responses as symbols to condense words or phrases (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018). The interpretation will ensure triangulation among emerging themes once data saturation is reached (Leavy, 2017; Saldaña & Omasta, 2018).

Limitations of the Study

The study encompasses several limitations. First, the data are insufficient to make more significant population generalizations and describes the experiences of a small sample size. The information does not assume a causal relationship between intrusive advising and persistence, as no statistical data were conducted. Furthermore, the data collected is gathered at a point in time, whereas a student's perception of their advising experiences may change.

In accordance with the nature of this research, the data effectively understood the advising experience of first-generation Latinx students; however, it is not generalizable to the experience of all Latinx students. The participants in the study represent a small sample from a limited geographic area. All the participants in the study attended Hispanic Serving Institutions located in predominantly Hispanic communities. The environment of the participants can impact their experience. Thus, Latinx students in a predominately White institution and community may report a different experience than they would experience being minorities in their campus and community. The students attended two out of 19 community colleges in Kansas, located in predominantly Hispanic communities with a majority of Hispanic student enrollment. Hence,

students' experience in Southwest Kansas may vary significantly from those at community colleges with a Hispanic minority.

Additionally, the study participants were not selected randomly; hence, the familiarity with other participants utilizing a snowball sample could have influenced the individual responses. Another limitation of the study was that all the participants were either currently enrolled or postgraduates. The study did not have participants who dropped out of college while pursuing their bachelor's degree. The experience of students who withdrew from their institutions before completing their degrees could add a different perspective. Furthermore, some participants might have been reluctant or more reserved to share the depth of their experience with me as the researcher.

Chapter Summary

The qualitative study investigated the lived experiences of first-generation Latinx students through interviews. Eleven participants who graduated from a community college in Southwest Kansas and transferred to a university were recruited utilizing a snowball sample. Participants signed an electronic consent form to participate in the study by sharing their experiences in a semistructured interview. The interviews were transcribed verbatim and coded using NVivo. The thematic analysis is presented in Chapter 4.

Chapter 4: Results

This qualitative study aimed to understand the transfer experience of first-generation Latinx students. The research questions guiding the study include:

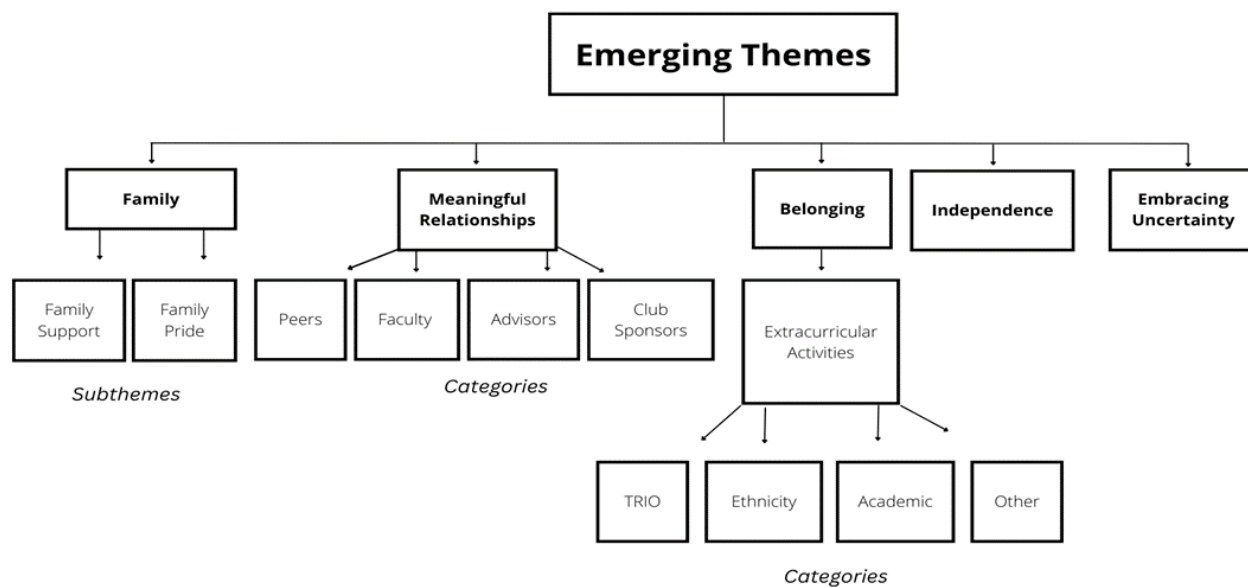
RQ1a: Do Latinx students describe academic advising resources as contributors to their upward transfer?

RQ1b: If yes, what resources do they identify, and do these resources fit the criteria of intrusive advising?

RQ2: Does intrusive advising impact the upward transfer of first-generation Hispanic/Latinx students compared to students who did not participate in intrusive advising?

RQ3: Do students experience one or more forms of community cultural wealth through the process of intrusive advising that factor into their persistence?

The previous chapters discussed the theoretical framework that guided the interview questions, including Tinto's model of institutional departure and community cultural wealth, to explore the participant's holistic college experience. This chapter presents the study's results through thematic analyses of themes emerging from the data. Five emerging themes included family, meaningful relationships, belonging, independence, and embracing uncertainty, displayed in Figure 3.

Figure 3*Emerging Themes***Family**

The participants in this study credited their family as a significant contribution to their academic success, demonstrating familial capital (Yosso, 2005). Within the “family” theme, two subthemes emerged family support and pride. The first subtheme describes the support family members provide students throughout their educational journey, including financial, emotional, and task oriented. The second subtheme describes how making their family proud significantly motivated participants to pursue higher education.

Family Support

The family dynamic varied slightly among participants; some were traditional students who went to college right after high school and transferred immediately after graduation. However, four participants took some time after completing their degree before deciding to transfer. Most participants described significant financial and emotional family support despite the different journeys. When asked how they would describe their family's support of them

attending college, most ($n=10$, 90%) reported feeling very supported. Family support is grouped into three categories task-oriented, financial, and emotional.

Task-Oriented Support

Isabella, a young mom, decided to go to college after taking some time off. She shared the task-oriented support her family provided. She said,

It takes a village to get through things, so they were very supportive of taking care of my kids when I had courses at night everybody had to pitch in, so I feel like just them helping me. That showed how supportive they were.

In a different interview, Guadalupe shared the task-oriented support she received from her family, helping take care of her son while she studied. Furthermore, Maria also described receiving help with her children when returning to college after taking time off to focus on her career for nearly 4 years. When speaking about task-oriented family support, Maria stated:

They have always made it clear that no matter what I do, school wise that they will support me a 110% as long as I am in school if it means babysitting if it means me going on a school trip, anything that has to do with school. They will have my back to 110%, and up to this day, they still do if I need help buying a book for a class. They are right behind. So, I have always had their support as long as it is for school.

Bryan described the task-oriented support he received from his parents, such as making meals during his visits that he could take back to college. Diana lived at home while attending college online and shared her family's task-oriented support:

My parents, they would offer me like food, because sometimes I wouldn't leave my room to eat, so they would bring it to my room. They bought me a desk personally, so that I could actually continue studying. So, they were very, very supportive about it.

In these examples, the women with children found it resourceful to have task-oriented family support, where family members helped care for their children while they attended class, worked on homework, and studied for their courses. Bryan and Diana also received task-oriented support from their parents, including preparing meals while they completed school responsibilities.

Financial Support

Many participants also expressed their gratitude for the financial support they received from their parents. Alejandro's parents partially contributed to his living expenses, and Max and Guadalupe also received financial assistance from their parents. Isabella shared how she had enrolled in college on three occasions and would drop the courses before they began. The fourth time, her mom offered to pay for her courses, and although she and her husband chose to cover all her college expenses, her mother made it clear that she was willing to aid her financially. When Bryan was at the community college, he held multiple on-campus jobs to cover his educational expenses. He described coming from a low-income family but still receiving financial support from his parents:

Financially, they're supportive of like me being here. When I first came here [transfer institution], I tried to have a job and go to school at the same time, and, like my grades, would suffer and stuff. So, they told me not to work and they would, support me.

Emotional Support

Additionally, the participants expressed receiving emotional support from family members. Alejandro recalled his family attentively listening as he shared some of the challenges he was experiencing with his courses. He shared:

I think the biggest role is just being there emotionally. I mean, it's not like they can go to class for you, or they can do the work for you. But if you have somebody there that you can vent with and just pray with. I think it helps a lot.

Victoria mentioned feeling emotionally unprepared for college, but her family's support was beneficial. She states, “my mom has always said I really don't know what you're doing. What you're learning or what you're telling me about. But I'll be here to listen. I'll be your emotional support.” Bryan recalled his parents frequently telling him how proud they were as he shared his academic accomplishments. Those words of praise encouraged him during the challenging days. Anthony referred to his family as the “cheering audience” he needed stating,

They were very supportive. They wanted me to excel. They wanted me to do bigger and better things and so they were very excited. They were always bragging to their friends. “My, like my kids got scholarships to go to school and... doing amazing”. They were super happy.

Table 2 provides a summary list of the types of support participants expressed receiving from their families.

Table 2*Family Support*

Financial support	Emotional support	Task-oriented support
Isabella	Guadalupe	Isabella- Childcare
Guadalupe	Max	Guadalupe- Childcare
Max	Diana	Maria- Childcare
Maria	Maria	Diana- Preparing meals
Alejandro	Victoria	Bryan- Preparing meals
Bryan	Alejandro	
	Anthony	
	Bryan	

Family Pride

During interviews, many participants expressed the motivation to continue their education rooted in making their families proud. All the participants in the study reported being either first- or second-generation immigrants. The primary language spoken at home was Spanish for all the participants. The families experienced challenges adapting to a new culture and learning a new language; hence, participants felt great pride in pursuing higher education. Bryan shared how his dad's immigration stories inspired him to pursue higher education. He said,

Hearing, like all my dad's stories, and how he came to United States and like for a better future for his kids. And I was like, well, how would I get a better future? It's like naturally through like education. So, I mean just like pushing myself to go to college for

my parents, which, like now it's. It's obviously for me. But I'm also doing it for them. and it's like definitely a motivator like I'm here to like. Make my parents proud, because they did all this work for me to come to college.

