SERVING WHOM?

EXAMINING THE COMMUNITY CULTURAL WEALTH AND MICROAGGRESSIONS OF LATINE STUDENTS AT AN EMERGING HSI

by

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DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

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Title: Serving Whom? Examining the Community Cultural Wealth and Microaggressions of Latine Students at an Emerging HSI

In the past decade, Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs), institutions that enroll at least 25 percent of undergraduate Latine students, have gained in popularity. With an increasing Latine population and enrollment in higher education, the federal government recognizes HSIs as major contributors to the academic persistence and graduation of Latine students. HSIs have access to federal funds to ensure success in supporting underrepresented students. Many colleges and universities, including the University of Oregon, have begun the transition from predominantly white institutions to Hispanic serving institutions. A university in this transitional period, characterized by a Latine student enrollment between 15 and 24.9%, is called an emerging HSI. There is no established protocol for emerging HSIs to successfully transition into federally recognized HSIs, which presents a persistent challenge. Similarly, the definition of what it means to serve Latino students can vary significantly from institution to institution.

This dissertation assesses how an emerging HSI can better support its Latine students during this transitional period. The project focuses specifically on the lived experiences of Latine students at the University of Oregon. As UOregon begins its transition, the institution must consider the lived experiences and testimonies of Latine students to better understand where they

are excelling and what areas require improvement. The design of this case study includes select interviews and surveys with 65 Latine, mostly female-identifying undergraduates.

This research contributes to a greater theoretical understanding of servingness for emerging HSIs, focusing on theories of community cultural wealth and microaggressions. Latine students enter emerging HSIs with a particular cultural capital, which institutions must not only acknowledge but also promote.

This project’s findings suggest that the majority of Latine students at this specific emerging HSI sense a lack of belonging and require more than just words to feel genuinely supported by their universities. This study also indicates that an emerging HSI’s identity must be based on student feedback if an institution is to genuinely embody the Latine-serving mission. Moreover, this study highlights the drawbacks of interest convergence and challenges the notion that HSI status is solely based on student enrollment.

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GLOSSARY	
Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI)-singular (HSIs)-plural	Defined in federal law as an accredited, degree-granting, public or private nonprofit institution of higher education with 25% or more total undergraduate Hispanic or Latino full-time equivalent student enrollment.
Emerging Hispanic serving institution	No standard federal definition. However, Excelencia in Education defines emerging HSIs as institutions with an undergraduate Latine/Hispanic enrollment between 15 and 24 percent. While emerging HSIs do not have the critical mass of Latino student enrollment required to meet the federal definition of an HSI, these institutions may soon meet the criteria as their enrollment grows and Latino representation increases; also referred in academia as the aspiring Hispanic Serving Institution
Historically black colleges and universities (HBCU)	Institutions of higher education in the United States that were established before the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to primarily serve the African-American community. There are currently 107 federally recognized HBCUs, such as Spelman College and Howard University.
Latine	Refers to people of Latin American cultural or ethnic identity in the United States. The gender-neutral ⟨-e⟩ suffix replaces the ⟨-o/-a⟩ ending of Latino and Latina which is typical of grammatical gender. For the purpose of this dissertation, I will use Latine as more of my participants identify with this term than Latinx. In addition, using Spanish grammar rules (-e) to make a word genderless, it rejects the colonization of language.
Hispanic	Refers to people, cultures, or countries related to Spain and the Spanish language. This is a controversial term as Latin American has a long history of Spanish colonization, which is why some prefer to go by Latina/o/x/e. Federal designations such as Hispanic Serving Institutions, however, have not considered this nuance and for their purposes, a Hispanic person is anyone who identifies with or has heritage from Latin America, Spain, or the Spanish language. Hispanic is also a census designation.

Racial microaggression	Defined as spoken and unspoken racial affronts that people of colors are exposed to in academic and social spaces. According to Tara Yosso, these are subdivided into interpersonal, racial jokes, and institutional microaggressions.
Community Cultural Wealth	Recognizes the strengths of underserved populations and encourages them to identify experiences, skills, and knowledge as positive contributions or assets in their educational experience.
Critical Race Theory	Historically CRT evolved in the United States after the Civil Rights Movement in the 1970s. Despite certain social justice and civil rights achievements in the 1960s, legal scholars such as Derrick Bell, Alan Freedman, and Richard Delgado argued that such social development halted, and hidden forms of racism increased (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). Critical Race Theory (CRT) in education is an interdisciplinary paradigm that examines the relationship between race/racism and student experiences across educational settings (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995).
Lat Crit	LatCrit challenges the dominant discourse on race and racism in relation to education by examining how educational theory and practice are used to minoritize or disregard Latine students (Solorzano, D. G., & Bernal, D. D. (2001). More specifically Lat Crit examines experiences unique to the Latine community such as immigration status, language, ethnicity, and culture.
Predominantly White University (PWI)	The term used to describe institutions of higher learning in which 50% or greater of the student body identifies as white or Caucasian. However, the majority of PWI institutions may also be understood as historically White institutions, which means this institution was previously segregated or has a contentious past with underrepresented students of color (see Bonilla-Silva & Peoples 2022)
Critical Race Testimonios	Characterized and distinguished by a collaborative process between the (Latine) research and the (Latine) participant, focusing on cultural intuition, mutual respect, and overcoming the apartheid of knowledge. Discussed at length in Chapter 3 of this dissertation.

CHAPTER 1 : INTRODUCTION

Serving Latine Students

Over the past 10 years, the changing demographics of US universities have been highly influenced by students that identify as Latine or Hispanic. The Pew Research Center reveals that there has been a significant increase in university enrollment during the past few decades numbers rising from 1.5 million in 2000 to 3.8 million in 2019 (Mora, 2020). This is unsurprising, given that Latine and Asians communities are the two fastest-growing minority groups in the US (Pew Research Center, 2021). Given the significant influence and prominence of Latine communities, as well as the corresponding increase in the number of Latine students on a national scale, it is to be expected that an increasing number of universities are making targeted efforts to recruit and provide support for them.

Universities, colleges, and community colleges that actively recruit and support Latine or Hispanic students are federally recognized under the designation Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSI). This distinction is made legally and educationally because these institutions are acknowledged for providing services and support to students who belong to marginalized groups and who are typically underrepresented in traditional universities, as noted by Flores and Park (2015). They are also attuned to the unique barriers and circumstances these students face, providing, among other things, on-campus support to improve their education experience (O'Brien & Zudack, 1998).

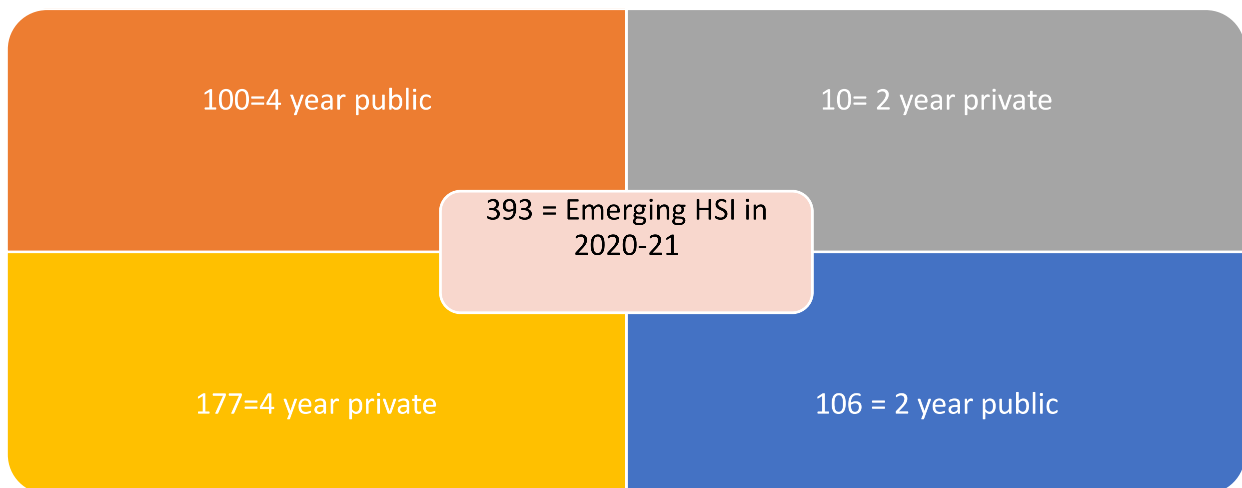
The federal government identified 539 higher education institutions as HSIs in the 2018-2019 school year, according to Excelencia in Education (2020). Like Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), HSIs are categorized as

minority-serving institutions. In contrast to HBCUs (which number 107 in the USA) and TCUs (which number 32), HSIs are experiencing significant growth each year.

It is important to note that unlike other minority-serving institutions, such as HBCUs and Tribal colleges, any university with a growing Latine community can apply to be federally recognized as an HSI. HBCUs were historically created and funded to support Black students, while Tribal colleges have a historical connection with the indigenous community in the area or are located near an indigenous reservation. Currently, HSIs serve 19% of national college students who identify as Latine, and this number has the potential to increase each year, according to Pew Research Center (2022). The HSI phenomenon is widespread and not limited to one region or state. If a university wishes to become an HSI but does not meet the 25% federal enrollment requirement, it would be considered an emerging or aspiring HSI, with an enrollment of 15% to 24.9% Latine-identifying students. The following chart represents this growing higher education trend and illustrates the appeal of HSI status.

FIGURE 1

Figure 1-Emerging Hispanic Serving Institutions Nationally (2020-2021)



Why Investigate an Emerging HSI?

HSIs are institutions that are driven by enrollment, so their numbers will continue to increase along with the Latine population. As the chart above demonstrates, many institutions are implementing HSI initiatives. In the 2020-21 academic year, 393 emerging HSIs were identified in 39 states, according to the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (2022). The focus of my dissertation is on institutions that are striving to become HSIs but are still figuring out how to establish a Latine-serving identity as an emerging institution.

Emerging HSIs are in a unique position to proactively plan how they will serve Latine students and the kind of resources they will offer prior to receiving HSI status (Corral et al., 2015). This is noteworthy because the degree to which emerging HSIs actively want to serve Latine students is predicated on factors such as the university mission, dedication to the Latine community, and funds available to make these changes during the transition period (i.e., from emergent HSI to federally recognized HSI). Unfortunately, there is no clear-cut protocol for the ways of transitioning from emergent HSI to federally recognized HSI. A comprehensive literature review yielded less than 10 studies on emerging HSIs, thus implying a notable gap in the existing literature. Therefore, the most emerging HSIs rely on looking at other universities to see what worked and what did not work for them.

Consequently, I will focus my dissertation on the benefits and needs emerging HSIs can draw on by including student-lived experiences while going through this transitional phase. While faculty and administration can come up with their own substantial HSI initiatives, I believe it is also essential to talk to the Latine community that is already on campus. In academic research on HSIs, most scholars agree that these institutions have a distinct culture (Garcia, 2019). Furthermore, scholars contend that HSIs can create a supportive environment where

Latine students feel linguistically, culturally, and racially connected to their peers, faculty, and administrators. This finding is significant because general education research has shown that a positive and inclusive campus climate leads to better outcomes for marginalized students (Hurtado et al., 2012).

For this reason, I am focusing my dissertation on the student voices at an emerging HSI to get a better gauge of campus culture. When a Predominantly White Institution (PWI) begins to make strides to become an emerging HSI, it is a unique and complex situation. The university-wide redesignation process involves various perspectives that need to be taken into account. It is crucial for institutions to assess the perception of the campus climate among Latine students as part of this process. By doing so, they can determine the areas where Latine students feel satisfied and those that require improvement. As the literature suggests, a welcoming campus climate is linked to Latine students' successful transition into four-year institutions (Hurtado et al., 1996) and their sense of belonging within their college (Hurtado & Carter, 1997). Both campus climate and sense of belongingness lead to an increase in retention outcomes. Yet, few studies examine Latine students' perceptions of campus climate at emerging HSIs (Sanchez, 2019), indicating a need for additional research on these contexts confronted by rising Latine enrollments and shifting racial politics. Since the 2016 elections, there has been a noticeable increase in hate crimes, anti-immigrant attitudes, and negative stereotypes targeting the Latine community, which some scholars have referred to as the "Trump Effect" (Baum-Baicker, 2020). These societal problems do not occur in isolation and inexorably impact Latine university students. Therefore, emerging HSI faculty and administrators need to address them.

Overall, multiple variables make HSIs and emerging HSIs interesting for academic study and educational research. First off, unlike HBCUs, HSIs are exempt from creating special

purpose statements or course curricula for servicing Latinos (Santiago, 2006). Second, due to their geographic location, many PWIs have recently seen an increase in the enrollment of Latinos despite always being White majority states. Oregon provides an example of how demographic changes and institutional shifts have led to the recognition of six federal HSIs and 15 emerging HSIs, despite not having a large Latine population like Florida or Texas. The state's universities and colleges are starting to embrace the HSI designation in response to these demographic changes. During this transition, emerging HSIs need to increase their Latine enrollment, diversify their faculty and staff, and eventually diversify their curriculum (Hurtado & Carter, 1997). This can have powerful results for underrepresented students as research has found they are more likely to persist at institutions which are responsive to their needs (Myers, 2003).

HSI Impact on Students

Several studies have highlighted the benefits of a PWI transitioning into an emerging HSI or HSI. One such benefit is improved racial relations, as the transition to an emerging HSI involves increased diversity and an emphasis on cultivating an inclusive campus culture (Hurtado & Carter, 1997). There is also a palpable impact on graduation rates. On average, Latine students take longer than four years to graduate from HSIs, but a disproportionately high number of Latinos do graduate compared to public PWIs (Garcia, 2013, 2016). Moreover, there is evidence that attending an HSI not only enables Latine to cultivate a strong sense of ethnic identification but also boosts their sense of belonging and academic self-perception (Arbelo-Marrero & Milacci, 2016; Chun et al., 2016; Guardia & Evans, 2008). Furthermore, due to their strong sense of belonging and positive impressions of their school environment, Latine students that attended an HSI with a 75% Latino enrollment had greater academic goals (Arbelo-Marrero & Milacci, 2016).

However, these findings do not imply that the HSI transition is impervious to criticism. Education scholars have long debated whether HSIs make a substantial difference in the academic success of Latine students (Hamann, 2022). One example of the difference in success metrics between HSIs and PWIs is that HSIs may have a greater emphasis on community engagement and social justice, as opposed to the more individualistic values emphasized by many PWIs (Vasquez Heilig, 2011). Additionally, leading HSI scholars have argued that the "student success" of HSIs should be measured by factors beyond conventional PWIs (Garcia, 2019). As a case in point, Santiago (2012) provides some recommendations on how HSIs need to re-categorize student success and cannot be compared according to traditional statistics such as dropout and graduation rates. Santiago suggested that monitoring increased educational and social opportunities, enhanced academic offerings, improved educational quality, and financial stability for Latine students. Other non-traditional components to consider are interpersonal support, mentoring, community outreach, campus culture, and post-graduation job success. I am convinced that each of these categories is crucial to Latine students' success. My dissertation discusses microaggressions and Community Cultural Wealth (CCWealth) as the two central categories to keep my project focused and to arrive at clearly formulated recommendations. Throughout the surveys and interviews, Latine students focused on interpersonal support, mentoring, and community outreach when discussing CCWealth. Likewise social opportunities and campus culture were noted by participants as the main factors for negotiating microaggressions on campus.

Problem Statement

Education scholars interested in the niche topic of HSI and emerging HSIs have still been unable to reach a consensus on their level of success at serving Latine students. This is because the lack of 'successful' data tends to divide opinions. However, what remains unanimously clear from both sides is that diversifying the student body alone will not be sufficient to enhance the educational experience (Garcia, 2013; Hurtado et al., 1998). When emerging HSI and HSI are not fully committed to supporting their Latine students, it can result in stunted cultural expression and a hostile campus climate (Medina & Posadas, 2012). For this reason, institutions undergoing the transition to HSI status must focus on improving their campus environment, including evaluating past and present inclusion policies and implementing changes to create a more inclusive climate. Scholars have found that BIPOC students are more likely to stay and graduate at a predominately white institutions where they feel engaged to the university as a whole (Carter, 2006) This is crucial for enhancing the educational experience and academic success of Latine students (Hurtado et al., 1998).

Research Questions

Considering all these components, my dissertation will focus and center on Latine students' lived experiences at a specific PWI that is in the process of transitioning into an emerging HSI. More specifically my study was conducted at a 4-year, Research 1 University in the Pacific Northwest called University of Oregon. This public university is located in Eugene Oregon and has roughly 21,000 undergraduate students[1].For this dissertation, I collected perceptions and lived experiences from current University of Oregon students through two

[1] University of Oregon official website. Accessed on May 30,2023. https://registrar.uoregon.edu/statistics/facts-at-glance

mediums: testimonios and survey responses. By doing, so I am consciously going beyond the normal success markers used in educational research like graduation and dropout rates.

Through the analysis and coding of student data, I aim to gain insights into how University of Oregon, in the midst of its transition to HSI status, is supporting its current Latine student population. By examining the lived experiences of these students, I hope to provide recommendations for areas that need improvement and consideration. The following study thus takes a look at both sides of the argument to answer the following questions:

How can an emerging HSI better serve their Latine students by considering their…

a) community cultural wealth?

b) experience with microaggressions?

I will answer these two research questions using data collected from 65 Latine participants currently enrolled at University of Oregon. As I am using the LatCrit feminist framework of *testimonios*, I want to focus on the lived experiences of the majority female-identifying Latine students. There are many reasons behind this recruiting choose such as the lack of representation of ethnic women in academia (Brown & Brown, 2010; Busey, 2019; Crocco & Libresco, 2007; Suh et al., 2015). This invisibility can lead some Latine students to feel that their gender or ethnicity is not appreciated. In addition, female Latine students are more likely to disengage from school if they perceive that their schools do not promote inclusivity, community development, a healthy campus climate, or Latine professors (Leslie, 2021). Female-identifying Latine students also have a higher undergraduate degree attainment rate than their male counterparts (Pew Research Center, 2022). This trend is also seen in other racial and ethnic groups, highlighting the importance of understanding the female undergraduate experience to understand campus climate. While I will not disregard any male or non-binary survey responses collected during workshops

out of respect to their lived experiences or testimonios , my goal is to recruit majority female identifying participants because they are underrepresented in Latine educational research.

To summarize, the project highlights the significance of Latine student experiences to accurately represent a university's commitment to serving this community ('servingness'). As a Latina immigrant student currently completing a doctoral degree, the importance of supporting students of color and need for representation on emerging HSI campus is one I am innately drawn to. My own experiences at a predominately white university (PWI) and the lack of mediums to express my opinion as an underrepresented student is what has informed my survey data collection and research questions focused on testimonios or individual lived experiences. For this study, I will be focusing on Latine students personal experiences with community cultural wealth and microaggressions because one informs the other. Scholar Tara Yosso (2005), who served as a co-creator for both theories, has found Latine students react to the racial discrimination they confront on campus by creating communities that represent and reflect the cultural capital of their home communities. Therefore, community cultural wealth can serve as a way to negotiate and work through microaggressions. Emerging HSIs serve a significant number of Latine students, and with the growing number of Latine students nationwide and the increase of HSIs and emerging HSIs, understanding the experiences of this group is becoming increasingly important in the field of Education Studies.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

The History behind Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSI)

The establishment of HSIs dates back to 1998 with the inception of the Developing Hispanic-Serving Institutions program. This program was created as part of the Reauthorization of the Higher Education Act, which aimed to provide funding for institutions serving significant numbers of marginalized students (Hurtado & Ruiz, 2012). Historically, students of color have been underrepresented in higher education institutions due to issues of segregation and inequity. The creation of HSIs aimed to address this imbalance by providing more opportunities for Hispanic students to access higher education. As the HSI designation is less than 25 years old, its requirements and standards are continually being reevaluated by national organizations. There is an official application process for HSI designation and for an educational institution to be designated as an HSI on the federal level, they must meet one primary requirement: to have 25% of the full-time equivalent undergraduate student enrollment identify as Hispanic or Latine descent (Laden, 2004). Other requirements such as enacting a Latine identity and promoting their culture/overall diversity are highly recommended but not required by the federal government. On its website, however, the federal government does promote national organizations including the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU), Excelencia in Education, and the Alliance of Hispanic Serving Institutions Educators. All of these national organizations offer HSIs and emerging HSIs with extra resources and assistance in terms of equity and social justice work. Due to a substantial overlap between these organizations and those designated as emerging HSI or HSI by the federal government, it can be surmised that the Department of Education promotes and recognizes what these organizations stand for (Department of Education Website, 2022).

Since aspects such as inclusion and community development cannot be measured with statistical data, it is difficult to provide concrete evidence of a university's achievement of these goals during the application stage. Therefore, emerging or aspiring HSIs are mainly required to describe their plans for implementing these forms of inclusion, rather than providing proof of successful implementation or a timeline for doing so. It is crucial to keep this in mind as we consider the transitional period for emerging HSIs, where the planning and theoretical goals may not always align with the actual practices of the institution.

What Makes HSI Different?

For Latine-identifying students, attending an HSI is a straightforward decision. Theoretically, these universities are specifically focused on promoting your culture and Latine history. In addition, they provide a space where Latine representation in the student body and staff are the norm, not the exception. The Pew Research Center suggests that financial constraints are the main reason Latine students do not apply for or graduate from universities (2021). Financial constraints for university students are nothing unique nor race specific. But if these Latine students were to apply to an HSI, they would be given priority for financial awards and need-based scholarships. According to the Department of Education Website (2022), it is strongly recommended that HSI institutions that apply to their Title V, Section B grant programs :

> "*expand the postbaccalaureate academic offerings as well as enhance the program quality in the institutions of higher education that are educating the majority of Hispanic college students and helping large numbers of Hispanic and low-income students complete postsecondary degrees.*"

Additionally, a college or university must submit an application to the U.S. Department of Education that demonstrates its eligibility and dedication to serving Latino students in order to be federally recognized as a Hispanic-Serving Institution (Tran et al., 2016). Latine students may be drawn to HSIs due to the support they cannot find at traditional PWIs. However, for universities, HSI designation is important for two main reasons. One, they encompass diversity and inclusion, a hot-button issue that most, if not all, universities are trying to incorporate into their curriculum. This goes hand in hand with a certain level of prestige and aspirational capital, as it improves a university's public image if they are committed to helping marginalized students and supports student retention (Garcia 2019; Aguilera-Smith 2021). The fact that HSI qualifies for federal grants for building construction, student services, and research grants to support serving Latine students is the second more notable incentive (Garcia, 2019). These are sizable grants; according to the Hispanic Associations of Colleges and Universities website, $315 million dollars were awarded to the 559 federally recognized grants in the 2020-21 academic year.

In essence, as an HSI, a university has the opportunity to apply for specialized grants, which would be provided by the federal government and would be used to enhance the institution. Additionally, there are no limits to the number of grants an HSI can apply for once it receives the federal designation. It should be noted that recent research suggests that there is no official regulation of how these federally provided grants are used after they are distributed. This means that universities have the autonomy to use the grant money in any way they see fit for their institution without any accountability to any governing agency after the fact (Petrov & Garcia, 2021). Therefore, HSIs have the legal right to invest their federal grant money in any way they believe is most appropriate for their university, without the need to report spending to

any agency. While HSI grants are flexible, as it is challenging to measure and report on whether a new curriculum, minor, or building would benefit the Latine students on campus, some individuals argue that the dissemination of these grants should be regulated (Hurtado & Ruiz, 2012; Petrov & Garcia, 2021).

To better understand the potential financial gain of an HSI, it would be helpful to analyze the case of the University of California – Irvine. UC-Irvine is a public state university HSI in California with a 38% Latine student population. According to the university website as an HSI, the university, faculty, and students are eligible to apply for specialized federal grants, partnerships, and internships. On the UC-Irvine website, only a portion of these grants are listed (30); all ranging from $100,000 to $ 4 million annually. Keep in mind that these are just the grants that are listed, meaning there may be more they are eligible for, and all HSIs can apply to multiple grants every year.

A further deep dive shows just how much financial support UC-Irvine has been awarded in the last couple of years, specifically in their Science programs. UC-Irvine's official website reported in September 2022 that the university is dedicated to creating a STEM pathway for Latine students, and as a result, they have applied for and received multiple grants from the National Science Foundation HSI program. In 2019, UC-Irvine was granted $2.5 million to assist community college students in transitioning into STEM programs. In 2020, they were awarded $3 million to provide workshops on cultivating more inclusive academic spaces, and in 2021, the NSF granted $3 million to The Institute for Meaningful Engagement at UCI to investigate the reasons for minority students leaving STEM programs and how to improve minority student retention (Garcia, 2022).

For instance, in a four year period, UC-Irvine has been awarded $8.5 million in grants from NSF, specifically due to their federal recognition as an HSI and their focus on underrepresented students in STEM fields. These financial gains were publicized in an article on the university's official website (Garcia, 2022). However, it must be noted that UC-Irvine may have been awarded more HSI grants during this time period that were not publicized the way their STEM-focused NSF grants were. UC-Irvine is an exceptional example of the potential financial opportunities becoming an HSI can afford an institution. Overall millions of dollars in grants make a notable difference for campus programs and affect all students, not just Latine ones:

> *"HSI grants are not just for Latine students – they're for everyone," says Joseph Morales, associate director for strategic initiatives and partnerships in UCI's Office of Inclusive Excellence. "Any faculty member can be eligible to pursue an HSI grant, and any student can be eligible to take part in a program supported by an HSI grant."*
>
> *Morales interview as quoted in L. Garcia 2022*

The above quote demonstrates how being designated as an HSI can benefit the entire campus community, not just individuals of a particular race or ethnicity. UC-Irvine's success in becoming a competitive HSI is due to their commitment to ensuring that serving Latine individuals is not limited to undergraduate programs. "Becoming an HSI means we also have to find ways to serve Latine graduate students, staff, and faculty. We have to find ways to permeate all levels of the campus ecosystem."(Joseph Morales interview as quoted in Garcia, 2022). Serving is at the core of this universities initiative and that is why they are regarded as HSI that others should take note of and even emulate.