Diana shared a similar experience stating that her parents did not make her go to college but did highly encourage her to pursue higher education. Diana lived in Mexico until she was 2 years old and migrated with her parents. She knew that going to college would make them proud, stating:

I wanted them to feel like they're like their sacrifices that they did to bring us to the United States was something that would make them proud, I knew attending a college and university was something that they wanted from their kids, and I knew if I did that then I was going to make them proud.

Guadalupe had a similar experience as her parents migrated from Mexico to the United States. She said,

The expectation was that they would love, for you know like me and my siblings to all go to college like that was kind of like the expectation, you know, and they gave us the whole background and speech about why they even came to the US. That was predominantly the main reason why is for their kids to go to school and receive an education.

Many participants recalled messages of their parent's sacrifice in migrating to a new country, hoping it would offer a better life than their country of origin, demonstrating aspirational capital (Yosso, 2005). One participant had a different experience as a first-generation immigrant, with most of his family living in Mexico. Ernesto shared, "I'm the oldest. So my family played a big role by me to push myself and giving an example to my sisters to pursue their own education." Max also wanted to set a good example for his siblings, as he was

the oldest. Alejandro shared how he was the first in his family to pursue higher education and the impact it had on his siblings:

Well, my siblings, especially to my brother. They saw it as. They saw that an opportunity for him, too. That if I was going to take that step and go build a career, go to university. Then he could do it as well, you know. So they were excited for me.” and “I was proud. I think it was very. It was very meaningful, especially to my parents. To see me graduate, you know it's a big deal for us. I especially being the first one. I was proud, and I felt like I was getting a good example to my brother.

In their own words, Isabella, Cristina, Maria, and Victoria shared similar sentiments about the sense of pride they felt and the impact it made on their families.

Meaningful Relationships

All of the participants interviewed in the study discussed the impact of how the meaningful relationships they built contributed to their educational journey. This theme includes two subthemes, including institutional relationships and peer relationships. The institutional relationships include those developed with advisors, faculty and staff, and club sponsors.

Tinto’s model of student departure illustrates a student’s institutional experience's impact on retention (Tinto, 1993). Tinto categorized institutional experiences by academic and social systems. The participants expressed the significant impact the relationships with faculty, staff, and peers had on their academic journey.

Institutional Relationships

Advisors

The participants in the study generally expressed receiving support and encouragement from their advisors. While most students had different experiences with their advisors, 90%

($n=10$) believed their relationships were positive and professional. Ernesto and Max added that they felt their advisors were like a friend and that they were comfortable talking to them about anything.

Isabella went to her advisor for help with managing her anxiety and panic attacks. She felt safe sharing how overwhelmed she was and was relieved and calm after speaking to her advisor. Cristina had a similar sentiment towards her advisor, expressing that they connected emotionally. Guadalupe had several advisor changes, but her last advisor left a lasting impression. She shared how they are still in contact since he made a meaningful impact on her life.

When asking students how often their advisor reached out, Cristina shared how her advisor communicated very well and adjusted her communication methods to connect with her. Cristina shared: “I don't check my email very often, and she does a lot of email. But then she started, realizing that I don't check my email very often. So, she started texting. She did very well, communicating with me.” Max also expressed a similar experience:

[my] SSS Advisor was a lot more relaxed. I can just text her and be like. Can I take this this and this [course selection], and with my academic advisor, it'd have to be setting up an appointment, or you know sending a formal email. But it was very. How do you say this convenient that I could just text her in and save like and ask your questions over text message.

Alejandro shared how valuable his advisor was in helping him transfer. He described the communication as follows:

It was very open and honest. So really early on I knew I wanted to eventually transfer to a university. So, he started working with me on what I needed to do to prepare for that.

And what classes I needed to take that we're going to transfer with me. and including
What are some of the clubs that I could be involving to better my experience like we
were talking.

Alejandro's advisor helped him set up college visits to transfer institutions and adjusted his academic plan to fit the bachelor's degree he was planning to pursue. Additionally, his advisor connected him to resources at the university before he transferred, including a research program that ultimately led to him receiving a significant scholarship. Furthermore, that connection led to him securing employment at the transfer institution a year before transferring. Alejandro still stays in contact with his advisor via social media. Cristina shared her advisor's guidance in navigating the transfer process, including coordinating her enrollment visit to the transfer institution. She said,

She [Advisor] helped me through absolutely everything. She was very on top of things. because I was unable to be on top of things because I was scrambling. She pulls me into fill out my application. She pulled me in to do my FAFSA. She did everything honestly like I said. If it wasn't for her. I wouldn't have gone very far.

Cristina described how her advisor would use various communication strategies to connect with her. She shared,

She [Advisor] knew that was the way to catch me is catch me in the hallway and talk to me in person, because if you send me an email, it's going to be like a year before I see it, and so she would always catch me in the hallway, or she would give me a call, or she absolutely needed me or something.

Cristina's experience exemplifies intrusive advising as her advisor would continuously reach out and adapt her communication to connect with the student. Furthermore, the advisor would ensure

that the student completed all tasks necessary to transfer and assist in the process rather than assuming the student knew the steps needed to transfer or expecting the student to complete the task without assistance. Cristina shared how she has heard students complain about her advising experience but expressed gratitude for having a positive experience with her advisor. She shared,

I hear a lot of people complain a lot about their advisors, but I honestly think that my advisor saved my life. She was kind of like she was always there for anything, and I definitely feel like if I wouldn't have her guidance I would have been very, very lost.

During his interview, Bryan shared how much of the assistance he received in preparing for transfer came from his advisor. He received assistance in selecting the required courses from his advisor for the transfer institution. Furthermore, Bryan got assistance in completing his FAFSA and scholarship applications. Bryan said he had a good relationship with his advisor and described having daily conversations about various topics.

Victoria's advisor was instrumental in helping her prepare to transfer. Her advisor was also the HALO sponsor. With her involvement in HALO, she visited a university where she was inspired to pursue social work after learning more about the academic major. After the visit with HALO, her advisor helped her prepare to transfer. She received assistance with the FAFSA, admission application, and scholarship applications from her advisor. Victoria's advising experience demonstrates intrusive advising per the definition provided in the study.

Faculty

Four of the participants in the study were involved in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) programs at the community college that allowed them to gain research experience known as Bridges to the Future. The student's involvement in Bridges to the Future made them excellent candidates for the Developing Scholars Program at a large university in

Kansas. The Developing Scholars program offered a significant scholarship for students to continue doing research making it a great motivator to transfer. Furthermore, students built excellent relationships with faculty through these programs. The faculty at the community college who led the Bridges to the Future program was in communication with those at the university; thus, together, they mentored the students and were an excellent tool to help students transfer.

When Anthony first enrolled at his community college, he was exploring majors. After taking psychology courses, Anthony found his passion in psychology. Anthony shared,

So, I was at a big loss up until I spoke to [the Bridges to the Future faculty] who told us about the opportunity to go into Bridges, which allows students to do research and go to a 4-year institution, that they partnered with, and they would fund us to do research. It would allow us to figure out what we wanted to do, especially those who wanted to go into higher-achieving fields like getting their masters or Ph.D., and so that kind of opened my eyes.

Anthony credited the Bridges to the Future faculty member as instrumental in helping him transfer and get connected to those at the university. The same university offered a summer research program where students would stay on campus throughout the summer to conduct research. Many students participated in the summer research program. Alejandro shared the impact it had on his education:

When I did that internship my freshman and sophomore year. I was able to meet a very influential individual, in the and the beef cattle industry today and making that relationship with him at the time really influence me because he actually offered me a job as a student worker to go work for him when I transferred. So that was another part of

why there I decided to go to [transfer institution] I was going to have a job and being able to attend school at the same time.

When asking students how they selected their transfer institution, the four who participated in the Bridges to the Future program or the summer research program credited it as a significant contributor to their decision. When Anthony was exploring transfer institutions, he was motivated to learn more about his academic major, but the financial incentive of conducting research was instrumental in helping him select his transfer school. Anthony said,

The opportunity to learn more because I wanted to know more about what opportunities there were for me to you know. Get a 4-year degree to get a bachelors. to move out of Kansas, the small town, Kansas specifically. And to get to know more people get to be in the bigger city a community that was based in this common area of interest, because psychology was not a big area of interest at [community college] so to have all that really outweighs staying or going to another place, especially with the opportunity to get paid to do research and to have our tuition covered.

Max's participation in research programs was instrumental in his transfer preparation. When asked how he selected his transfer institution, he stated,

Through a small research program there called Bridges. That's how I transferred to [transfer institution]. It prepares you to do research at a bigger school, a bigger institution. So, we do small research projects then we present them in the spring and then after that you move. You transfer and then you do research over the summer. It's an 8-week research. You work for the university. You get paid for it, too. But then, after that once the semester starts, you, you get paid your tuition to do research for 2 years or if you're here more than 2 years. And while you're here you get that money. I am still a part

of bridges. The program that you go into is called the Developing Scholars Program and that's who you do research under.

While Alejandro was at the community college, he participated in a research program during the summer between his first and second year. The summer research program was located at the transfer institution he selected. Alejandro said that experience helped solidify his decision to transfer to that institution. He shared, "I mean just being there over the summer being able to participate in research meeting other students from other places and just being on campus, part of the internship was living in the dorms. So having the experience." Bryan aspired to attend the transfer institution he selected but was concerned about the cost of attendance. He shared that his older sisters attended universities in Oklahoma that were a lot more affordable, and coming from a low-income household, he was concerned about paying for college. However, Bryan could afford his preferred school after participating in research programs. He said,

So, like when I first started college I wanted to go to [transfer institution] to begin with.