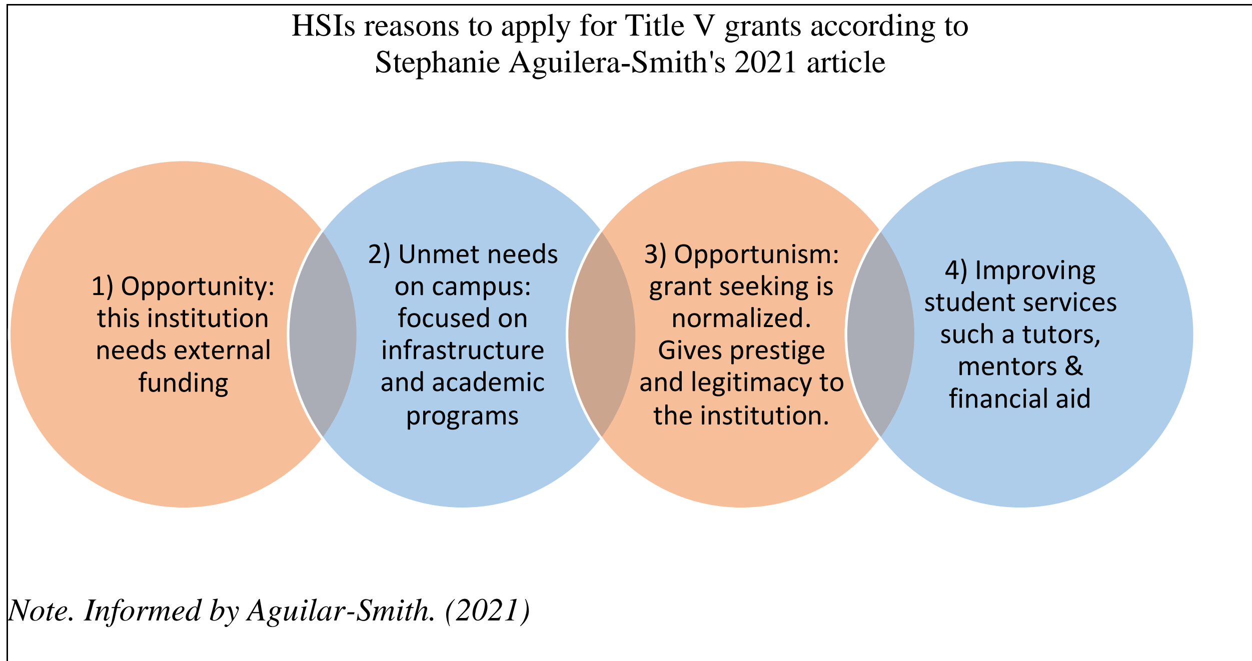
How Do We Define 'Serving'?

As emerging or aspiring HSI institutions continue to grow in number, it is vital to discuss what serving a population of students truly means. As previously mentioned HSI stands for Hispanic Serving Institution, therefore in theory 'serving' the students of this marginalized population should be a top priority. According to the existing literature, there is no one definition of what 'servingness' means in the grand scheme of HSIs (Garcia 2019). At the federal level, the primary requirement for HSI designation is the recruitment and enrollment of at least 25% Hispanic or Latine students. However, no other specific criteria exist for this designation. HSIs can differ in terms of size, location, and whether they are public or private institutions. Nonetheless, they all share the overarching goal of being a higher educational institution that prioritizes serving and supporting the marginalized Latine community.

Historically, HSI were located in states with a high Latine population, implying that most of their students were local community members in the states of Florida, Texas, California, and New York. Unlike HBCU, HSI are not known for recruiting students from different states or countries (Garcia, 2019). Instead, HSI traditionally serves the community in their state or county, with a small number of students moving from out of state to attend (Garcia 2019). Taking this into consideration, it is necessary to analyze some of the reasons the university administration would want to start the HSI process. Scholar Stephanie Aguilera-Smith recently published a case study on this topic, aptly naming it *To Serve or $erve?: Hispanic-Serving Institutions' Race-Evasive Pursuit of Racialized Funding (2021)*. Aguilera Smith qualitatively studied the administration of 23 HSIs. In her results, she outlined the four most common reasons for applying for the HSI designation, ranging from most discussed (1) to least discussed reasons (4).

FIGURE 2

Figure 2-HSI reasons to apply to Title V grants (Aguilera-Smith, 2021)



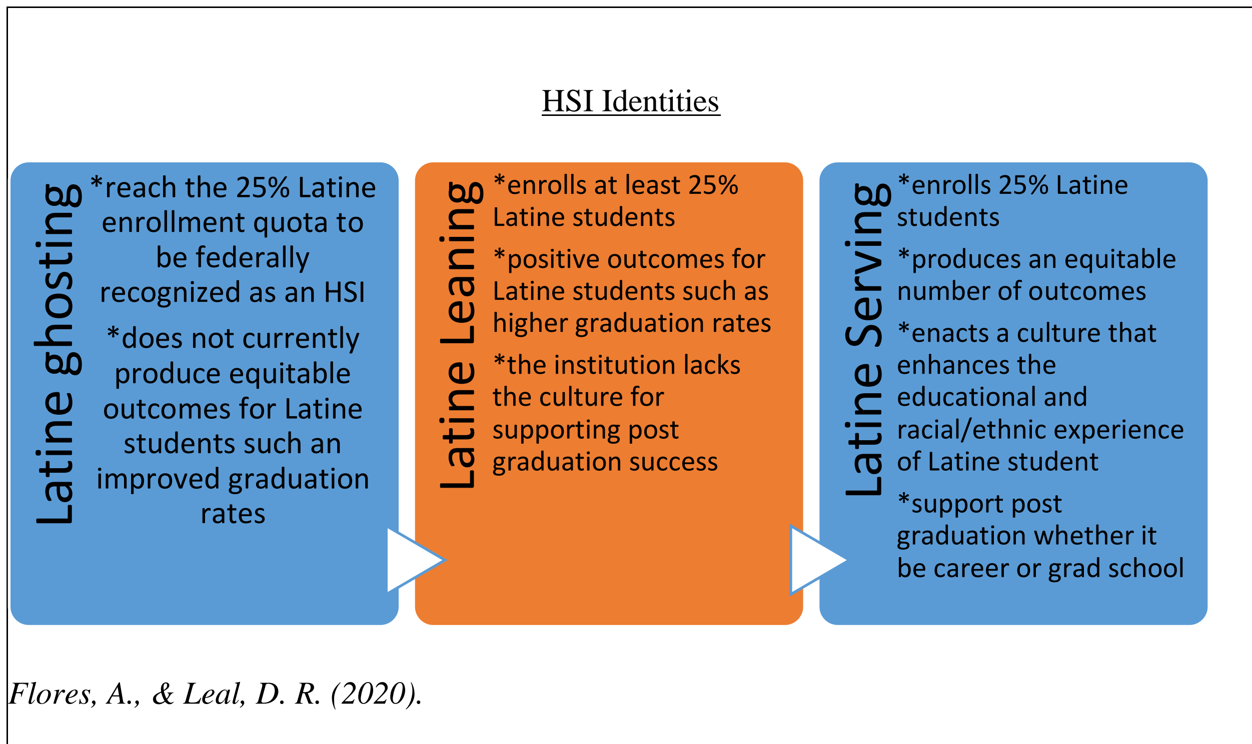
Note. Informed by Aguilar-Smith. (2021)

According to Aguilar-Smith (2021) the most common reasons HSI apply to get federal recognition is for opportunities of external funding. The least most important factor is improving student services such as tutors, mentors or financial aid. Unfortunately, these findings are not unexpected because prior research on HSIs has already highlighted the financial challenges that universities face in meeting the needs of their BIPOC students. As most HSIs were not originally established to cater specifically to Latine students but to fulfill a recent federal requirement of enrolling 25% of Hispanic students, it is challenging for staff and faculty to comprehend the impact of campus culture and institutional identity (MacDonald et al., 2007; Olivas, 1982).

Another example of this complex issue is Flores and Leal's study conducted in 2020 on HSIs' different identities. They interviewed 19 different administration members at HSIs in Texas and found they had three common ways in which they produced their institution's identity. According to their results, HSI generally fell into the following three categories:

FIGURE 3

Figure 3- HSI Identities



Flores, A., & Leal, D. R. (2020).

When analyzing the aforementioned three identified HSI, it is important to view them as a spectrum. Put succinctly, an emerging HSI or federally recognized HSI can fall into any of the three categories. They are neither stage-based nor do they always work in chronological order. Instead, HSI identities are in constant flux and an institution can jump from one identity to another depending on their dedication to “serve” their Latine student population. Overall, making sense of these three identities is important because it sheds light on an HSIs ability to support the development and educational growth of their students.

While it is indubitable that HSI are a worthy cause, they are far more complicated in practice than they are in theory. Serving a community is a very abstract notion and unfortunately, there are no nationally accepted criteria for how to successfully do it. Both Aguilera-Smith's (2021) and Flores and Leal’s (2020) articles point to a recurring theme, which is the role that the

financial gain of HSI - or interest convergence - plays. According to pioneer critical race scholar Derrick Bell, the practice of allowing people of color to benefit from social institutions is directly related to the convenience it provides for White society. This practice of 'diversification through convenience' is known as interest convergence (Bell.1980; Dudziak, 2000). Bell expanded on the notion of interest convergence by giving examples such as universities celebrating diversity through ethnic foods and fiestas, but failing to provide equitable opportunities to students of color. Most emerging or aspiring HSI should be transparent about the role interest convergence plays in their university. HSI needs to actively recruit Latine students and maintain a 25% and above percentage of these students to maintain federal funds and HSI status. A school that is not truly committed to helping Latine students and where students feel tokenized or unsupported has lower chances of increasing their Latine student body. Students of color are quite attuned to when they are tokenized or when campus culture is toxic (Niemann, 1999; Steele, 1995). Given these circumstances, it would be unsurprising for a newly established HSI that prioritizes financial gain over the experiences of its students to experience a sudden plateau or even a decline in Latine enrollment. This may occur due to the university's unsupportive policies and superficial attempts to cater to Latine students.

This is a central reason why a study at an emerging HSI must focus on student voices. Scholars such as Solórzano et al. (2000) emphasize that creating safe and inclusive learning environments is essential, and a sense of belonging is a critical component of this. This feeling of belonging is determined by whether or not students feel respected, valued, accepted, cared for, and included in the classroom, on campus, or in their chosen professional path (Strayhorn, 2019). It is also reflected in a student's perception of whether they feel connected and included in the

campus community (Hurtado & Carter, 1997). Furthermore, a sense of belonging can be established when there is a shared sense of responsibility between the institution and the student (Johnson et al., 2007; Rendón et al., 2000). Ultimately, Latine students reported a stronger sense of belonging when they observed a campus atmosphere that embraced diversity and inclusivity, which should be a priority for all HSIs striving to support their students of color (Hurtado & Carter, 1997).

Campus Climate

Campus climate is the overall racial environment of the university, which can affect students in many ways, such as their academic performance and their likelihood of graduating (Solorzano, 2000). As mentioned before, race campus climate is an excellent way to gauge student perceptions of an institution (Cuellar & Johnson-Ahorlu, 2020). While it is very similar to the definition of campus climate, it looks at the campus through a race-based critical lens. This is especially pertinent among students of color, as prior research has found that a negative campus climate can lead to poor academic performance and high dropout rates among marginalized students (Hurtado et al., 1998; Hurtado & Ponjuan, 2005; Solórzano, 2009).

Latine students and other students of color in higher education face a wide spectrum of racial microaggressions. Some Latine students employ coping techniques to handle the everyday stress generated by racial microaggressions, such as creating safe places on and off campus and forming a community with other Latine students (Yosso et al., 2009). However, these strategies may backfire as they cause social and academic withdrawal, hence creating more isolation.

Numerous studies have highlighted how the everyday work of negotiating racial microaggressions causes worry and tension among students of color at PWI (Solórzano 1998; Solorzano & Ceja, 2000; Yosso et al., 2009). As discussed previously, microaggresions may

include verbal jokes, racist stereotypes, and lowered academic standards (Yosso et al., 2009). Other examples of microaggressions include alienation, social isolation, othering, and criminalization (Garcia & Johnston- Guerrero, 2015). A student's feeling of belonging may be negatively affected by racial microaggressions, which make them feel uncomfortable and signal they do not belong in that particular academic setting.