But what like really did it for me was the research like thing. I got like the Bridges program that helped me pay for tuition here. That was like what really made me want to come.

Anthony, Max, Alejandro, and Bryan participated in research programs that provided excellent support in transferring and financing college.

During Diana's interview, she expressed her challenge in developing a relationship with her assigned academic advisor. Diana expressed frustration in not connecting to her assigned academic advisor and difficulty with course registration. She decided to reach out to a faculty member for help. She said,

So, when I took it upon myself to go to the advisor or the instructor that helped me. She was very helpful. She just wanted to make sure that I was going down the right path, and she communicated everything with me professionally she wasn't like "Oh, my God! Why are you here. I'm like I'm not even your advisor". She was really helpful. She accepted that. my advisor didn't want to help, so she helped me herself.

Throughout her academic career, Diana frequently contacted the faculty member she established a relationship with for advice. She expressed gratitude for the support she received and ultimately built a strong positive relationship with the faculty member. Cristina shared a similar experience as she revealed that two of her instructors at the community college were her most significant role models and expressed gratitude for a staff member from the tutoring center who was patient and supportive as she navigated through challenging coursework.

During her time at the community college, Maria was a work-study for the Admissions Office. Working on-campus allowed her to build strong relationships with the student services division as resources for her upwards transfer. She shared,

I had a lot of the connections. For instance, working in the Admissions office. I got a lot of help from the admissions coordinators. Any question that I had I would be able to ask them. The same with financial aid I was able to just go into the office and ask the question. I mean everything was. I feel like it was more accessible to you. At a smaller institution.

Club Sponsors

A significant component of college life is being involved in extracurricular activities. Tinto (1993) categorized extracurricular activities as a formal social system impacting a student's institutional experience in integrating into an educational institution. During the

interviews, many students shared the impact club involvement made on their academic journey. Ninety percent ($n=10$) of participants were involved in at least one club or organization, and seven were involved in the Hispanic American Leadership Organization (HALO). Several students mentioned going to the HALO sponsor for guidance. Maria stated,

I did rely a lot [on] my HALO instructor and she would be the one to kind of guide me, and just she would pep talk me more than anything else. So, I always had, I guess, a positive experience with them.

Victoria shared how her HALO sponsor assisted her and other HALO members. She said,

Once I figured out really what I wanted to do [HALO sponsor] was very instrumental. And a lot of us myself and all my friends in our transfers in our pass towards college. So, she was big, big part of that. I think I was doing the general education and I think that's what [HALO sponsor] was doing [advising]. It was the general education, but we all kind of always gravitated towards her to help us. And she did.

Alejandro had a similar experience with his HALO sponsor, “we also [had] the HALO sponsor. Yeah, she was. She was [a] huge help, but she was not my direct advisor, but she was always there for me. you know. Primarily with the like FAFSA and things like that.” Victoria, Alejandro, Bryan, and Ernesto also joined HALO at the university they transferred to due to the positive experience in HALO at the community college they attended.

Peer Relationships

There was a notable subtheme in the data on peer relationships' impact on participants. Tinto highlights how peer group interactions and extracurricular activities aid in the social integration of students at educational institutions (Tinto, 1993). When asking students why they selected the community college they attended, all participants shared that proximity was a

significant factor. Diana found attending a community college comforting because many of her high school classmates were attending.

Only two of the 11 participants moved to attend their community college, about an hour away from home. Although Max moved about an hour away to attend his community college, his social skills made it easy for him to develop bonds with his peers. Knowing that friends were attending the same institution made it easy to adapt to being a college student. Ernesto spoke about how his friends were a motivating factor in transferring, saying, “my friends, as I mentioned before. They actually went to this in college. So, they're older than me. It was exciting to try to catch up and do the college experience with them.”

The transfer process can overwhelm first-generation students as they navigate the application process, financial aid, and housing plans (Rubio et al., 2017). Victoria shared how many of her classmates were going to the same transfer institution and spoke about how they worked together to prepare to transfer. She shared, “So we were all helping each other. So, if one [friend] got one answer from their advisor, or whatever I mean, we all got the answer. So, we kind of all helped one another.”

As students prepared to transfer, housing was a process that many relied on the peer relationships they developed at the community college to aid in the transition. Bryan said,

I mean, I made a lot of like my friends like at the community college. Like some of my closest friends were made there. So, like the friends I made, they were also transferring here, so that, like also helped to make this decision.

Bryan shared how the friends he made at the community college ended up being his roommates at the transfer institution, and he relied heavily on them searching for apartments. Anthony shared a similar experience as he made a friend through an organization on campus who would

transfer to the same intuition. When asked what relationships influenced his transfer decision, Anthony said:

One of my roommates definitely helped with that because I knew I was going to have at least one roommate. And he was. He definitely took a little bit of stress off my shoulders and ultimately became really good friends. And we were just able to live together the entire time we were there at [transfer institution]. So that relationship helped.

Max's membership in the Bridges to the Future program allowed him to meet others going to the same transfer institution. He was able to transfer with five other students, and he had other friends already at the institution; hence, those friendships influenced his decision to transfer.

Anthony's friends had different majors, yet they encouraged each other to do well in their coursework, sharing, "My friends were very much more hands on and supportive, and like involved. We would study together. We would work on things at the same time. Even if we weren't in the same courses, we would just be together." Ernesto was the youngest in his friend group, which was beneficial as his friends offered support. He shared,

My friend reminded me like, "hey, don't forget to pay this", and you know as everything aligned. And since they all, they're older than me. They had the experience. So everything like even classes. They're like, "oh, yeah, take this, Professor don't take that one. Take these classes". They help me a bunch.

While most ($n=7$, 63.63%) students selected institutions where they knew other students, four students attended schools where they did not know anyone. The students who transferred to schools where they did not know anyone described their experience as "scary." Maria transferred twice. The first time she was only at the transfer institution for 2 months before deciding to move back home. Her first time transferring hindered her academic progress financially and

academically. When describing how she felt not knowing people at the transfer institution she selected, she said, “I felt like a lost child, literally like I had nobody to run to, nobody to ask the question to. It was all different faces every single time because it's such a big university.”

Guadalupe and Diana took time off after receiving their associate degrees, transferred to online programs, and completed their degree online. As Guadalupe described how she felt attending a school where she did not know anyone, she said, “It was scary what it really was. Scary because I didn't know any of my peers. I didn't know the instructors.” She added, “at the time it was very scary, you know Didn't know anybody, and... going back to school, so I would say, because when you don't know anybody that does hinder your experience, too.”

Diana expressed similar feelings about attending a school without knowing anyone. She shared,

Yeah, it was scary. Like, I said. I like to have somebody that has gone through that experience already, so that they could tell me how their experience went to see if, like I would benefit or not from that experience. So, it was kind of scary.

Cristina had a different experience. During her interview, Cristina shared how she met a few people attending the same transfer institution but was still fearful because they were not friends.

She shared,

It was kind of a long story because of SSS a group of us went to go and enroll at [transfer institution] and so I met two girls and I wouldn't say we were friends. I just kind of knew them. And so going to [transfer institution] I was like, “okay. I know them. So, I'm okay”. But like I didn't really bond with them enough to be friends. So, I really didn't know anybody, and that my boyfriend at the time was also going, but we had broke up before we went. So, it was more awkward than anything. So, it was really hard. I didn't

know anybody, and it was. It was really scared. And I because I'm such an introverted person, I haven't met. I didn't meet anybody, either.

While peer relationships significantly impacted the student experience, those without friendships at the transfer institution reported negative feelings such as fear and loneliness. Thus, establishing peer relationships was important for students' transfer experience. Those who did not have strong peer support had trouble integrating into campus. For instance, Cristina struggled to make friends at her selected transfer institution. She shared, "Towards the end they got a couple of people to where I could call them my friends. but I don't think we ever hung out or anything, but I wouldn't say I made special bonds with anybody." Cristina transferred after graduating from her community college in only one year but struggled at the transfer school she selected. Cristina ultimately decided to return home after feeling lonely at the transfer institution. She shared:

I decided to take time off because I was, I was at a really low point in my life, and all I knew that it is that I didn't want to be alone. And being alone in such a big city. It is kind of scary especially when you're going through things [mental health] and you kind of just don't know what to think you don't know who to run to.

The section covered how meaningful relationships made an influential impact on the experience of participants. Alejandro's closing remarks during his interview exemplify how peers, advisors, club sponsors, and faculty positively impact students. He said,

You know, the biggest thing probably will be after the part of that positive experience was creating good friendships with your classmates and in with your professors and advisors stay in contact with those people throughout your academic career. And even

after, because you never know, I mean you might be able to help them and give back a little bit of what they gave you. or they might give you even better opportunities.

Belonging

Maslow developed the Hierarchy of Needs, where a sense of belonging is deemed a basic human need (1943). Tinto discussed social and academic integration's impact on students' integration into educational institutions (Tinto, 1993). The eligibility for participants in the study included being first-generation and Hispanic or Latinx. The theme of "belonging" emerged from participants seeking clubs or organizations where they fulfilled a sense of belonging. In this study, 90% of students were involved in clubs or organizations (see Table 3).