When discussing campus climate for Latine students, scholar David Solórzano (2000) has pinpointed four major components to be taken into consideration:

(a) the inclusion of Students, Faculty, and Administrators of Color;

(b) a curriculum reflecting the historical and contemporary POC experiences

(c) programs to support the recruitment, retention, and graduation of Students of Color;

(d) a mission that reinforces the institution's commitment to diversity and pluralism (e.g., Carroll, 1998; Guinier et al., 1997; Hurtado, 1992, 1994)

According to Solórzano, a university that promotes these four components is one that strives for genuine diversity or pluralism. On the one hand, if an institution adheres to these goals only half-heartedly, then they are enacting a diversity of convenience. This term refers to an institution that wants to embody and fit in with race-neutral politics but does not go the extra mile to ensure that their students of color have a general sense of belonging. A common example of this is when one goes to a PWI's website and it is filled with pictures of students of color, inflating the number of Black /Asian/Latine students that are actually on campus. To an outsider, this website shows a diverse student body; however, they are being used as hollow tokens or

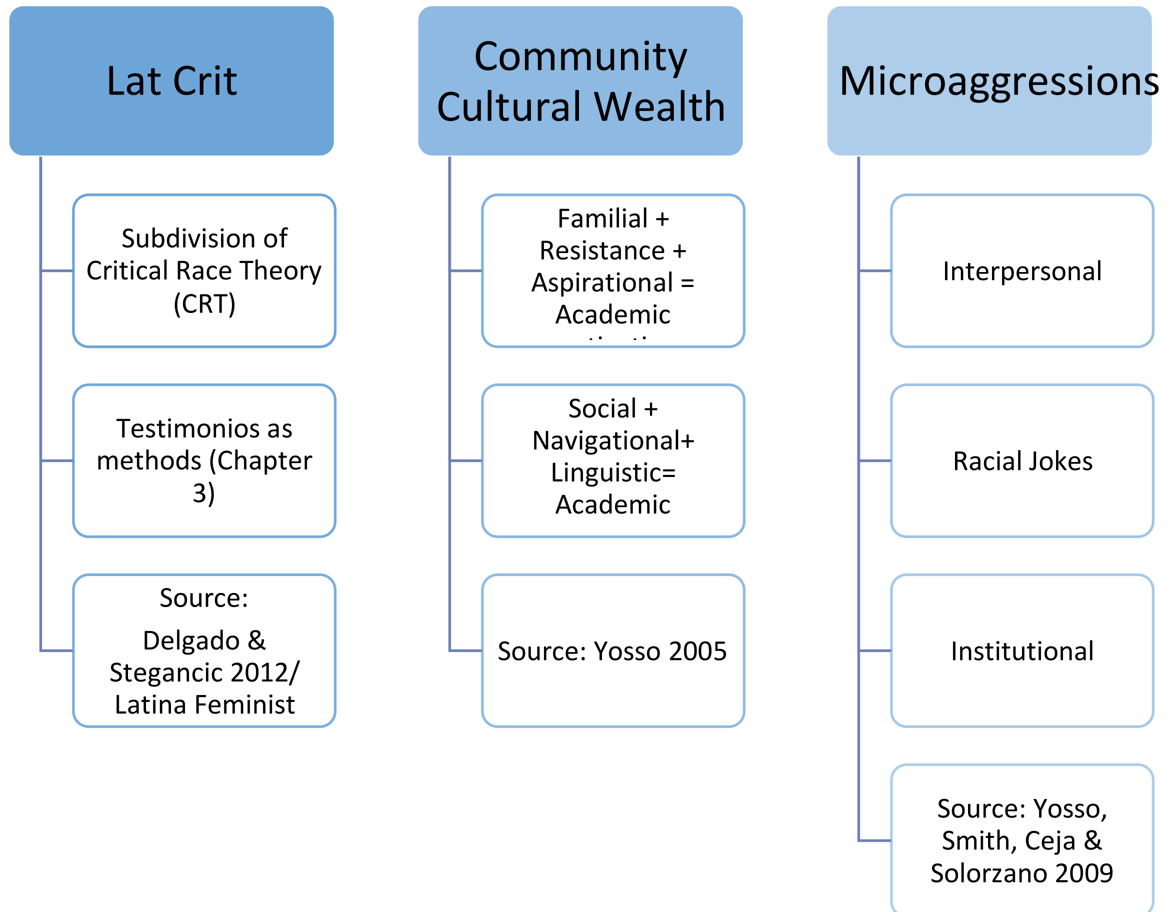
symbols to the actual students posing in these promotional pictures. Their race/ethnicity is being tokenized by the institution, to promote the façade of a positive campus racial culture. However, these students are not benefitting from participating in this promotion in any way and dealing with a hostile campus climate will not positively affect them in any manner.

Genuine racial diversity or pluralism refers to the physical presence and equitable treatment of underrepresented racial and ethnic groups on college campuses. Research has found equitable access and opportunities for students of color are pillars of creating a more inviting, positive campus climate. All administrators, faculty, and students affirm one another's dignity by demonstrating a willingness to learn from one another's experiences as well as to recognize one another's contributions to the college's well-being. Programs to compensate communities the university has historically underserved and initiatives in order to rectify social inequalities perpetuated by the institution are a step toward demonstrating genuine diversity. Initiatives such as increasing Latine enrollment to become a federally recognized HSI may disrupt the status quo and help upend a university's historical racial power base (Vargas & Villa-Palomino, 2019).

To summarize, campus climate is an excellent way to study and analyze Latine perceptions for all the aforementioned reasons. In this dissertation, I surveyed Latine students throughout University of Oregon and qualitatively analyzed the recurring themes that may affect these students at an emerging HSI. In the next section of this literature review, we will shift our focus away from studies specifically conducted at Hispanic Serving Institutions. By exploring the history, financial considerations, and campus climate of HSIs, we have gained a deeper understanding of the forces that influence educational institutions. In this second section, we will discuss the theoretical framework that underpins this study. Specifically, we will delve into the foundational concepts of LatCrit theory, Community Cultural Wealth, and Microaggressions.

These three theories are crucial lenses through which we will analyze the experiences of Latine students at an emerging HSI campus.

Figure 4 -Theoretical Framework for this Dissertation



Critical Race Theory

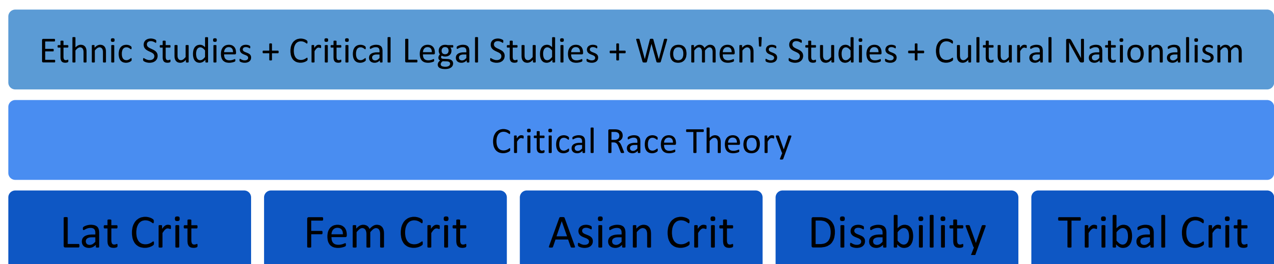
Critical Race Theory (CRT) in education is an interdisciplinary paradigm that examines the relationship between race/racism and student experiences across educational settings (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). Historically, CRT evolved in the United States after the Civil Rights Movement in the 1970s. Despite certain social justice and civil rights achievements in the 1960s, legal scholars such as Derrick Bell, Alan Freedman, and Richard Delgado argued that such social

development halted. This led to an increase in the hidden forms of racism (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). They were joined by legal and education researchers who wished to enhance critical legal studies and study the implications of race and racism in other institutional settings (Brayboy, 2005; Lynn & Adams, 2002; Lynn et al., 2002; McCoy & Rodricks, 2015). Eventually, other fields such as history, sociology, law, ethnic studies, and women's studies began to inform CRT (Bell, 1980; Delgado & Stefancic, 2012; Harper et al., 2009; Solórzano et al., 2000). Overall Critical race theory assesses the "unequal and unjust allocation of power and resources along political, economic, racial, and gendered lines." (Taylor et al., 2009, p. 1)

While legally sanctioned racial discrimination may no longer exist explicitly in American universities and colleges, CRT helps us uncover patterns, practices, and policies of racial inequality that continue to exist in more subtle and covert ways (Villalpando 2004). When assessing the educational experiences of Latines and other underrepresented populations, it is vital to recognize racism and other types of subtle and systematic discrimination (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). The power of CRT has motivated scholars in different fields to develop scholarship on social justice and equity among various minoritized groups (e.g., Asian Crit, Disability Crit, Tribal Crit, etc.). For the purpose of this dissertation, I will be using LatCrit, a specific subset of CRT, which focuses on the Latine community and challenges the discourses and practices of White dominant society.

FIGURE 5

Figure 5- Critical Race Theory Family Tree



Source: Solórzano, D. G., & Yosso, T. J. (2002).

Latino Critical Theory

Latino Critical Racial Theory (LatCrit) is essentially characterized as a "branch of critical racial theory that studies problems relevant to Latinos, such as immigration, language rights, and multi-identity" (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). Valdés (1997) opines that the four roles of LatCrit theory are: a) "the production of knowledge; b) the promotion of social transformation; c) the growth and connection of anti-subordination movements; and d) the cultivation of community and coalition, both within and beyond the boundaries of legal academia in the United States." The interconnectedness of race and racism with other kinds of subordination, such as sexism and classism, is acknowledged by both CRT and LatCrit (Solórzano et al., 2000). LatCrit focuses on the intersectionality of identities within the Latine community and how these experiences of language, immigration, and ethnicity are not typically addressed within the Black-White racial paradigm (Delgado Bernal, 2002).

To stress the complexity of the matter, it is important to note that Latinos often do not align with the racial classifications created from the Black-White binary (Ramirez, 1994). The issue of racial identification among Latinos in the United States is illuminated by the results of the 2010 Census, where over 18.5 million of the 19 million individuals who selected "some other race" when asked about their race or ethnicity were Latinos (Krogstad & Cohn, 2014). Within LatCrit, it is acknowledged that for many Latinos, racial identification is interlaced with ethnic and cultural identity (Rodriguez, 1994; Trucios-Haynes, 2014), meaning that individuals may prefer to identify with their country of origin or ethnicity (e.g. Mexican, Puerto Rican, or Colombian) rather than by race. In summary, LatCrit aims to spotlight the diversity of intersectional identities within the Latino community and provide a more comprehensive

understanding of the academic socialization experiences of Latinos. (Ramirez, 1994; Krogstad & Cohn, 2014; Rodriguez, 1994; Trucios-Haynes, 2014).

To clarify LatCrit theory is not in competition with CRT but rather can be seen as a distinct branch that has grown from the CRT framework. LatCrit focuses specifically on the complexities of the pan-ethnic label "Latino/Latina" and goes beyond traditional race issues to address concerns related to language, immigration, and phenotype. One unique aspect of LatCrit is its feminist tradition, which offers a strong gender analysis and aims to address the experiences of Latinas in relation to the cultures that have historically excluded them (Hernandez-Truyol, 1997, p. 885). This theory has been particularly influential in discussions of transformative resistance among Chicanas (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002). In this dissertation, LatCrit theory will be employed to challenge dominant discourses at a PWI and explore the forms of community cultural wealth highlighted by Latine students, as well as the microaggressions they may encounter.

After conducting a comprehensive review of existing literature, it has been found that LatCrit has proven to be a valuable theoretical framework for examining the experiences of Latine students in previous education studies. For example, Solórzano and Yosso (2001) utilized the LatCrit paradigm in their examination of Mexican American graduate students to identify instances of microaggressions. Similarly, Pérez Huber (2010) employed both LatCrit and testimonios in her study of ten undocumented Chicana students, utilizing these approaches to document experiences of racism and nativism. According to Pérez Huber (2010), the use of the LatCrit framework enabled her to uncover not only racial and ethnic stereotypes, but also instances of aggression related to the students' undocumented immigration status. In addition to

student-focused studies, the LatCrit framework has been previously used to study faculty experiences.

Researchers such as Oliva et al. (2013), have used both CRT and LatCrit theoretical methods to analyze Latina faculty members' multiple identities in the traditional 'ivory tower' of academia. To communicate their own experiences, they used a fundamental aspect of LatCrit, known as experiential knowledge. A similar study conducted by Flores and García (2009) exposed the need to establish a safe atmosphere for Latinas at their predominately white colleges. In this 2009 study, Latina students, staff, instructors, and community members were able to explore the themes that influenced their life by using testimonies and highlighting the value of experiential knowledge. To summarize, these studies demonstrate that using LatCrit can enhance the authenticity and legitimacy of educational research. This is because it focuses and places importance on Latine knowledge, including the documentation of their lived experiences and narratives.

Considering all the previous studies, one can see and appreciate the potential of collecting Latine lived experiences and narratives at an emerging HSI. Students must have a say in the creation and execution of student service programs, particularly if these services are intended to benefit Latine students at an aspiring HSI. In the past, student input, particularly Latine student voices, has been neglected or diminished in higher education while implementing policies and student services (Santiago 2013). In this dissertation, testimonio will be utilized to disrupt the silence of Latine students may have to contend with at University of Oregon or any other emerging HSI. Latine testimonios will offer insight into who this unique demographic is and what their needs are. Chapter 3 will provide more details of testimonios and their role in my

methodology will be outlined. In the following section we will discuss the theoretical framework of this dissertation, beginning with the theory of micro aggressions.

Theory of Microaggressions

Scholar Chester Pierce first developed the term microaggression, which he described as "subtle, stunning, often automatic, and nonverbal exchanges that are 'put-downs' of blacks by offenders" (Pierce et al., p. 66). Various academics have expanded on Pierce's theory such as Sue et al. (2007) who extended the definition to include everyday interactions that convey derogatory messages to marginalized group members. Furthermore, Tara Yosso and her mentor David Solorzano expanded this conversation on microaggressions experienced by BIPOC individuals by focusing on the microaggressions experienced by Latine students in higher education (Yosso et al., 2009). Yosso's expansion of the microaggression theory is essential to the methodology and formulation of my dissertation project.

According to Yosso et al.(2009), students of color have a unique perspective of campus climate. Although their white classmates may believe a campus to be diverse and accepting, students of color are attuned to the spoken and unspoken forms of discrimination, especially microaggressions. In particular, Yosso and her coauthors refer to three specific forms of microaggressions that Latine students face which their white peers may be unaware of (2009).

The first tier of microaggressions is interpersonal microaggressions, which is defined as spoken and unspoken racial affronts that Latine students are exposed to in academic and social spaces. For example, this may happen when interacting with classmates, teacher assistants, or faculty members. According to Yosso, these affronts happen because Latine students are “disrupting the natural state of being on campus” (Yosso et al., 2009, p. 667). This racial othering can take many forms such as staring at a student of color during class conversations

about racism or giving a backhanded compliment about a Latine student's intelligence. The article cites examples in the form of comments such as 'You don't act Latino' or 'your English is really good' (Yosso et al., 2009). Possibly, such comments are not made with malicious intentions but end up reinforcing the idea that Latine students at a PWI must look, act, and talk a certain way. When they don't, they are going against the existing stereotype and are thereby disrupting the roles other people have pigeonholed them into. This disruption creates discomfort for the majority white student body and their reaction to it, in turn, creates discomfort for minority students.

The second tier of microaggressions is racial jokes. Racial jokes are historically a "consistent part of White campus subculture" (Yosso et al., 2009, p. 669). This can be traced back to the idea that it is much easier to say racially charged comments when you can fall back on comments such as 'it was just a joke' or 'don't be so sensitive.' The use of politically correct language is an important part of university curriculums, which involves the adoption of gender-neutral terms and using the term BIPOC to refer to communities of color (Deo, 2021). However, students often use humor as a means to break these rules and make use of more controversial words that reinforce existing stereotypes. In one instance, a student spoke about being subjected to Taco Bell references due to their Mexican heritage, while another student who identifies as Chicana reported having heard chihuahua jokes, which she viewed as a "covert form that allows others to abuse her community members" (Yosso et al., 2009, p. 670).

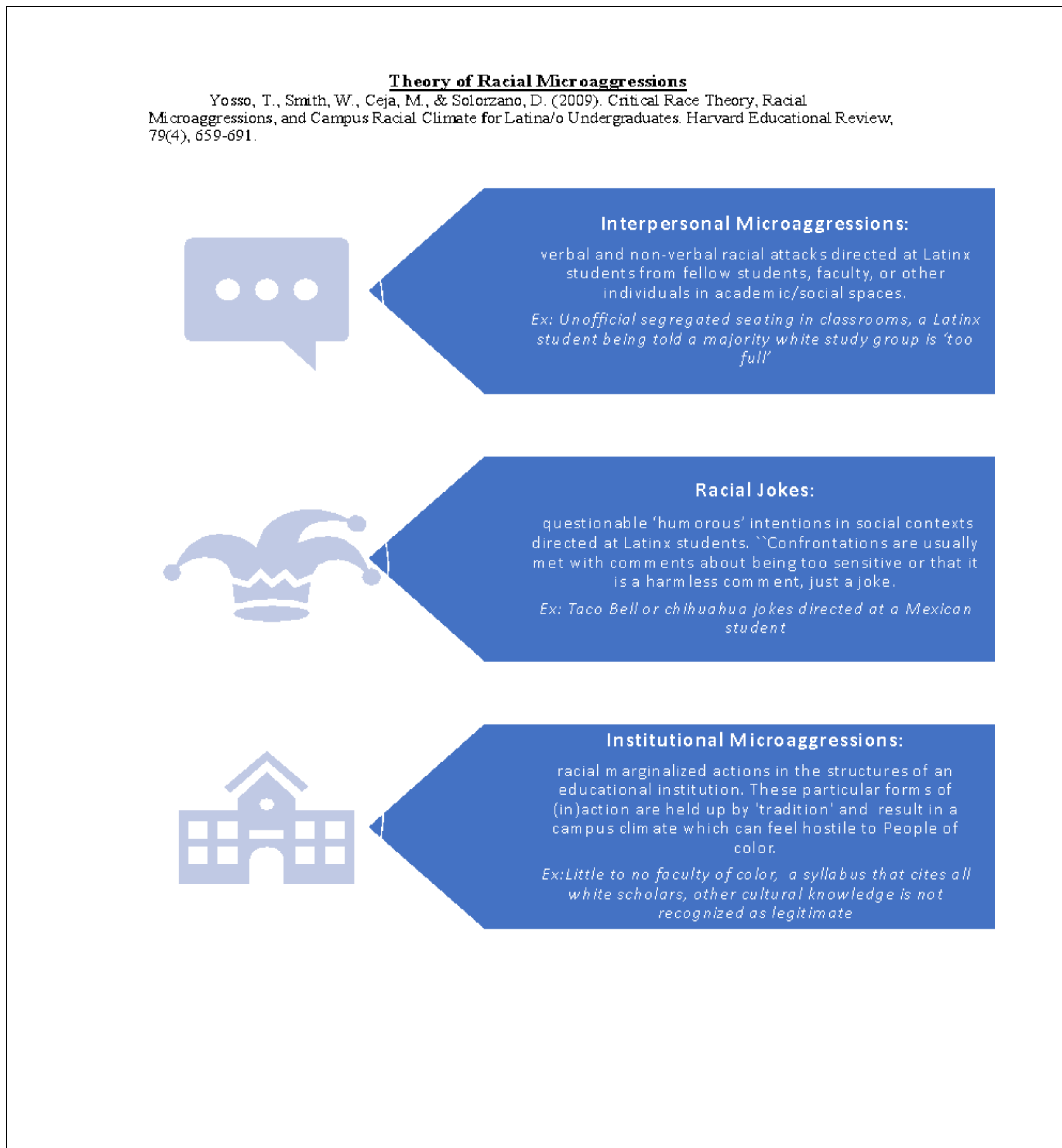
The final tier of racial microaggressions that Latine students face at PWI are institutional microaggressions. This form of microaggression is much more unspoken and subtle than racial jokes or interpersonal microaggressions. This is because university administrations try very hard to word their official documents in politically correct language which is considered a

bureaucratic and social norm at institutions of higher education (Bermann, 2011). Although few interviewees elucidated written forms of institutional microaggressions in Yosso et al's study, a lot of the examples given were much more subtle (Yosso et al., 2009, p. 670). One instance of institutional microaggression may occur when a program claims to promote diverse perspectives but only assigns readings from mainstream white academics, thereby excluding other viewpoints. Another form of microaggression is the failure to acknowledge other forms of knowledge such as Indigenous, LatCrit, or Asian critical movements in the classroom. The scarcity of faculty members of color is also a common example of microaggression that was discussed in the article multiple times. In conclusion, Yosso and her co-authors stress the significance of documenting and addressing these microaggressions as they can have an impact on the educational trajectories of Latine students. More specifically, they draw on colleagues' work that states "these stealth racial assaults have an impact on the adjustment, academic performance, sense of comfort, sense of value, and ultimately the persistence of students of color" (Hernandez & Villodas, 2019).

Over time, these microaggressions or verbal/non-verbal assaults can lead to the mental, emotional, and physical strain on students. Smith (2011) coined a specific type of microaggression burnout among POC, which he calls *"racial battle fatigue*". Furthermore, continually dealing with microaggressions can influence students to do drastic things such as change majors, drop classes or leave campuses altogether (Solorzano, 2000). To be clear, not all students of color experience or react to microaggressions in the same manner. Some researchers have taken note of how certain Latine students push themselves to excel academically to prove the racialized and ethnic stereotypes peers may have of them wrong (Yosso 2000). Therefore, this dissertation aims to document and validate Latine student experiences to learn more about their experiences with - and responses to - microaggressions on campus.

FIGURE 6

Figure 6 - Theory of Racial Microaggressions



Community Cultural Wealth

Tara Yosso's theory of community cultural wealth is the last theory guiding this study. Community Cultural Wealth is defined as an array of information, skills, talents, and connections

employed by POC communities to survive and oppose macro- and micro-forms of oppression (Yosso 2005). Traditional frameworks such as the original cultural capital were defined by predominately White, middle-class values as explained by Pierre Bourdieu (1974).
The ideas of cultural capital and habitus, which are widely discussed in academia, were originally formulated by Bourdieu. According to his theory, cultural capital refers to the accumulation of experience and knowledge that individuals acquire throughout their lives, shaped by their family background and sociocultural experiences (Bourdieu, 1974; Marsh, 2006). Bourdieu also believed that the dominant group, those in control of the economic, social, and political resources, has its culture embodied in schools (1974).

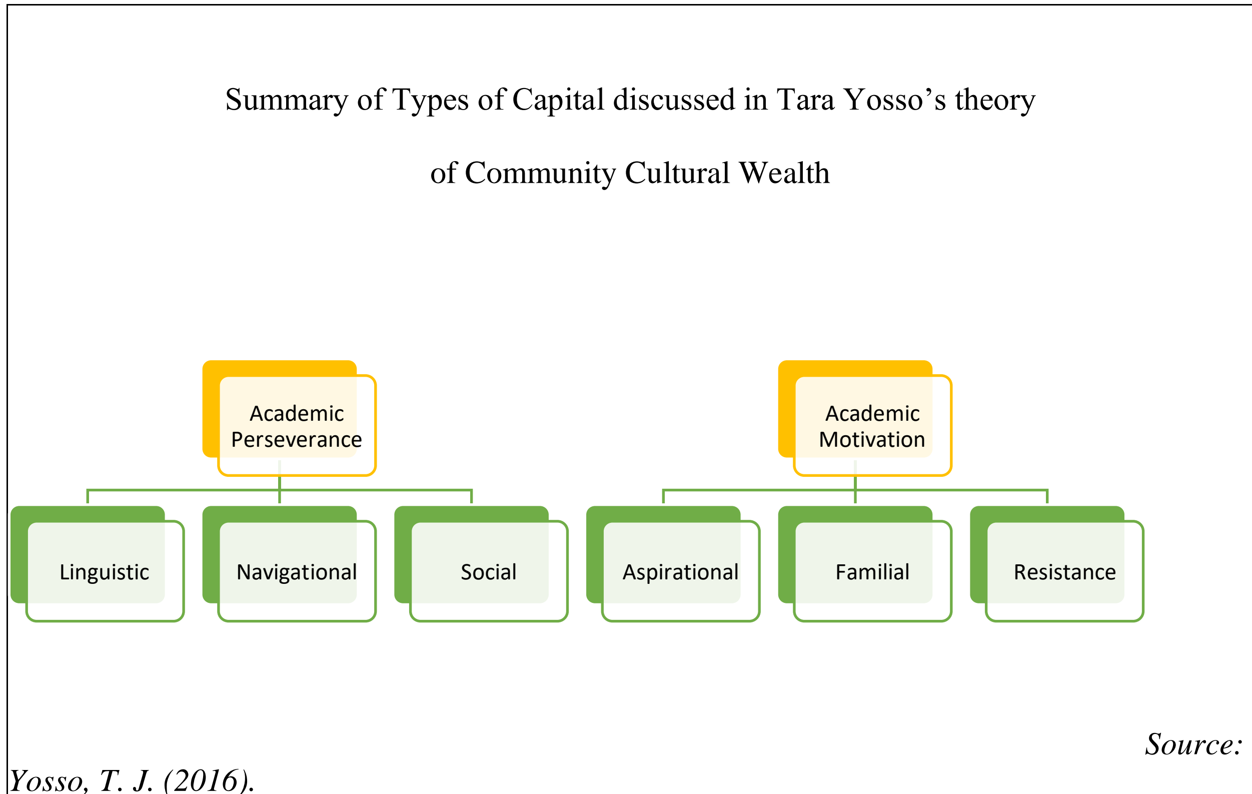
In the context of educational institutions in the United States, the dominant culture is characterized by white, male, middle- and upper-class values. As a result, other types of cultural capital possessed by students who do not fit this profile are often ignored or undervalued, causing underrepresented students to suffer academically. Essentially, Bourdieu's theory suggests that schools perpetuate a specific form of cultural capital as the only legitimate form of capital (Bourdieu, 1974).

Community Cultural Wealth differentiates from Bourdieu's theory because it centers on the experience of POC. Notably, POC's unique history and lived experiences allow them to accumulate innate skills and talents that are more closely related to their culture than their financial standing. To illustrate, a black student may possess the community's cultural wealth to navigate racial situations and be more attuned to what is considered a multicultural or racist space. Likewise, a Latine student may have the community cultural wealth to explicate a concept in both English and Spanish, in order to accommodate a bilingual audience. Yosso's (2005)

Community Cultural Wealth Model revealed the six types of community cultural capital (familial, linguistic, resistant, aspirational, navigational, and social).