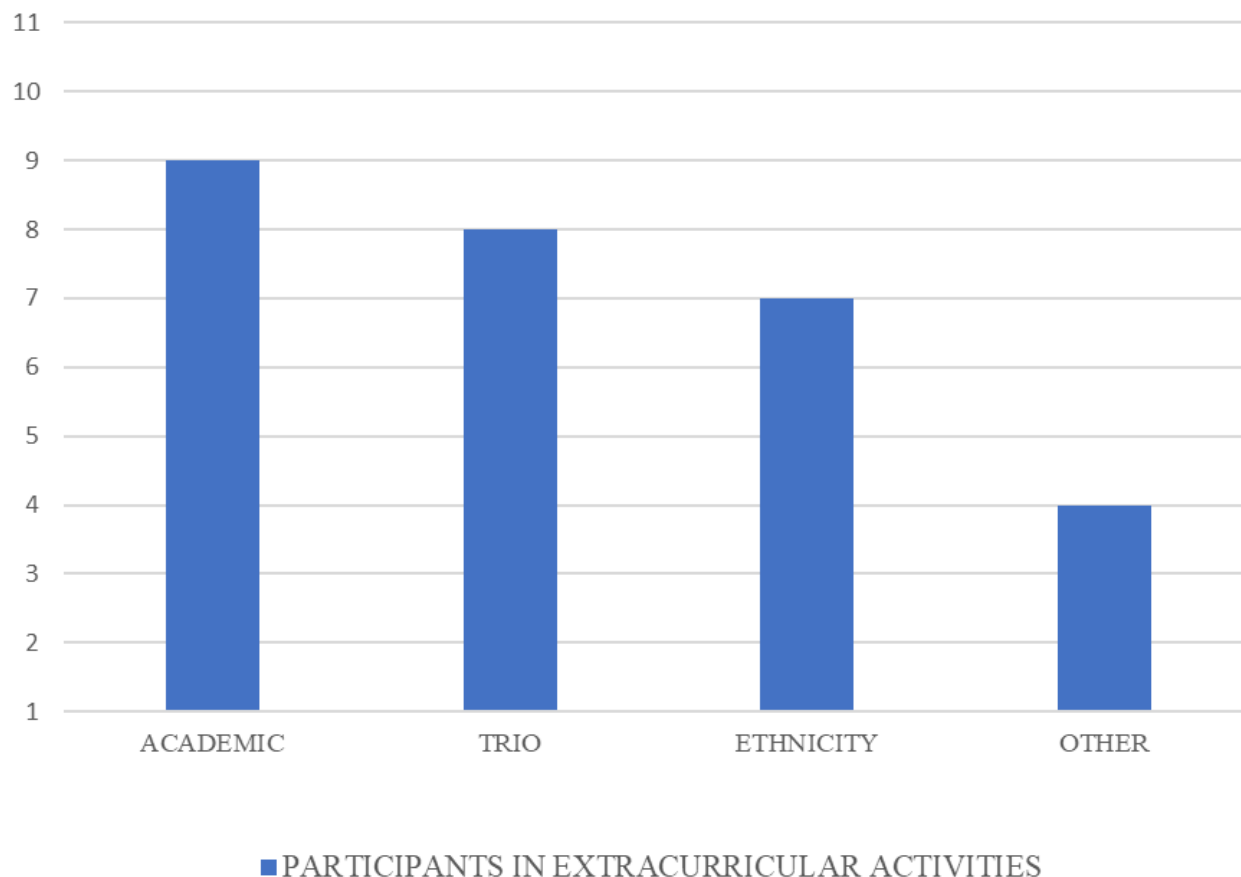
Table 3*Extracurricular Involvement*

Pseudonym	TRIO	Academic	Ethnicity	Other
Guadalupe	-SSS	-Student Respiratory Therapy Association	-HALO	
Diana				-Cheer
Maria	-SSS	-Student Nurses Association	-HALO	-Cheer
Cristina	-SSS	-Choir -Community Musical		
Victoria		-Social Work Club	-HALO	
Max	-SSS	-Phi Theta Kappa -Bridges to the Future -Developing Scholars Program	-HALO	
Alejandro	-SSS	-Block & Bridal -Developing Scholars Program	-HALO -League of United Latin American Citizens	-Cheer
Anthony	-SSS	-Phi Theta Kappa -Psi Chi Honor Society -Bridges to the Future -Developing Scholars Program		-Student Government Association, -Sexuality and Gender Alliance, -Campus Messengers for Christ
Bryan	-SSS	-National Organization of Minority Architecture Students -Bridges to the Future, -Developing Scholars Program	-HALO	
Ernesto	-SSS	-Tech Eng Ed Assoc. -Epsilon Pi Tau	-HALO	

TRIO organizations are federally based programs for first-generation, low-income, or students with disabilities. Student Support Services (SSS) is abbreviated in the table for conciseness. Out of 11 participants, eight were members of SSS, a program dedicated to preparing students to transfer.

The academic organizations listed include those based on academic performance, such as honor societies and academic majors of interest. Ninety percent ($n = 10$) of the participants were involved in academic-based organizations. The ethnic organization includes those which are culturally or ethnically based. The Hispanic American Leadership Organization is abbreviated in the table below as HALO. A total of seven participants were involved in ethnic-based organizations. The other section includes athletic, religious, political, and gender-based organizations. Participants in the study were involved in 20 different organizations.

Figure 4 demonstrates the most common types of extracurricular activities. Academic organizations included 15 different organizations based on the students' academic majors and performance. There were three honor societies and two research-based organizations.

Figure 4*Participants in Extracurricular Activities*

As part of the interview, students were asked if their participation in organizations influenced their academic success and decision to transfer. Guadalupe answered:

Yes, for sure. Especially HALO... A lot of it was just because I felt like a group where I felt like I belonged was just a big door opener, I guess in a sense that hey, you know there's all these other kids just like me that grew up just like me, and they made it this far, you know when they would bring in speakers from like other universities. And so that was definitely a way to really attach myself to the fact that, hey, I can do it, you know, if they can. You know, I know I can, too. So that a lot of that came from HALO and TRIO,

I should say, especially when they take a would take us to those college visits, I guess, when they would take us around, so definitely that those support groups for sure.

Anthony shared a similar experience regarding his participation in extracurricular activities. He was motivated by his peers having similar goals and aspirations. He said,

Well, just being able to see others, that I mean talking about HALO here in my in the community college. Just being able to see other Hispanics ahead of the same dream of going to transferring to a bigger university. I think it motivates you in certain ways to. If one can do it, then we can do it too right.

Maria's sentiments were similar to Anthony's sentiments. She was inspired to see people with similar demographics to her pursuing higher education. She stated,

Definitely. I saw a lot of Hispanics that said they were able to do it, and I knew there was more people in my shoes as a first generation. So, I know they had a huge impact on that because there's more students like you.

Hence, these examples demonstrate how students felt a sense of belonging seeing people of similar experiences having the same goal and felt inspired to further their education.

The participants in the study attended two different community colleges in Southwest Kansas; however, both community colleges are federally recognized as Hispanic Serving Institutions. Hispanic Serving Institutions are higher education institutions with at least 25% Hispanic students; thus, institutions reported 57.3% and 47.4% of Hispanic students (Excelencia in Education, 2020). While most students at the community college participated in HALO, they did not experience being a minority until they transferred to the more prominent university.

There are no Hispanic Serving universities in the state of Kansas. Ernesto, Maria, and Victoria

experienced culture shock at the university to which they transferred. In Victoria's own words, she shared,

Here [at community college, it was] normal when I transferred culture shock. I guess you could say. It was constantly pointed out that you were different especially within the program. I think I was one of 3 Latinas in the program and everybody else was Caucasian. So, it was culture shock. It was always being pointed out. You were always being singled out, pointed out in class and generalized. I mean, I just. I knew I had to get through it, but I couldn't let it get under my skin. I just kept going, and I would talk about it with my friend, and he will tell me "just don't let it bother you. You know we have just as much of a right to be here that they do". So, it was just it's just wow. "Okay, yeah, you're right. I do belong".

Ernesto enjoyed his experience in HALO at the community college as it represented his culture; therefore, he joined HALO at the university when transferring. Bryan also joined HALO because he wanted to be around other Hispanics whom he could connect with based on cultural similarities. When he transferred, he looked for culturally specific clubs to join where he could continue to meet minority students. Cristina expressed having a wonderful experience at the Hispanic Serving Institution she attended. She shared:

Being at [community college], I absolutely loved it. Everybody at SSS and HALO found out I was a mariachi [singer] so anytime they had an event they wanted me to sing for it, and I felt very very proud to be a Hispanic at that time. And I want to show off my talent, and I wanted to show the world, and it was really great, because that was a little bit before I guess that career kind of took off a little bit and so I felt very proud to be Hispanic in college. Actually, a lot of people have told me that they were scared to be

because of like racist comments and things like that. And I did not get any of those it was all very, very nice. We all kind of were a community.

Tinto describes the importance of students' integration into higher education institutions through extracurricular involvement (Tinto, 1993). These examples show how participants in the study looked for organizations where they could gain a sense of belonging. Isabella felt left out in class as many of her peers often made her feel excluded for being Hispanic; however, that drove her to do her best in school, demonstrating resistance capital as defined in the study. Anthony also expressed that he wished there was more diverse representation in advising at the institutions he attended. Claiming he would have benefited from having a Latinx and first-generation advisor; furthermore, as a member of the LGBT community, he felt like he lacked representation.

Independence

As mentioned, all participants shared being first- or second-generation immigrants and English language learners. As immigrant families, many of the participant's parents worked labor-intensive jobs such as meat packing plants and feedlots; thus, when describing their childhood, participants recalled their parents working long hours. Maria shared her home life growing up,

I could say in the beginning it was lonely. I was a single child until the age of 9. My parents worked all the time. To remember they woke up at five to go to work, so by the age of like 6-7 I had my own alarm and would get ready for school. I would walk myself to the bus stop and after school I'd walk myself home. I grew up to be independent unwillingly. It isn't always a bad thing; I've learned to navigate by myself a lot. Up to date, I still do. I learn as I go.

Isabella and Anthony shared having to help their parents with their family business from a young age. Most of Isabella's childhood memories revolved around going to her family's party store to help; she would spend evenings and weekends at her family's business. Anthony had a similar experience assisting at his parent's restaurant. He shared his experience:

There was a lot of responsibility placed on us to you know. Make sure things were taken care of around the house, and even myself, with our parents' business. A lot of responsibility to contribute in some large way. I was helping out when I was like probably 10, but officially working when I was 14, and then I helped out after school pretty much every day on the weekends. It's very busy.