FIGURE 7

Figure 7- Community Cultural Wealth Theory by Tara Yosso

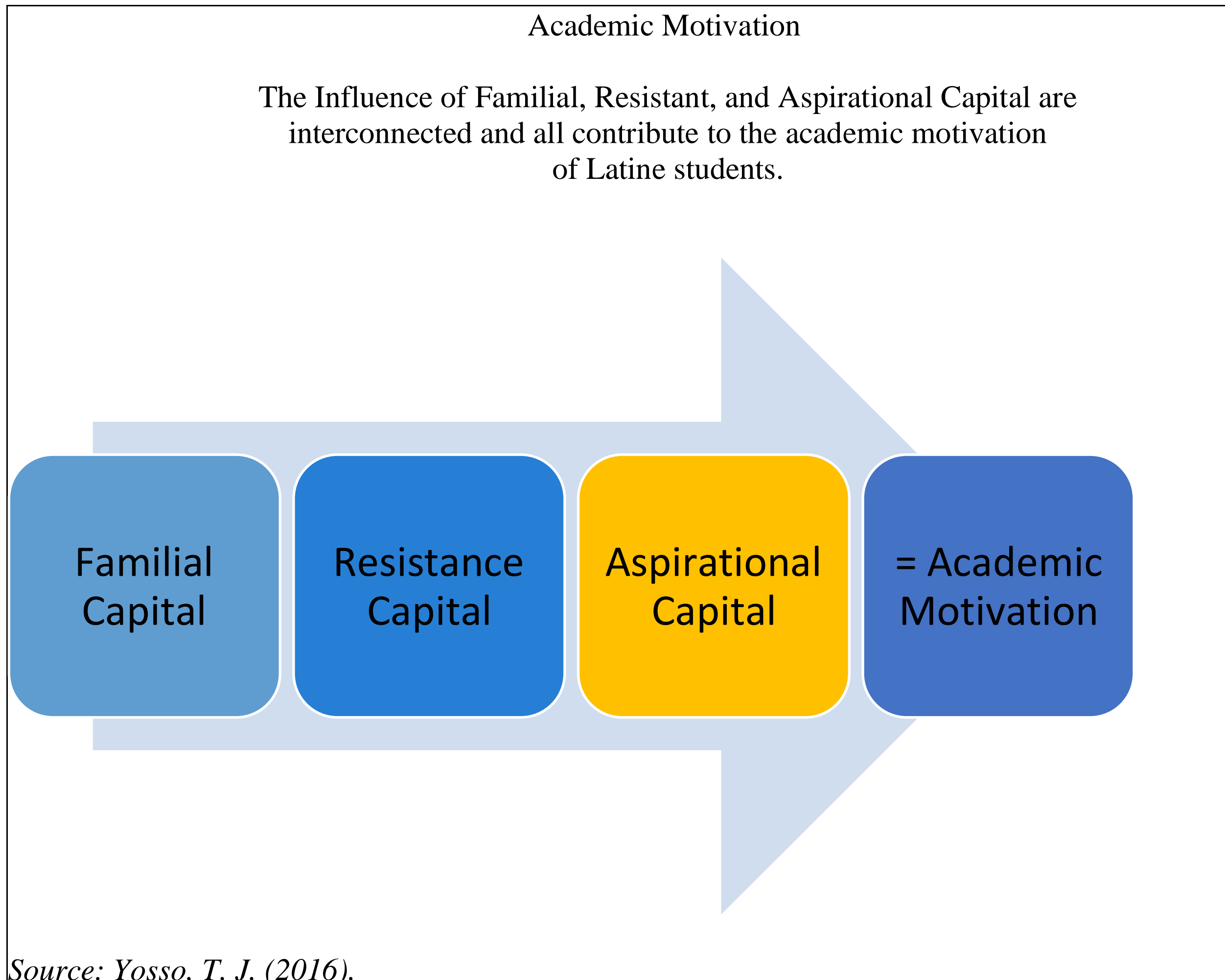


Source: Yosso, T. J. (2016).

In her study, all of these types of cultural wealth contributed to the academic success of Latine students in educational settings such as elementary school, high school, GED programs, community college, and undergraduate/graduate programs. The connection of all these types of capital in fostering the academic drive and tenacity of Latine kids is a frequent subject in the existing literature (Garcia 2019; Hernandez & Villodas 2019). Furthermore, Yosso's study suggests that the relationship between familial, resistant, and aspirational capital contributed to the academic motivation of Latine pupils. The intersection of Latine students' navigational, social, and linguistic capital contributed to their academic achievement as well.

FIGURE 8

Figure 8-Academic Motivation



Source: Yosso, T. J. (2016).

Familial Capital

In education studies, how Latine parents are frequently absent from school parent groups or have poor participation at school functions is a common archetype or trope associated with them. This absence from school functions is erroneously cited as evidence that Latine pupils have insufficient familial capital (Durand, 2011; Ramirez, 2003; Shah, 2009). Conversely, Yosso contends that Latine pupils reported a considerable quantity of family capital in ways that are typically hidden or overlooked by institutions. Latine students, for example, recounted how their parents financially supported them and exhibited dedication via their hard work in labor-

intensive occupations (Jimenez, 2016; Peralta, 2013; Perez-Huber, 2009). Meanwhile, another study cited how a Latina student frequently thought of her father's scarred hands and face from years of manual labor, "I was disgusted when I saw his face and hands. This is the reason I attend school!'" (Perez-Huber, 2009). Furthermore, other studies highlighted that Latine students' parents emphasized their academic performance and the value of an education (Cuevas, 2016; Luna & Martinez, 2013).

Moreover, their parents made sure their kids attended school every day, went to bed and got up on time, and were exempted from cooking and housework to fulfill their academic responsibilities (Espino, 2016; Perez, 2017; Perez & Taylor, 2016). Scholars studying Latine communities have observed that Latine parents are eager for their children to benefit from educational opportunities that they themselves may not have had access to. This positive attitude toward education contradicts the deficit-based view that is often held regarding Latine parental engagement. Although factors such as demanding work schedules may prevent Latine parents from attending school events, they are still actively supporting their children's education at home. This family support, or family capital, serves as a source of intellectual stimulation for Latine students and helps them develop other types of capital, including linguistic, resistant, and aspirational capital (Aragon, 2017; Espino, 2016; Perez-Huber, 2009; Saenz et al., 2018).

Resistant Capital

In addition to familial capital, parents provided Latine students with resistant capital (Aragon, 2017; Cuevas, 2016; Espino, 2016; Perez, 2014; Saenz et al., 2018). Students of Latine heritage have frequently shared how their parents showed perseverance when faced with difficult situations such as overcoming racism, microaggressions, work exploitation, and anti-immigrant

sentiments. All these forms of resistance are alluded to as resistant capital. Studies have shown that Latine parents' perseverance against racism in both life and work has inspired Latine students to demonstrate the same resilience and strength when faced with obstacles at school (Araujo & Piedra, 2013; Espino, 2016; Saenz et al., 2018). Many Latine students posited that taking pride in their culture and pursuing education signified a form of resistance against social inequities and negative Latine stereotypes seen in media and politics (Cuevas, 2016; Perez, 2014; Saenz et al., 2017).

Moreover, many Latine students developed resistant capital after taking social justice or ethnic studies courses, joining social justice clubs, engaging in the community, and processing their own experiences with inequalities (Aragon, 2017; Duran & Perez, 2017; Duncheon, 2017; Perez-Huber, 2009). In this context, one Latine student noted, "We learnt about topics such as history, racism, and homophobia, which helped us comprehend how they work in society and impact my life and that of my parents" (Aragon, 2017). Consequently, Latine students strived to destroy harmful stereotypes, which often served as the foundation for their aspirational capital and academic motivation. This is why aspirational and academic motivation is closely linked to their academic accomplishments (Cuevas, 2016; Perez, 2014; Saenz et al., 2017).

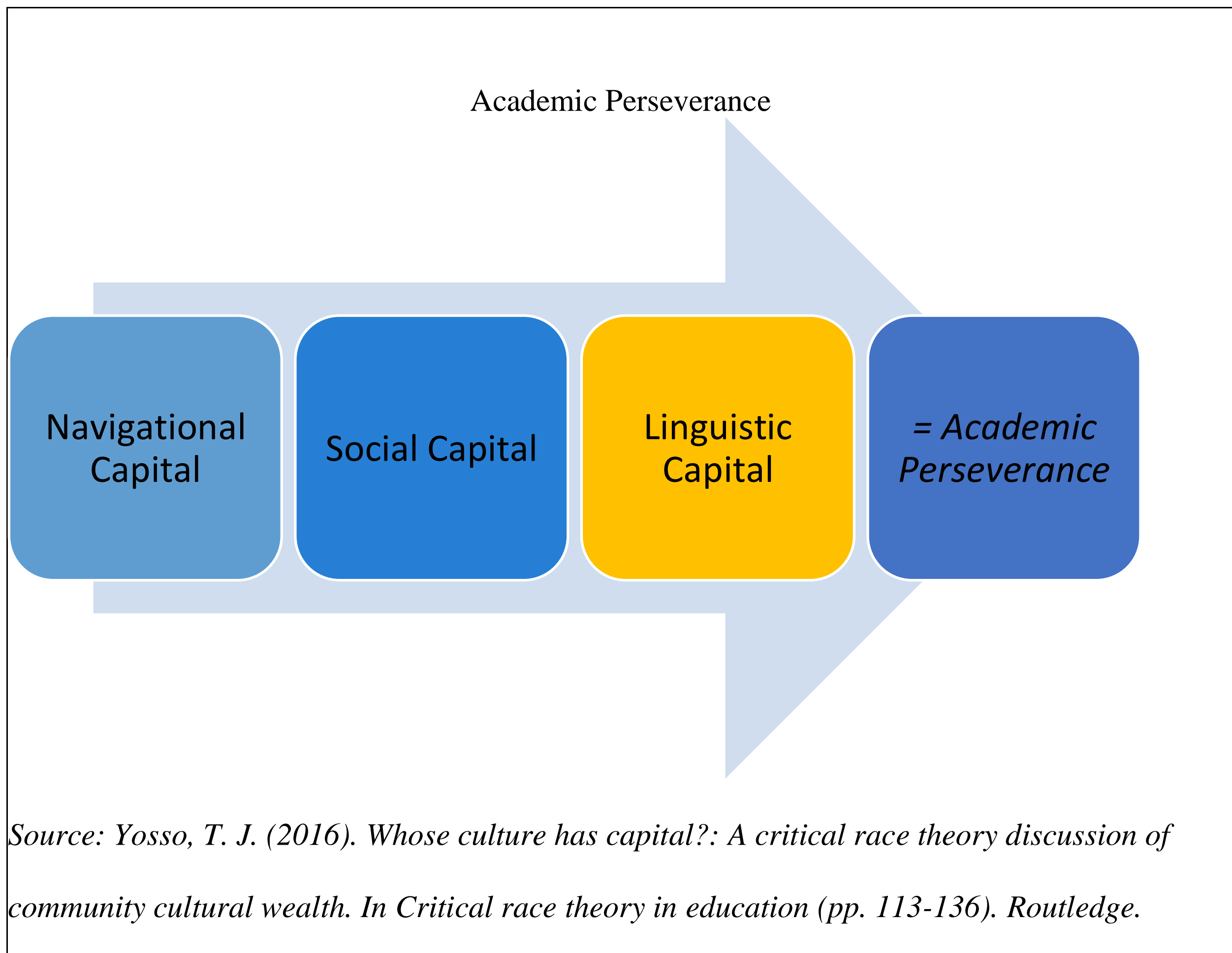
Aspirational Capital

Yosso (2006) defines aspirational capital as the ability of people of color (POC) to maintain their aspirations and goals for a successful future despite real and perceived obstacles. In the case of Latine children, their aspirational capital is closely connected to their family and resistance capital. Some Latine students feel a sense of responsibility to take care of their families, which includes repaying their parents for their efforts and sacrifices and making them

proud (Aragon, 2017; Araujo & Piedra, 2013; Espino, 2016; Perez-Huber, 2009; Perez & Taylor, 2016; Saenz et al., 2018). Furthermore, several Latine students view education as a form of resistance against social injustices and a means to challenge negative stereotypes about their community (Cuevas, 2016; Perez, 2014; Saenz et al., 2017). This demonstrates the strong link between aspirational and resistance capital among Latine students. In conclusion, for Latine students family and resistance capital interacted with aspirational capital to serve as the foundation for academic motivation.

FIGURE 9

Figure 9 -Academic Perseverance



Source: Yosso, T. J. (2016). Whose culture has capital?: A critical race theory discussion of community cultural wealth. In Critical race theory in education (pp. 113-136). Routledge.

Navigational Capital

The term "navigational capital" refers to the skills and talents that enable pupils to traverse "social institutions," including educational spaces such as university campuses or classrooms. Yosso (2006) contends that pupils' navigational capital enables them to navigate unfavorable or hostile surroundings. Latine students, many of whom are the first in their families to attend college in the US, rely heavily on their navigational capital to succeed in educational institutions that were not originally designed for them (Garcia, 2019). This type of capital assumes great significance because Latine students face significant obstacles such as poverty, immigrant status, and language barriers (Jimenez, 2016; Saenz et al., 2018). Additionally, they must navigate new institutional structures such as financial assistance techniques, the college application process, and graduation paths, without the guidance of their families (Bejarano & Valverde, 2012; Peralta, 2013; Perez, 2014; Ventura, 2017).

Furthermore, institutional racism, bigotry, and prejudice present cultural hurdles that Latine students must overcome (Espino, 2014; Jimenez, 2016; Perez & Taylor, 2016). However, they possess social and linguistic capitals that aid them in overcoming these obstacles (Alarcon & Bettez, 2017; Duran & Perez, 2017). These capitals serve as assets for Latine students in their academic pursuits.

Social Capital

Social capital comprises networks of individuals and community resources that Latines may develop throughout their lifetime. These peer and other social relationships may give both practical and emotional assistance for navigating tricky institutions (Stanton-Salazar, 2001; Yosso 2015). To illustrate this, one can consider the example of a Latine student who is struggling to pay their way through college. The utilization of social relationships and

community resources can be beneficial for Latine students. For instance, they may use their parents' connections to find a part-time job or learn about college scholarships from older relatives who have previously won them (Aragon, 2017). These social networks can also help Latine students with drafting scholarship applications and provide emotional support throughout their academic journey (Cabrera et al., 2014; Perez & Taylor, 2016). Historically, People of Color have employed their social capital to gain access to education, legal justice, employment, and healthcare when traditional routes failed them (Yosso, 2005). Successful individuals from Communities of Color often shared their knowledge and resources with their social networks to help guide others on similar paths (Cabrera et al., 2014). Informal social networks, often created by immigrants upon arrival to the US, can provide valuable information on employment opportunities, legal advice, and housing options for those with no credit or social security history (Sanchez, 1993; Yosso, 2005). These networks can be described as mutual assistance organizations. A more formal example of such organizations is the National Association of Colored Women's Clubs, whose slogan has been "raising as we ascend" since its inception in 1986 (see Gurnier et al., 1997, p. 167). Scholars have observed a community-oriented or collectivist approach within the Latine community, particularly among Latine students in higher education. This stands in contrast to the individualistic perspective commonly observed among their white peers, who are less likely to share their support systems or networks with others (Arevalo et al., 2016).

Linguistic Capital

Finally, Latine students attribute a considerable amount of their academic resilience to their linguistic capital. (Yosso, 2006). These students have reported that their ability to speak multiple languages has provided them with both intellectual and social skills. The development

of bilingualism often stems from their parents speaking Spanish at home or the students serving as translators for their family members (Aragon, 2017; Jimenez, 2016; Liou et al., 2009; Peralta, 2013; Perez-Huber, 2009). Their parents' sharing of oral histories, (known in Spanish as *cuentos*), lectures (*platicas*), advice (*consejos*), and proverbs (*dichos*) have all added and expanded Latine students' linguistic capital. This linguistically rich atmosphere instilled in Latine kids results in political awareness, social and communication skills, self-respect, and cultural pride. Existing studies suggest that this, in turn, affects memory and attention to detail, empathy, morality, and values (Cuevas, 2016; Espino, 2016; Perez, 2014, 2017; Perez & Taylor, 2016; Saenz et al., 2017). Latine kids routinely employ these linguistic skills and positive language to continue in school and achieve academic achievement (Aragon, 2017; Saenz et al., 2017). Notably, not all Latine students are bilingual or fluent in Spanish. However, even if they are not fluent in Spanish, they are exposed to Spanish words at a higher percentage than their peers due to unique circumstances. For example, they may have distant family members, may engage in cultural events such as Dia de los Muertos, or hear phrases from popular Spanish music that older members of their family may listen to. In the context of this study, it is worth mentioning that identifying as Latine does not necessarily require being bilingual. To recap, the majority (89%) of participants identified themselves as speakers of a language other than English. Among them, Spanish was the most commonly spoken language, with 54 out of 65 participants reporting proficiency in it. Some participants also reported speaking other languages such as Arabic, Korean, Catalan, and Mixteco, as their third language. Although seven participants identified themselves as English monolinguals, all of them had at least one parent of Latin American descent.

The most surprising data in terms of linguistic capital was Latine identifying individuals that spoke English and other languages such as Swahili (2) and Chinese (2). Despite the lack of concrete evidence of why my Latine participants have such a high percentage of Spanish speakers, I postulate that they all attend University of Oregon, where a second language is mandatory for all undergraduate degrees. In addition, University of Oregon offers both a Spanish language course and a heritage Spanish speaker course.

In conclusion, Tara Yosso's theory of community cultural wealth expands on the unique assets Latine students accumulate and how these unlikely factors play into their academic motivation and perseverance. When discussing underrepresented student populations at PWI, it is important to pinpoint both how the institution is supporting them and specify some areas of improvement. Accepting underrepresented students at PWI is a step in the right direction. However, it is necessary to take many other steps to make these students feel supported and included at their new educational institution. Part of this frank assessment entails considering the campus climate.

According to the existing literature, many educational institutions do not create a climate where Latine students' community cultural wealth is recognized, welcomed, and/ or valued (Huber & Cueva, 2012; Valenzuela, 1999; Ventura, 2017). In contrast, many Latine students have experienced what scholar Angela Valenzuela (1999) calls "subtractive schooling." The subtractive process disregards important social and cultural resources from Latine students. This means Latine students are vulnerable to academic failure because educational institutions are slowly "stripping away student identities" (Valenzuela, 1999, p. 10). Taking all this into consideration, it is clear to see how campus climate is intertwined with community cultural

wealth and microaggressions. Therefore surveying students about one aspect will inevitably lead to a richer and more multidimensional representation of what they experience on campus.

Gaps in Existing Literature

In terms of setting, this dissertation fills a gap, because existing HSI studies focus on case studies of universities located in states with high Latine populations such as Texas, California, Florida, and New York. The institution I am focusing on is unique because it is a predominately white university (61%) in a predominately white state (75% of the population). Despite a growing population, Latine residents only account for 18% of the state in which University of Oregon is located and 16% of the students enrolled at its institution (US Census Data 2020; official university website).

Secondly, this dissertation fills the gap in HSI research by addressing the topic from a LatCrit lens, focusing on the testimonios or lived experiences of Latine students. What is currently lacking in existing studies is the focus on Latine student voices as most of the research focuses on the points of view of administrations and faculty members (Flores & Leal, 2020). Through the utilization of testimonios, which is a LatCrit counter story telling device, this study aims to gather and validate the first-hand experiences of Latine students currently attending the institution. This approach will provide the emerging HSI with qualitative data on the experiences of Latine students, particularly in relation to campus climate, microaggressions, and forms of community cultural wealth. The insights gained from the testimonios will be used to develop a list of recommendations for administration and faculty decision-making. The ultimate goal is to influence positive change and improve the experiences of Latine students at the emerging HSI.

Lastly, most of the studies in HSI research focus on quantifiable data such as enrollment, retention, and graduation rates. As previously mentioned, the majority of educational research

views academic achievement as the sole indicator of successfully supporting students. But this cannot be relied on as the only measures of "success" when discussing emerging HSI, since these institutions are still in the transitional period. My dissertation fills a gap in the research by addressing these topics from a LatCrit perspective and by interviewing current Latine students, regardless of their academic achievement level.

Why Does This Study Matter?

It would be naïve to critically analyze the reason a PWI aspires to become HSI without considering the role interest convergence plays. As evidenced by the previously mentioned article written by Flores and Leal (2020), which details three types of HSI identities, Hispanic Serving Institutions that fulfill enrollment requirements but do not provide equitable opportunities for Latine students do exist. They were paved with the best intentions but their students still lack comprehensive support, therefore these institutions are not truly 'serving' their Latine students. Instead they are just enrolling their Latine students.

This dissertation is significant as it addresses the contentious issue of how HSIs effectively serve the Latine student population. Through the literature review, it is evident that HSIs vary significantly and the identities they project are directly related to their commitment to the Latine community. While it is beyond the scope of this study to predict what identity University of Oregon will adopt in the future, it is crucial to guide and influence the decisions made by the university as it transitions from an emerging HSI to a federally recognized one. In the upcoming transitional years, University of Oregon can prevent interest convergence by establishing a Latine serving identity (Flores & Leal 2020).

In this dissertation, I argue that a truly serving emerging HSI must go beyond enrollment quotas and address the issues Latine students find the most pertinent. These issues are brought up in student testimonios I collect through semi-structured interviews and online surveys. This will culminate in a list of suggestions for how best to navigate the HSI transition with Latine students' voices at the forefront. Increasing Latine enrollment at University of Oregon is a step in the right direction, but Latine students' opinions and lived experiences are vital to make changes inside and outside the classrooms.

CHAPTER 3 : METHODOLOGY

This study will employ a qualitative research design to demonstrate the power of survey data and testimonios as a tool for identifying how to support the growing population of Latine students at an emerging HSI. Testimonios, as a methodological approach, allows those affected by racism, sexism, and classism to respond to oppression through their voiced experiences (Pérez Huber & Cueva, 2012). Bernal et al. (2012) state that historically, "...testimonio has deep roots in oral cultures and in Latin American human rights struggles" (p. 363). This study will attempt to answer the following research questions using testimonio and survey results to collect and analyze the narratives of Latine college students:

How can an emerging HSI better serve their Latine students by considering their…

a. Community cultural wealth?
b. Perceptions of microaggressions?

The purpose of this qualitative study is to document and honor the experiences of Latine college students. Testimonio creates for students an empowering and liberating repositioning of power inside the traditional academic setting (Cruz, 2006). As per the Latina Feminist Group (2021), testimonios also has a rich history in the crux of LatCrit and feminist movements, which is why I prioritized recruiting female-identifying participants for this study. Meanwhile, Huber and Cueva (2012) posit that "Testimonio in educational research can reveal both the oppression that exists within educational institutions and the powerful efforts in which students of color engage to challenge and transform those spaces" (p. 392).

By gathering these testimonios, my research participants will give voice to their unique experiences of education, achievements, and oppression. They will also represent the experiences

of a larger collective (Huber, 2009). For this reason, I plan to utilize testimonio as my primary methodology. The purpose of this research is to contribute to the existing body of knowledge on testimonio as a legitimate methodology for amplifying the stories of marginalized groups. Moreover, this study seeks to illustrate that testimonio is an effective research instrument for identifying and addressing the needs of Latine students at emerging Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs). For institutions experiencing an increase in Latine enrollment and have been designated as emerging HSIs (enrollment of 13% to 24.9% full-time students), the examination of testimonios is critical. Specifically, it provides a means to gain direct insight into the needs of these students and to develop systems and practices to meet those needs. This information is crucial for developing a more nuanced understanding of the academic and personal experiences of Latine and other underrepresented students on campus.

Knowledge Creation through Testimonials

Testimonio is a method of study that was initially used in Latin American literature to describe the lives of oppressed people during conflicts. Although "testimonio" has several meanings, it has often been used to protest injustices faced by disadvantaged people (Booker, 2002). Yúdice (1991) defines testimonio as "a true account narrated by a witness who is impelled to do so by the immediacy of a circumstance" (p. 17). On the other hand, Brabeck (2001) describes testimonio as a "verbal journey...through one's life experiences with an emphasis on the injustices one has undergone and the effect these injustices have had on one's life" (p. 3). Literature also underlines how testimonio is a "collective memory" process that transcends a specific incident and is connected to a larger social struggle (Beverley, 2004; Yúdice, 1991) These definitions, along with those propounded by other scholars who use the term testimonio, acknowledge the importance of narrative in understanding the experiences of oppressed

communities (Beverley, 2004; Booker, 2002; Brabeck, 2001; Burciaga, 2007; Cruz, 2006; Cienfuegos & Monelli, 1983; Gutiérrez, 2008; Latina Feminist Group, 2001; Yúdice, 1991).

When reflecting on the concept of testimonios, my attention is drawn to the definition proposed by Reyes and Rodriguez (2012), which characterizes it as a unique approach to presenting spoken accounts of oppression. The idea is that individuals who share their personal stories of facing discrimination or mistreatment through a testimonio are seeking to rectify wrongdoing or prompt immediate action. Testimonios can take various forms, such as diary entries, novels, qualitative vignettes, recorded interviews, and even song lyrics, as explained by Reyes and Rodriguez (2012).

In the past, academics of color have used testimonios to uphold their legacy of oral storytelling, while also emphasizing the lived experience of POC who may not have a voice or platform to convey their lived experiences. Therefore, testimonials are qualitative tactics comparable to critical race counter-narrative (Yosso, 2006). It can be traced back to the oral storytelling tradition witnessed in Latino, Indigenous, and African American groups (Booker, 2002; Yosso, 2006; Huber, 2009).

Certain LatCrit framework parts are analogous to the major characteristics of testimonios. For example, both Testimonio and LatCrit legitimate and center the experiential knowledge of People of Color, recognize the power of collective memory and knowledge and are motivated by the transformation and liberation of Communities of Color.

Therefore, testimonio can be viewed as the spoken journey of a witness who reveals the injustices they have experienced based on their race, class, gender, and immigration status (Bernal & Villalpando, 2002; Pérez Huber, 2009). Through sharing their testimonio, individuals can find healing and empowerment for a more just society. This approach challenges mainstream

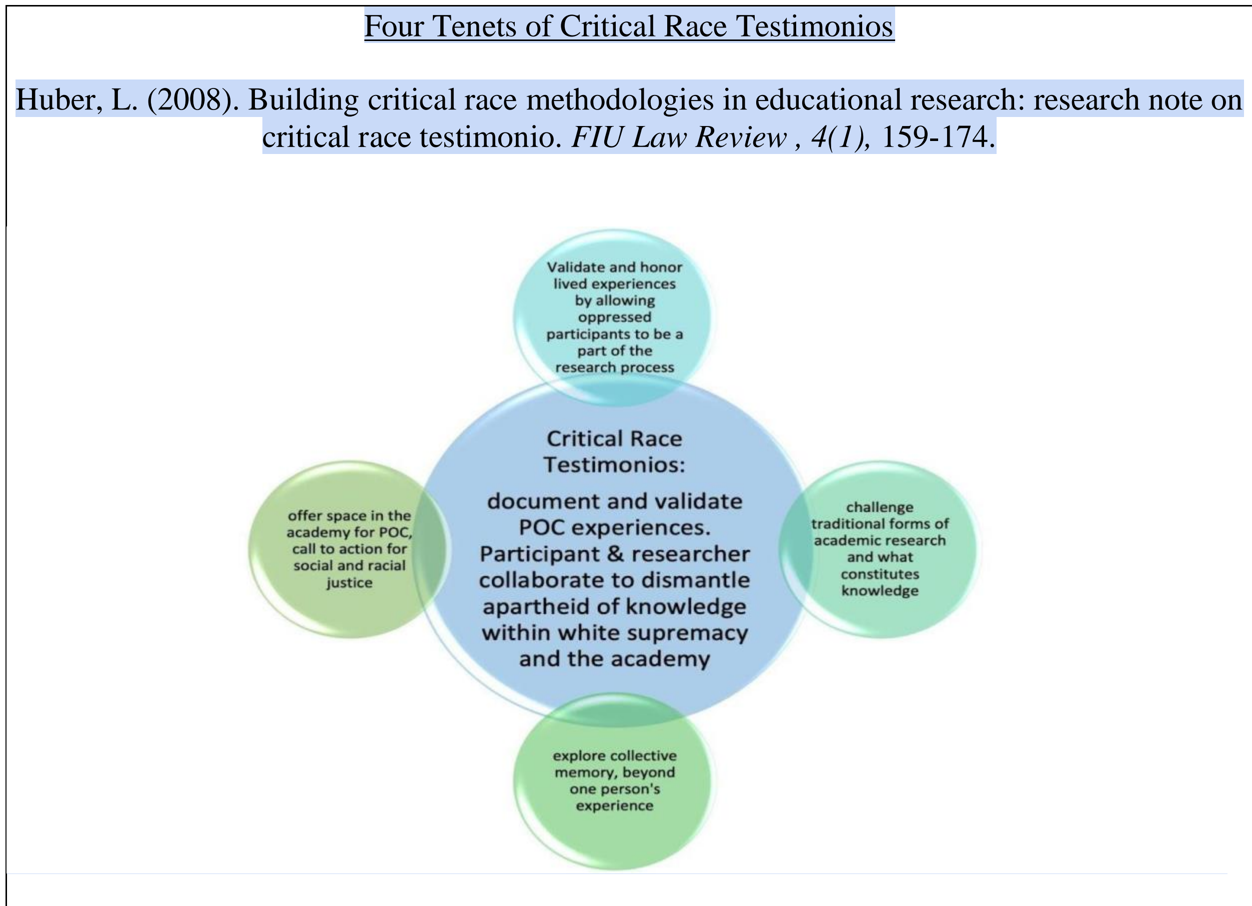
Eurocentric epistemologies, which are based on white supremacist ideologies, and provides a means for voices and perspectives that have been historically marginalized to be heard. According to Delgado Bernal and Villalpando (2002), conventional research methods tend to privilege Eurocentric perspectives and dismiss alternative perspectives, which reinforces the dominance of Eurocentric knowledge and further marginalizes the voices of those who do not conform to it.