The stories of Maria, Isabella, and Anthony demonstrate how family expectations included being independent since youth. As the participant's independent behaviors normalized, they modeled the same behavior in education. Participants expressed navigating the language barrier on their own when attending K-12 education. Overall, seven participants described preparing or navigating college processes on their own. While higher education professionals could have helped navigate college, many participants functioned independently.

Displaying his independence, Ernesto's family resides in Mexico. When deciding to go to college, he reached out to people for assistance because he did not have family in the United States that could assist him in applying for college. Victoria did not receive help from her high school counselor to apply for college; therefore, she reached out to a friend's mom who had attended college for help navigating the admission process. Maria wanted to go to college, but in high school did not understand the processes of navigating college. As the fall semester approached, she enrolled at her local community college. Maria later learned that the transfer institution she selected did not accept all her credits, which extended her academic progress and

set her back financially. Maria shared how she had to navigate college processes independently as her family could not offer support and she had no mentor to guide her. She said,

I was figuring things out on my own and I thought to myself, okay well I need to enroll somewhere. I received an acceptance letter from the community and I wasn't sure how that was going to affect me long term. If I would have just gone to a university, I would have gotten it all over with faster. Sometimes I feel that attending the community college I took a couple steps back, education wise. I didn't know how to navigate all of that. I didn't have the right mentor.

When discussing their academic preparation, many students expressed feeling unprepared. Cristina shared how she did not know what a credit hour was and could not ask her family because she was a first-generation college student. She shared, "They [parents] never experienced it [college], and it was definitely hard. but I just kind of had to guide myself through it, even though it took me a lot of time." She added, "I was very slow moving, and it took me a while to finally understand things, but I kind of had to do it all on my own." When discussing how she prepared for college she said, "I just kind of had to put myself in the mindset of no one's here to hold your hand anymore you just kind of got to do it by yourself."

Guadalupe shared that she did her best to prepare herself by making herself more accountable with homework in high school. She added, "It's just since they [parents] didn't have any of the college or academic experience. I feel like because of that I honestly had it just did on my own. A lot of it was just academically just preparing myself" Max and Cristina shared that they did not prepare for college until their junior year by working to improve their grades and study skills.

Paying for college is an entirely different process for students to navigate. Ernesto, Victoria, Maria, and Guadalupe described navigating the FAFSA process independently, as their parents could not help due to the language barrier. Bryan's older siblings went to college; thus, his parents knew what FAFSA was but could not help him fill it out as they do not know English well and cannot read in English. Guadalupe shared,

The only downfall to that, of course is, you know, growing up in the English-speaking world when you have Spanish speaking parents that couldn't quite help navigate their child as far as especially in the college level at that point.

Ernesto struggled to complete his FAFSA process. With his mom in Mexico, he sought to get independent status from financial aid, which would result in him getting the maximum Pell grant to pay for college. He described getting his FAFSA awarded as tough, stressful, and frustrating.

Ernesto said:

You're trying to look for somewhere like websites and all that. It was, It was a struggle it was. It was rough. and of course, I can't remember every detail, but I do remember the lady making it tough on me, you know, and she even told me that "you need to do it yourself." You know, like, and I am like, "okay? Well, I don't even know what to do or how to even start" it made me frustrated and it was not easy.

Four students expressed having to navigate the transfer process independently. Isabella, Guadalupe, Diana, and Maria were all nontraditional students who took some time off before transferring. Isabella did not enroll in college right after high school as she became a teen mom and was uncertain of her future career. When navigating the transfer process, she shared, "I feel like a lot of the things like I did take initiative of doing myself like when I was going to transfer. I kind of took my own initiative to start the application process." Guadalupe, Diana, and Maria

completed their associate degrees and took time off before deciding to pursue their bachelor's degrees to advance in their careers. During Diana's time at the community college, she navigated course enrollment independently. She shared the challenges she experienced in not having a helpful advisor:

So, my official advisor, she didn't really help me. She was never available, never in her office at her office times. So, when I took it upon myself to go to the advisor or the teacher instructor that helped me." She later added, "Class registration was a little difficult for me just because I didn't have an advisor. My first year at community college. I didn't really have an advisor that was helpful, so I didn't know what classes I needed to take, and which ones would benefit me more towards my degree. So that process was a little difficult.

Diana graduated with her associate degree in one year due to having dual college credits from high school. After graduating, she began working in healthcare and pursued her bachelor's degree to advance in her profession. Diana shared researching independently for her program, saying,

The college I transferred to I had absolutely no idea existed until I found the health care management and administration program. One day I kind of just decided like, All right. I want to go back to school, but I don't know what I want to study, and I started Googling. Guadalupe returned to school after taking 6 years off because her new job required a bachelor's degree. During her interview, she shared her experience: "I didn't have that advisor to help transfer me on. So, a lot of it was just I had to do that on my own, so figuring that out was definitely hard." She added,

Now you have to do this. Now you have to do that. It was just kind of all over the place, and I just I honestly had to just figure it out on my own. So that would that definitely made it hard.

Table 4 displays students who believed they had to figure college processes out independently by category.

Table 4

Navigating College Independently

Maria	Guadalupe	Cristina	Ernesto	Victoria	Diana	Isabella
-Selecting College	-Academic Preparation	-Academic Preparation	-Pursuing College	-College Application	-Enrollment -Advising	-Transfer Process
-Transfer Process	-Transfer Process		-Financial Aid	-Financial Aid		
-Financial Aid	-Financial Aid					

Higher education institutions have resources to help students navigate college; however, students may not know where to locate resources. Maria shared:

I would just have to say navigating on your own as a first-generation Latina is hard and a lot of times. Yes, help is out there, but we don't know how to get the help we don't know where to look So I feel like a lot of resources are cut short from us. I know that helps out there. But where do you look? I guess would be the thing.

Guadalupe added that pursuing college as a first-generation student is intimidating, and not knowing how to navigate college processes enhances those feelings. She states,

Okay, now, I have to figure all of this on my own [college processes] and college is intimidating enough, anyway for any student. So, on top of it a student that has no idea how to navigate anything that I think that escalate so like 10 times more.

Cristina came into college expecting to be independent to succeed. However, after building a trusting relationship, she could rely on her advisor for support, she shared,

[My advisor] was always very consistent on due dates and stuff and usually I'm a very prepared person, and I figure out all those things on my own, and I make sure I get things in before the due dates, but because I was so busy and overwhelmed. kind of would get things done very last minute. But, she would. You know, let me know of all the due dates and everything in time for me to get things done. I know one of the times she told me due date that wasn't the actual day. just so I could get it done on time.

With the support she received, Cristina graduated with her associate degree in one year while actively participating in extracurricular activities.

In essence, being first or second-generation immigrants and English language learners led to students becoming independent as they described their experiences of navigating independently. Thus, when they attended college and struggled to navigate processes, they continued a behavior they had their entire lives, figuring out on their own. While some students may find it easier to ask for help, many participants in the study struggled independently.

Embracing Uncertainty

The final theme of embracing uncertainty surfaced as participants described their experience as first-generation college students with many unknowns. While participants had developed the skills to navigate processes independently, they embraced the uncertainty of not knowing. Throughout their interviews, participants expressed acceptance of figuring things out

as the situations arose. For Ernesto, Max, Anthony, Cristina, Guadalupe, and Victoria, embracing uncertainty was a tool in navigating college.

Ernesto stated that he “went with the flow,” and because he attended a community college first, it helped him learn college processes. Anthony enrolled in college unaware of what academic major he would pursue; although not knowing made him nervous and scared, he expressed, “I figured things have worked out up to this point. I'm sure they'll continue to work out, and I'll be able to figure it out along the way.” Victoria expressed similar sentiments:

You really don't know what you're doing. You don't know what you're doing. You have nobody to guide you. Yes, you have some of these outside resources. But looking back at 18-19 years old, I was still very, very shy. I didn't. I don't think I asked as many questions as I should have. She added, “My parents didn't know what I was doing. I had nobody to ask and say, hey, what do I do. Sibling? Because I'm the oldest. So, I kind of had to navigate through it on my own. So, I mean it was terrifying.”

During the interview, participants were asked how they felt they prepared for college emotionally. Max answered,

I didn't know what I was walking into. I kind of just took it as it came, you know. As the days came by, I noticed that it was really, it was kind of hard. Some days some classes were very difficult, but that was emotionally draining because I didn't know how to feel about that.

He recalled not preparing for college academically until his junior year of high school. Not knowing what to expect from college academically or emotionally, Max leaned into being comfortable with the uncertainty. Guadalupe attended her local community college and felt highly unprepared. She shared:

Being a literal freshman where you have no idea like, at least for me, like I said earlier, because I didn't have that background where my parents went to college, and they knew how to help me. I was literally on a clean slate. Nothing didn't know how financial aid worked or advising worked. I had no idea how any of that worked. So, I feel like because of that. That's where I didn't have the greatest experience in my advising portion of my college experience. Just because I didn't know what to expect or I should have been more proactive.

While she struggled to navigate processes, Guadalupe shared that she tried to prepare for the unknown because that was the only way she could. While many students embraced uncertainty, Bryan discussed how he assumed everyone was in similar situations as he was. He added, “it's just like an eye-opener seeing how people like know all these things” referring to the information continuing education college students have. Embracing uncertainty was a common approach for first-generation college students to pursue higher education.

Chapter Summary

The chapter presented the five themes that emerged from the data analysis. The themes included family, meaningful relationships, belonging, independence, and embracing uncertainty. Additionally, the family theme included the subtheme of support and pride. The meaningful relationships participants shared were grouped into four sections: advisors, faculty and staff, club sponsors, and peers. The themes in the chapter illustrate the experience of Latinx first-generation community college graduates who transferred to a university.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusion, and Recommendations

This study aimed to investigate the transfer experience of Latinx/Hispanic first-generation community college graduates. The study defined first-generation students as those whose parents did not earn a bachelor's degree. The qualitative study involved semistructured interviews of 11 participants who graduated from a community college in southwest Kansas and transferred to a university. The study implemented Tinto's model of institutional departure as the theoretical framework. The results provide a deeper insight into the student experience of Latinx first-generation students. This chapter includes an overview of the problem, a summary of the study, a summary of the findings, implications, and future research.

Overview of the Problem

The retention and persistence of first-generation community college students in significant to higher education as first-generation college students do not graduate or transfer at the same rate as students whose parents earned a college degree (Whitley et al., 2018). First-generation college students experience unique challenges as they navigate through college processes for the first time in their family's history. Furthermore, the Hispanic/Latinx student population experiences additional barriers, such as being more likely to place into developmental courses, having family expectations that hinder their academic performance, and transferring at lower rates than White peers (Acevedo-Gil et al., 2015; Storlie et al., 2016; Torres et al., 2006; Wang, 2012).

Summary of the Study

This study investigated if intrusive advising and community cultural wealth contributed to the persistence of Hispanic first-generation college students by using Tinto's model of institutional departure as the theoretical framework. The study utilized a qualitative approach

with semistructured interviews. The participants in the study were first-generation college students between the ages of 19 and 33 years old and identified as Hispanic or Latinx.

Participants in the study graduated from a community college in southwest Kansas and transferred to a university.

Summary of the Findings

Five themes emerged from the data analysis of 11 semistructured interviews. The themes included family, meaningful relationships, belonging, independence, and embracing uncertainty.

The family theme was separated into two subthemes: family support and family pride.

Participants expressed having established meaningful relationships with several people, which resulted in four sections: advisors, faculty and staff, club sponsors, and peers. The themes illustrate the experience of Latinx first-generation community college graduates who transferred to a university.

Research Questions Addresses

The thematic analysis data are analyzed by the research questions next. The research questions in this study were precise as they sought to understand the advising experience of students, specifically intrusive advising. The theoretical framework guided the thematic analyses to understand the holistic student experience before analyzing the research questions. The five themes that emerged, including (1) family, (2) meaningful relationships, (3) belonging, (4) independence, and (5) embracing uncertainty are referenced to answer the research questions.

Research Questions 1a and 1b

Six participants described their academic advising experience as contributing to their upward transfer to a university. The research question below is answered by describing the experience of Max, Victoria, Cristina, Alejandro, Bryan, and Ernesto.

RQ1a: Do Latinx students describe academic advising resources as contributors to their upward transfer?

RQ1b: If yes, what resources do they identify, and do these resources fit the criteria of intrusive advising?

Max

Max described several resources he received from his advisor, including free school supplies and college visits to the transfer institution he selected. His advisor also helped him develop a long-term academic plan for his career goal in physical therapy. Max found it beneficial to take all the course requirements for the graduate program he was pursuing at the community college. His advisor also referred him to tutors when he needed academic support. Max recalled meeting with his advisor at least twice a week regarding face-to-face interactions.

Furthermore, Max enjoyed the convenience of texting his advisor when he had questions and found it easy to communicate. The frequent communication with his advisor helped him build a lasting relationship where he communicates postgraduation. The frequency of meetings, academic advising, and interpersonal relationships provides evidence of intrusive advising. The resources Max received through intrusive advising include school supplies, college visits, and tutoring recommendations.

Victoria

Victoria's experience with her advisor was highly beneficial as the advisor also served as a HALO Sponsor at her community college. Her advisor serving in multiple roles, allowed Victoria to visit with her advisor formally and informally frequently. Due to her participation in HALO, she was able to attend a college visit where the university hosted an academic major fair. Through this college visit, Victoria connected with faculty from the social work department.

After deciding to transfer, her advisor assisted her in many transfer preparation tasks, such as applying, completing her FAFSA, and applying for scholarships.

She maintained weekly conversations with her advisor and described her as approachable, easy to talk to, and professional. After transferring, she remained in contact with her advisor for a few years. Frequent communication with her advisor, transfer assistance, and financial planning assistance are indicators of intrusive advising. The resources provided through intrusive advising are college visits, FAFSA, and scholarship assistance.

Cristina

The relationship between Cristina and her advisor was highly influential. Cristina enrolled in college without feeling academically prepared. She shared that she did not enjoy school in high school but wanted to pursue higher education to further her career. Cristina wanted to leave her hometown for a larger city to pursue her goals. This motivated Cristina to graduate from her community college in only one year without having dual college credits when she began her college journey. Cristina credits the support from her advisor as a resource to successfully transferring. Her advisor helped her plan her courses and offered assistance with completing the FAFSA and admissions application.

Furthermore, her advisor offered tutoring resources and a safe and welcoming environment. During her time at the community college, she communicated with her advisor daily and maintained communication after transferring. Cristina's experience demonstrates intrusive advising as she frequently communicated with her advisor and received assistance with the transfer process and FAFSA. Furthermore, Cristina received tutoring resources through the process of intrusive advising.

Alejandro

Alejandro shared a “good, positive, close relationship” with his advisor. Early in his educational career, he knew he wanted to pursue a bachelor's degree. While at the community college, his advisor connected him to resources at the transfer institution he selected. His advisor helped plan college visits to the university. He also connected him to former students who had transferred to the same institution. While at the community college, his advisor helped him apply to a research program that helped Alejandro secure a scholarship that covered his tuition. Before transferring, Alejandro knew people at his transfer institution and had secured employment due to the relationships his advisor helped him establish.

The guidance of his advisor led to several opportunities. Alejandro remains in contact with his advisor and expressed gratitude for the mentorship he received. Alejandro’s experience provides evidence of intrusive advising as his advisor provided transfer assistance, including referrals to a research program and extracurricular activities. The resources provided by his advisor included college visits and scholarship recommendations.

Bryan

Bryan established a good relationship with his advisor at the community college. His advisor guided him in selecting his courses and informed him of the general education courses he would need to complete for the transfer institution he selected. Bryan received assistance from his advisor in completing the FAFSA, admission application and locating scholarship opportunities at the transfer institution. He would talk to his advisor daily, from casual conversations to receiving transfer resources.

While he has not maintained continuous communication with his advisor after graduation, he catches up with her when he sees her and overall describes having a positive

advising experience. Bryan experienced intrusive advising as his advisor provided transfer assistance, FAFSA assistance, and frequent communication. He received intrusive advising resources including scholarship recommendations, assistance with financial aid, and continuous communication.

Ernesto

Ernesto had a different experience in college as most of his family lived in Mexican while he attended college. He relied on his advisor for additional support. Ernesto shared developing an interpersonal relationship with his advisor and described having daily conversations. His advisor was accessible and created an open environment where he felt comfortable sharing his experiences.

While preparing to transfer, his advisor helped him apply for admission and complete his FAFSA. Ernesto communicates with his advisor via social media and views the relationship as a friendship. Ernesto's experience demonstrates intrusive advising as his advisor frequently contacted him and offered assistance in transferring, such as help with the admissions process and financial aid. The resources his advisor provided through intrusive advising are transfer assistance, tutoring resources, and FAFSA assistance.

Research Question 2

RQ2: Does intrusive advising impact the upward transfer of first-generation Hispanic/Latinx students compared to students who did not participate in intrusive advising?

Max, Cristina, Victoria, Alejandro, Bryan, and Ernesto experienced intrusive advising while attending community college. The intrusive advice these participants received highly impacted their upward transfer. The advisors of Max, Cristina, Victoria, Alejandro, Bryan, and Ernesto assisted with applying to the transfer institution and locating financial resources to pay

for college. Furthermore, the participants described having a long-term academic plan while attending the community college, which allowed them to transfer most of their credits to the university they selected. The students developed a relationship with their advisor that has been beneficial in navigating the transfer process.

Isabella, Guadalupe, Diana, and Maria did not experience intrusive advising at their community college. These participants navigated transferring independently. All four participants took time off after graduating either from high school or community college, ranging from 1 to 6 years. The participants decided to return to college for employment purposes. Isabella, Guadalupe, and Diana needed a bachelor's degree to further their career goals. Maria decided to change her major after working for 4 years.

All participants expressed lacking the information to navigate transferring and spent much time researching and figuring out the transfer process. Guadalupe shared how her perception of advising has changed. She said, "I feel like an advisor does make a huge difference, and whether a college student continues their education or not." Diana had similar closing remarks. She shared,

I think that an advisor is a really huge thing that needs to be a part of a student's like academic career. Just because a lot of kids don't know what they're doing, and I was one of those kids included. Without that advisor. It's kind of just a downhill thing from there. My first semester, I can tell you I wasted more money than I should have, just because I didn't have that advisor to tell me what classes I needed and what classes I didn't need. So, I was taking classes I didn't need and wasting money that I basically didn't have. And it was, it was upsetting so I think advisors definitely are a big part of student's careers that they don't even really notice. Actually, with the Hispanic community, I feel like it's

even more needed, just because there's some kids I don't have this, but there's other Hispanics that do have that language barrier. They don't know what's going on, so they need somebody to help guide them. There's also a lot of other students that have like difficulty, I think, is what I want to say.

Anthony had a different experience with advising as he did not experience intrusive advising. He shared that he had three different advisors at the community college, none of whom would reach out to connect. Anthony recalled his advisor not remembering his name and being “hands-off” with their advising approach. Although he did not experience intrusive advising, he had additional support from his family. Anthony’s older brother was only one year ahead of him in college. He credits receiving guidance from his brother in navigating college processes and preparing to transfer. Anthony shared that his brother offered guidance with the task below:

Like completing the FAFSA, [and] like knowing when to reach out to my advisor.

Knowing what scholarships to look for, knowing how to sign up for my classes. That was a little bit of a learning curve for me. I didn't really know quite how to do that. I talked to my older brother a lot because he had just gone through all of that, and he was like, ‘here's how you do this,’ ‘here's when you need to do this,’ ‘here's what you need to know about talking to your advisor,’ and so he was a big help in learning how to navigate all that.

The students who experienced intrusive advising received assistance in navigating college and the transfer process. Those that did not experience intrusive advising took time off school to research schools and careers before transferring to their university. During that time, three participants started their families; thus, when returning to college had to navigate work, school, and family needs. While intrusive advising does not guarantee that a student will transfer

to a university, it provides students with the resources and knowledge to transfer upon completing their associate degree. Furthermore, interactions with advisors are categorized as an institutional experience that impacts students' academic integration and retention in higher education (Tinto, 1993).

Research Question 3

RQ3: Do students experience one or more forms of community cultural wealth through the process of intrusive advising that factor into their persistence?

Ernesto is the only participant to experience community cultural wealth through the process of intrusive advising. Ernesto shared that his advisor informed him of the ability to take a Spanish Language test to receive college credit. The exam allowed him to save money and earn 10 Spanish language credits. Ernesto's experience exemplifies linguistic capital; hence, the advisor recognized his linguistic capital and recommended resources that would benefit him academically.

Several participants described the capitals they possessed; however, they did not report their advisor building on those capitals through advising interactions. Students shared having resistance capital, familial capital, and aspirational capital. For instance, Isabella described resistance capital when her peers made her feel excluded in class at her transfer institution for being Hispanic, resulting in her driving herself to do her best in school and graduating with honors.

According to Yosso (2005), "Familial capital refers to those cultural knowledges nurtured among [family] that carry a sense of community history, memory, and cultural intuition" (p. 79). When describing their culture, Isabella, Guadalupe, Max, Diana, Maria, Victoria, Anthony, Bryan, and Ernesto had similar responses describing their collectivistic culture where family

unity is prioritized (Jandt, 2016). They described their family's value of putting family first, making time to spend together through large gatherings, and lending a hand to support each other. Hence, while familial capital was identified in interviews, it was not reported that it was discussed through intrusive advising.

According to Yosso (2005), "Aspirational capital refers to the ability to maintain hopes and dreams for the future, even in the face of real and perceived barriers" (p. 77). Previous studies reported that Latinx immigrant parents encouraged their children to strive for academic success and pursue higher education (Guzmán et al., 2001; Jabbar et al., 2019; Sandoval-Lucero et al., 2014). Guadalupe, Diana, Cristina, Maria, Victoria, Bryan, Anthony, and Alejandro expressed receiving similar messages from their parents. Although only one participant described experiencing linguistic capital through intrusive advising, it is essential to note that it could have been something that participants experienced but did not share during their interviews.

Implications

The results from this study provide insight into the experience of Latinx first-generation college students. With the enrollment of this population rising in higher education, three implications for higher education institutions include increasing Latinx employees, advising training, and supporting minority-based groups.

Increase Latinx Faculty and Staff

The participants in the study attended Hispanic Serving Institutions where the student and community population were predominantly Hispanic. However, the faculty and staff's ethnic backgrounds did not represent the student and community demographics. Anthony shared,

I do kind of wish that there had been someone who was Latino who was advising, who kind of had a little bit more knowledge about what it was like to be first-generation, and

who was willing to share their experiences in that way. because I don't think we really have that.

A challenge for rural communities may be to hire and retain diverse employees.

However, higher education institutions need to represent the community of residence ethnically.

In this study, students attended two community colleges in Southwest Kansas. Institutions in Southwest Kansas where their student and community demographics are predominantly Hispanic ought to try to hire employees who represent the student's ethnic backgrounds. For instance, Diana expressed the importance of having advisors that can support minority students. She shared,

I think advisors definitely are a big part of student's careers that they [educational institutions] don't even really notice. Actually, with the Hispanic community, I feel like it's even more needed, just because there's some kids I don't have this, but there's other Hispanics that do have that language barrier. They don't know what's going on, so they need somebody to help guide them.

Hiring more Hispanic faculty and staff at Hispanic Serving Institutions would enhance the student's experience. Guadalupe shared, “Having those advisors like we said those even those transfer advisors that are there for you will make a big difference and shift that mindset of those kids, especially first-generation like Latino kids to shift thinking.”

Furthermore, students in this study described experiencing culture shock at the transfer institutions they attended, where they were the minority. The research finding demonstrates how students seek social networks to fulfill their need to belong in higher education. Institutions can increase networks across campuses by hiring more minorities. Representation is essential for

students to connect with faculty and staff. Furthermore, students in this study described feeling inspired to continue their education when they saw successful Hispanics.

Advising Training

The following recommendation is to incorporate training for advisors as professional development opportunities across institutions. While intrusive advising is widespread in the advising profession, it is unknown if advisors receive adequate training in implementing and practicing intrusive advising. The study demonstrated how the student's experience varied when they had advisors who practiced intrusive advising. Intrusive advising has been effective in a variety of contexts. Advisors must learn practical strategies to implement intrusive advising on campus, specifically when focusing on first-generation college students challenged with navigating college for the first time in their family's history. Additionally, this study found that first and second-generation immigrants tend to practice independence to navigate college rather than seeking help due to relying on their independence in K-12 education.

Furthermore, Tinto's model of student departure and community cultural wealth could be used to examine existing advising practices and aid in making suggestions for enhancing advising strategies. For instance, advisors can practice identifying when a student has not integrated academically or socially into college campuses and can help intervene before the students drop out. Furthermore, integrating community cultural wealth through advising can assist advisors in shifting students' perceptions and building their cultural capitals. If advisors focus on the cultural capitals students bring to higher education rather than the ones they lack, students can increase their self-efficacy.

Support Minority-Based Groups

Lastly, higher education institutions must support ethnic clubs or organizations as they provide significant resources to the experience of minorities. The study found that students actively sought ethnically representative clubs or organizations. Tinto highlights the importance of integrating into institutional social systems through extracurricular activities to increase students' commitment to the institution and academic goal (Tinto, 1975). Furthermore, students credited participating in clubs like HALO as contributors to their upward transfer. Additionally, students described developing a meaningful relationship with HALO Sponsors. HALO appeared to impact the experience of participants in this study significantly.

Furthermore, extracurricular activities benefit students' social integration into colleges and universities. Tinto's model of student departure demonstrates social integration's impact on student retention (Tinto, 1993). Institutions can offer support by increasing funding to minority-based groups. Increasing the funding and support groups can increase their membership and reach more students. Additionally, institutions can offer professional development resources to club sponsors to ensure retention.

Future Research

Higher education benefits greatly from advancing research to explore the experiences of college students. Advances in research help guide higher education institutions in improving practices to enhance the student's experience. Recommendations for future research include studying the experience of first-generation immigrants exploring critical race theory, and the impact of hyper-independence.

Experience of First-Generation Immigrants

One recommendation for future research is to explore the experience of students who are first-generation immigrants or those whose parents still reside in their country of origin. In the study, there was only one participant who shared this experience. Furthermore, his experience was quite different from the other participants; therefore, researchers can explore the experience of students with similar backgrounds to understand this particular population further. This population may have undiscovered challenges or barriers that support services in colleges can consider as they work on enhancing the student experience.

Exploring Critical Race Theory

Critical race theories explore racial bias in institutions designed for White people. Historically, higher education institutions were designed for White men of higher social and economic status. While institutions have become more inclusive over the years, it is important to research if there are practices in higher education that lead to different outcomes for people of color. Institutions should evaluate laws, regulations, rules, and procedures to ensure racial bias is not present in higher education institutions. In this study, two participants expressed experiencing racial bias, despite that topic not being a focus of this study. In the last 3 years, critical race theory has been a popular topic of discussion among legislators, with some states seeking to prohibit it from being taught in classrooms.

Furthermore, Yosso's community cultural wealth is a model from critical race theory. Community cultural wealth recognizes that people of color have unique strengths, known as capitals, that can aid people in altering their perception and identifying cultural assets rather than deficits (Yosso, 2005). This study incorporated community cultural wealth in the theoretical

framework; however, the results indicated that capitals were not prevalent in the advising experience of students.

Impact of Independence

The study found that independence was an approach many students used to adapt to the uncertainty of college processes as first-generation college students. The independent nature of students was experienced from a young age as first and second-generation immigrants. These results can be studied further to explore how hyper-independence can impact the experience of Latinx first-generation college students. Furthermore, in understanding the student's independent nature, institutions can better implement intrusive advising practices to improve the student's experience. While being independent is an excellent tool for students, it limits their likelihood of reaching out for help to support services and, therefore, could lead to missed opportunities. Further studies can explore the impact hyper-independence has on students.

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Appendix A: Informed Consent Letter

Exploring the Upward Transfer Advising Experience of First-Generation Latinx Community College Students.

INTRODUCTION: You may be able to take part in a research study. This form provides important information about that study, including the risks and benefits to you as a potential participant. Please read this form carefully and ask the researcher any questions that you may have about the study. You can ask about research activities and any risks or benefits you may experience. You may also wish to discuss your participation with other people. Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary. You may refuse to participate or stop your participation at any time and for any reason without any penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You should be aware that even if you agree to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time. If you do withdraw from this study, it will not affect you.

PURPOSE AND DESCRIPTION: The purpose of the study is to investigate the transfer experience of Latino/Hispanic first-generation community college graduates. The results from the study may assist in understanding the transfer experience of Hispanic/Latino first-generation college students. Participants will be asked to answer the questions during a zoom interview ranging from 60-90 minutes. The interviews will be recorded including audio and video.

RISKS & BENEFITS: We anticipate minimal risks from participating in this study. However, if you feel distressed at all by answering questions on the survey about your transfer experience, please let the researcher know. Participation is voluntary and you may decide to stop this study at any time. Also, if there are questions during the interview that make you feel uncomfortable and/or would prefer not to answer, please notify the researcher. Below is a list of the foreseeable risks, including the seriousness of those risks and how likely they are to occur:

- Interview questions will be about the student's college experience. There is minimal risk involved if any questions may remind the student of negative experiences while in college. The probability of risk is rare and serious.
- The researcher will take all preventive measures to maintain participant confidentiality; however, all studies have the slight risk of breach of confidentiality.

The researchers cannot guarantee that you will experience any personal benefits from participating in this study. Participants may benefit from the experience of participating in research and may learn something through the research process. Additionally, the field of higher education may also benefit from your participation as the literature tries to understand the experience of first-generation Latino/Hispanic students.

PRIVACY & CONFIDENTIALITY: Any information you provide will be confidential to the extent allowable by law. Some identifiable data may have to be shared with individuals outside of the study team, such as members of the ACU Institutional Review Board. Otherwise, your confidentiality will be protected by the data collected, including written notes and electronic recordings, will be stored in secure locations to ensure the confidentiality of participant data. The electronic data will be stored in a password-protected computer and external hard drive.

Additionally, all physical data will be locked in a secure file cabinet. The electronic data will be stored securely in the password protected computer. The computer, external hard drive, and handwritten notes will be stored in a locked filing cabinet located in the researcher's home. The filing cabinet will be in the researcher's home office which will also be locked and only accessible to the researcher. The data will remain secure and stored until the study is complete. Once the study is complete the data will be destroyed. All electronic files will be permanently deleted from devices. The handwritten notes will be shredded.

CONTACTS: If you have questions about the research study, the lead researcher is Lizette Avalos-Morales, Doctoral Candidate and may be contacted at xxx-xxx-xxxx, xxxxx@acu.edu, or PO Box xxxxxxxxxxxx. If you are unable to reach the lead researcher or wish to speak to someone other than the lead researcher, you may contact Dr. Rick Zomer, Dissertation Chair at xxxxx@acu.ed. If you have concerns about this study, believe you may have been injured because of this study, or have general questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact ACU's Chair of the Institutional Review Board and Executive Director of Research, Qi Hang, at xxxxx@acu.edu. Qi Hang may be reached at xxxxx@acu.

Additional Information

Your participation may be ended early by the researchers for certain reasons. For example, we may end your participation if you no longer meet study requirements, the researchers believe it is no longer in your best interest to continue participating, you do not follow the instructions provided by the researchers, or the study is ended. You will be contacted by the researchers and given further instructions in the event that you are removed from the study.

Consent Signature Section

Please sign this form if you voluntarily agree to participate in this study. Sign only after you have read all of the information provided and your questions have been answered to your satisfaction. You should receive a copy of this signed consent form. You do not waive any legal rights by signing this form. The consent form will be signed by the participant using an electronic signature.

Printed Name of Participant

Signature of Participant

Date

Printed Name of Person Obtaining

Signature of Person Obtaining

Date

Consent

Consent

Appendix B: Interview Protocol

Interview Questions

Welcome: Hello! Thank you for making time in your busy schedule to talk to me today. I want to start by sharing a little about myself and my research. I am a doctoral candidate for Abilene Christian University studying Organizational Leadership with a concentration in higher education. I am a college advisor at a small community college in Southwest Kansas. My primary role is to help students prepare to transfer from a community college to a university. I am studying the experience of first-generation Latino/Hispanic community college graduates who transferred to a university. I want to learn more about their transfer experience. I have planned for us to meet for approximately an hour to an hour and a half. Next, I would like to review the consent form together to answer any questions you may have. After reviewing the consent form, we will begin with the interview if you are interested in participating in this study.

Confidentiality/Pseudonym: Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. Before starting your interview, I would like you to select a different name for this study. I am using a pseudonym to protect your identity and ensure confidentiality. If you do not have a name preference, I will assign one.

Interview: Before we begin the interview, do you have any questions? I will begin with some questions about your background. Let's get started.

- 1) What is your name, age, and what are you studying?
- 2) What year of school did you recently complete?
- 3) How would you describe the community and k-12 schools you attended?
- 4) How do you racially and ethnically identify and why?
- 5) What is your family structure (parents/siblings/etc.)?

- 6) How would you describe your family's culture?
- 7) What are some of your family's values?
- 8) How would you describe your home life growing up?
- 9) How did you select the community college you attended?
- 10) Did you feel prepared for college?
 - a) Academically:
 - b) Emotionally:
 - c) Socially:
- 11) Can you describe some of the experiences that helped you adjust to being a college student?
- 12) Did you struggle to navigate through college processes?
 - a) If so, how did you overcome the challenges?
 - b) If not, what helped you successfully navigate college?
- 13) How did your parents communicate their expectations about you attending/not attending college?
- 14) How did your family feel about you transferring?
- 15) How would you describe your family's support of you attending college?
- 16) What role do your family and friends play a role in your education?
- 17) Did you participate in any clubs or organizations in college?
 - a) If so, how do you believe they influenced your academic success and decision to transfer?
 - b) If not, what groups (friends/coworkers/family) do you believe influenced your decision to transfer?

- 18) Did you change your major or advisor? If so, tell me about the experience.
- 19) How often did you meet with your advisor at the community college?
- 20) Describe the communication you had with your advisor.
- 21) How often did your advisor reach out to you (email/text/phone calls)?
- 22) How would you describe your feelings about your academic advising experience at your community college?
- 23) How would you describe the relationship between you and your advisor at the community college?
- 24) Have you kept in contact with your advisor after transferring? Why or why not?
- 25) What resources did your community college advisor offer?
- 26) Did you meet with your advisor over things that were not related to academics (personal life/family/work)? If so, tell me about those meetings.
- 27) How did you choose your transfer institution?
- 28) What motivated you to transfer?
- 29) How did you navigate preparing to transfer, such as the application process, financial aid, housing plans, and so on?
- 30) Did you know anyone at the transfer institution you selected?
 - a) If so, how did they influence your decision to transfer to that institution?
 - b) If not, how did you feel attending a school where you did not know anyone?
- 31) What resources did you use at your community college that contributed to your transfer?
- 32) What resources did you lack or would have been helpful as you prepared to transfer?
- 33) What significant relationships did you cultivate in college influenced your transfer decision?

34) Who did you rely on for information to transfer, and what information was shared?

35) How did you feel being a first-generation college student?

36) How did you feel being Hispanic/Latinx in college?

37) Is there anything you want to share about your experience that I have not asked about?

Thank you for taking the time to share your experience with me. I am passionate about learning more about the experience of first-generation Latinx college students and your contribution today impacted my research. I will review the interview and transcribe in detail our conversations from today. In a few days, I will send you the transcript, and you will be able to review and make any changes you deem necessary. After making adjustments, I will allow you to review the transcript again to ensure that what I have documented accurately represents your experience. Once again, thank you, and I look forward to being in touch with you soon.

Appendix C: Solicitation Materials

Solicitation Materials

Email message:

Hello,

I am doing a research study entitled “Exploring the Upward Transfer Advising Experience of First-Generation Latinx Community College Students.” The purpose of the study is to investigate the student experience of Latinx first-generation community college students who graduated from a community college and transferred to a university granting university. To qualify to participate, you must be between 18 and 65 years old, a first-generation college student meaning neither of your parents have a bachelor’s degree and identify as being of Latino or Hispanic ethnicity. Additionally, to participate you must have attended and graduated from a community college and transferred to a university.

Participation would require about 60-90 minutes of your time to participate in an interview between you and me, the primary investigator. Interviews will be recorded including audio and visual, and securely stored.

If you are interested in participating, please contact me at and you will be presented a consent form via email with more info.

Sincerely,

Lizette Avalos-Morales

Primary Investigator

Appendix D: Social Media Post and Flyer

YOUR HELP IS NEEDED FOR A RESEARCH STUDY ON YOUR TRANSFER EXPERIENCE

SELECTION CRITERIA

- Are you Hispanic or Latino?
- Are you between 18-65 years old?
- Are you a first-generation college student?
- Did you graduate from a community college and transfer to a university?



WHAT WILL YOU NEED TO DO?

- Participate in a 1-1.5 hour interview
- Provide feedback on your transfer experience



**If interested, email
Lizette Avalos-Morales
at [REDACTED]**

Appendix E: Follow Up Messages

Follow-up Message: Confirming Eligibility

Hello _____

Thank you for replying to my post. To verify, participants for my study have to 1. Identify as Hispanic/Latino, 2. Be between 18 and 65 years old, 3. Be a first-generation college student (meaning your parents do not have a bachelor's degree) 4. Graduate from a community college in Kansas and transfer to a university. Do you meet the criteria?

Respectfully,

Lizette Avalos-Morales

Doctoral Candidate

Abilene Christian University

Follow-up Message: Sending Consent Form

Greetings _____,

Thank you for confirming your eligibility. The next step is for me to email a consent form that you can look over and electronically sign. It's a bit more detailed for research purposes but essentially it verifies my research eligibility that is on the post. Feel free to reach out regarding any questions you may have on the consent form. After the consent form is signed, we would arrange a time to do a Zoom interview ranging from 1-1:30 hours. Do you have a good email I can send the consent form to?

Warm regards,

Lizette Avalos-Morales

Doctoral Candidate

Abilene Christian University

Follow-up Message: Verifying Transcript Data

Hello _____,

Thank you again for taking the time to be interviewed for my dissertation research. I truly appreciate your time. I have attached a copy of the interview transcript.

Please, review it to ensure that I have accurately documented your experience. I highlighted the questions so that you can easily identify them. If you want to change or add any information, feel free to do so in red. During interviews, it may be easy to forget to include some information; hence, changes are welcome.

Once again, thank you. If no changes are necessary, please verify that the transcript is accurate.

Warm regards,

Lizette Avalos-Morales

Doctoral Candidate

Abilene Christian University

Appendix F: IRB Approval Letter

Date: 3-10-2023

IRB #: IRB-2022-34

Title: Exploring the Upward Transfer Advising Experience of First- Generation Latinx Community College Students.

Creation Date: 9-12-2022

End Date:

Status: **Approved**

Principal Investigator: Lizette Avalos

Review Board: ACU IRB

Sponsor:

Study History

Submission Type	Initial	Review Type	Exempt	Decision	Exempt
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Key Study Contacts