In academic studies, this results in a one-dimensional perspective known as the "apartheid of knowledge." The present dissertation advances the deconstruction of the apartheid of knowledge by identifying the intellectual capital of Latinas at University of Oregon, a mostly white institution. This is not the first time testimonio and education have intersected, even though it signifies a new approach for education research. Burciaga (2007) expanded on the usage of testimonio by demonstrating how the process of testimonio might be implemented in educational research by means of Latina feminist epistemology. Similarly, Delgado Bernal (1998) outlines how researchers might re-center a foundation of knowledge by adopting an epistemological perspective that acknowledges the validity of our experiences as Latine women and allows our cultural intuition to contribute to the research process. Bernal (1998) highlights that the participation of participants in the process of data analysis is a fundamental feature of a Latina feminist epistemology.

The flexibility of testimonios in terms of its interpretation and presentation has led to its usage in various disciplines including anthropology, sociology, ethics, and feminist theory. Examples of influential works that incorporate testimonios by scholars of color include Gloria Anzaldua's "This Bridge Called My Back" (1981) and Patricia Collins' "Black Feminist Thought" (1990). Collins has particularly stated her decision to support testimonios or testimony

because it enables individuals to be "agents of knowledge, speak to the significance of that oppression," and emphasizes the role knowledge "plays in strengthening oppressed people" (Collins, 1991, p. 221). In conclusion, female researchers of color have used Testimonio in academia since the 1960s due to its adaptability and centering on non-traditional forms of knowledge. Furthermore, I am drawing on the subsection of critical race testimonios because it is a collaborative process between the interviewer and interviewee.

FIGURE 10
Figure 10- Four Tenets of Critical Race Testimonios



Ontological Assumption behind the use of Spanish/ Translanguaging

Due to the historical linguistic discrimination of Spanish and, by extension, Spanglish, language is a particularly contested topic in LatCrit studies. In addition, researchers have found "the educational experiences of Latine pupils are rife with linguistic violence that develops and informs their own linguistic ideologies" (Ek et al., 2013, p. 197). Moreover, academic research has shown Latine students experience covert scrutiny about their English proficiency, even if their reading and/or writing was at grade level (Katz, 1999). According to historical studies, Spanglish has been incorrectly ascribed to vocabulary gaps, lack of education, bad language management, and perceived lack of ability (Gumperz, 1982; Lance, 1969; Romaine, 1995).

It is important to avoid making the assumption or oversimplification that language prejudice affects all Latine groups, as they are not a homogeneous population. Not all Latine individuals speak Spanish; some may be monolingual English speakers while others may use indigenous languages such as Nahuatl or national languages such as Portuguese in Brazil. However, the majority of the participants who were interviewed and had access to the study were proficient in both English and Spanish (80%). The interview questions and the survey used to recruit participants were all written in English. Nevertheless, a small percentage of participants (13%) chose to use a combination of English and Spanish to share their lived experiences, a process known as translanguaging

As a researcher, I am cognizant of the controversy pertaining to translation in data collecting, or how a researcher may misinterpret the point of a participant while translating it from the original language to English. In my analysis chapter, I have chosen to provide both translanguaging examples, followed by an English explanation in footnotes and parenthesis for monoligual readers. Having the translanguaging, original excerpt enables me to guarantee that

neither the participants' precise words nor an essential data point get ‘lost in translation’. This technique, referred to as adhering to the translanguaging corriente, is used to promote the use of translanguaging or Spanish in academic areas, as opposed to monolingualism (Garcia 2017).

Furthermore, in addition to the reasons stated above, eliminating naturally occurring Spanish words or Spanglish phrases from the testimonios of study participants would only serve to reinforce the English-centered language hierarchy that is prevalent in academic settings. To prevent the erasure of the participants' statements, I have decided to include the Spanglish terminology used by them in the findings chapter, along with footnotes that provide clarification regarding their English equivalents.

Ontological Justification for Quoting Scholars of Color

I have decided to utilize testimonios as the methodology for my dissertation primarily to challenge and broaden the narrow perceptions of what constitutes legitimate forms of methodology for an education dissertation. Given that testimonios have a long history in LatCrit and have been embraced by communities of color, it is appropriate to adopt this methodology. Moreover, I am deliberately selecting authors of color for citation in my work, with approximately 90% of the sources being from scholars who are people of color. To quote the title of an Audre Lorde book, “The master’s tools will never dismantle the master’s house” (2018). Therefore, I cannot embrace Western methodology that is dominated by a majority white, male cisgender perspective if I want to present a new perspective in my research and give voice to Latine female students that would otherwise be silent.

To be clear, studies about discrimination and racism in education studies have merit, regardless of the author. However, LatCrit and critical race testimonios are about giving a voice to marginalized communities. While researching immigration law and its effects on students is

important, it cannot replace the value of hearing firsthand accounts from Latine individuals about their own family members being deported. Testimonios are meant to give respect and authority to lived experiences, which is why I am drawing on existing knowledge within communities of color. While there is a vast array of scholarship available in academia, my dissertation is specifically focused on utilizing testimonios to share the experiences of Latine female communities. By citing sources from 90% of scholars of color, I am not negating the value of white scholarship, but rather prioritizing the perspectives and voices of communities of color. These individuals have historically suffered societal discrimination and therefore take a unique perspective when discussing it. To sum up, the use of testimonios in this dissertation is aimed at recognizing and valuing qualitative methodologies that are not commonly used in education research, such as thick description or diffraction, but can still generate significant and *"legitimate"* knowledge. Therefore, citing scholars of color is a priority, as this methodology is rooted in communities of color and aims to give voice to their experiences.

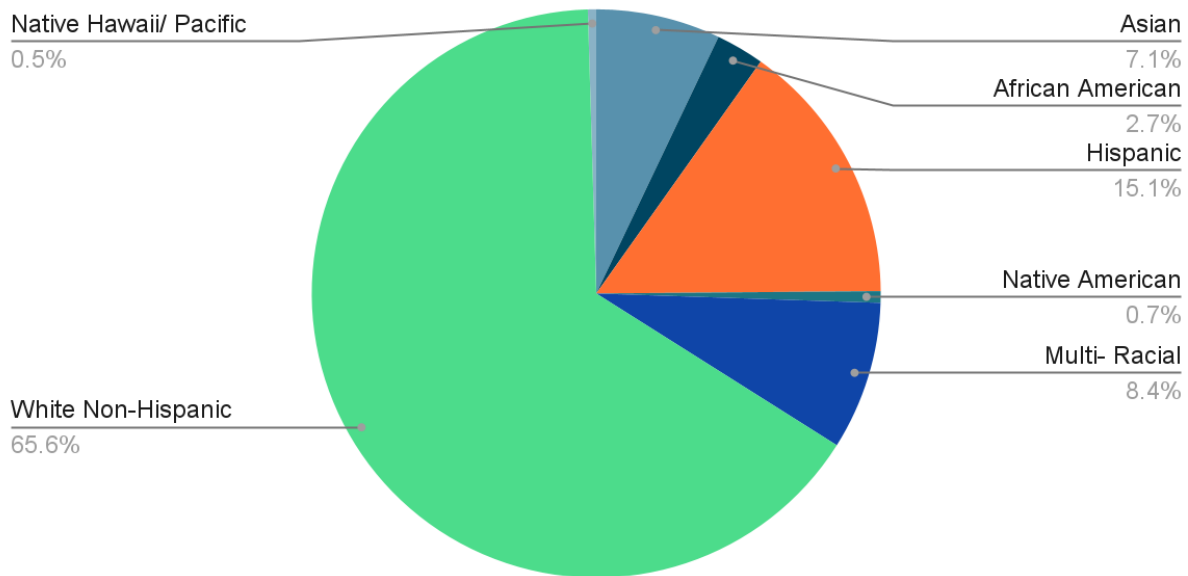
Research Setting

As previously discussed this study was conducted at a public, Research 1 university in the Pacific Northwest. During the 2021-2022 school year, there were roughly 22, 000 students on this campus, comprised of the majority of undergraduate students (University Website, 2022).

When discussing this research setting, it is essential to note that this educational institution is a PWI. This is exemplified by the universities official Equity and Inclusion website, which denotes 66% of the student population identifies as white (2022).

FIGURE 11

Figure 11- Ethnicity & Race of UOregon Students (2021-22)



Note -This is for both undergraduates and graduates. Both charts were created using data from the University's Official: Equity and Inclusion Website. (2022, March 15). Retrieved Jan 16, 2023, from https://inclusion.uoregon.edu/facts-and-figures.

According to the charts above, only 15.1% of the student population identify as Latine which is the lower end of the requirement for emerging HSI (15% to 24.9%). Moreover, it is important to note that 13, 621 students identify as white compared to 3,127 who identify as Latine (i.e. Hispanic). Despite still being a numerical minority of the student body, the Latine community is growing among the student body. The 2022-23 Academic school year reported the largest group of Latine students in their incoming freshman class, breaking the 1,000 for the first time in an incoming class (University Website, 2023). This fluctuation in demographics is one of the many reasons University of Oregon is the perfect setting for a research study on emerging HSI. There are at the initial stage of the process and in the last two years recently began a Latine

Studies minor and a faculty/admin initiative to discuss goals and transitions if they were to apply for emerging HSI status.

Positionality of Researcher

My belief about this topic is that an emerging HSI needs to invest in learning more about their Latine lived experiences on campus. Though it can be time-consuming to get this individual information from Latine students on campus, it will better inform their policies for supporting them in the future. Based on my educational experiences in London, New York, and Eugene, I have observed that stereotypes, racism, and discrimination towards Latine students are unfortunately still prevalent. Similarly, my family and friends who are part of Latine communities have reported similar experiences, with micro-aggressions becoming more frequent in the political climate since the 2016 elections. Additionally, specifically at University of Oregon, there is a Latine support group that I regularly attended to give Latine students (immigrant or otherwise) an outlet for their frustrations and coping techniques for dealing with discrimination at a predominantly white educational institution. I agree that racism and discrimination are part of a larger societal problem, not a problem to be pinpointed and disregarded as just certain individuals or bad apples (Bonilla-Silva, 2019). Keeping this in mind, I will am intentionally focusing on Latine students and their interpersonal lived experiences at the University of Oregon campus.

It is important to note my research is very much guided by my personal experience. I am very honest about the fact that I'm emotionally invested in this topic. As a Honduran national who was born and raised for 20 + years in Central America, I am well versed on the misconceptions Latine students must contend with within the United States. While my experience as a student in the US for 8 years is not universal, it is one of many that highlights the

racial inequalities that racially diverse students face in American educational institutions. I cannot claim to be impartial or objective about this subject, but I believe that my personal experiences are a form of cultural wealth that informs my research rather than being an obstacle to it.

Lastly, I consider language to be a crucial component because it is intertwined with how bilingual individuals choose to present themselves to the world. Through my interviews, I observed that participants tended to code-switch during emotional retellings of microaggressions or when describing their family/community. I intuitively understood that there was a correlation between the participants' emotions and their choice of language, whether English or Spanish.

It is noteworthy that my privilege and education have allowed me to adapt and catalogue my accent, sometimes even passing as a native English speaker. During my K-12 education, I attended a bilingual, international school in Central America that was established by the US embassy. Our Honduran teachers taught us, Honduran students, to imitate the accents and perfect the enunciation of our majority-white American teachers. When I struggled in first grade, my white American teacher advised my mother to speak only English at home so that I could become more accustomed to the language's sounds and words. Speaking Spanish in school was often met with punishment, including infractions and detention. It is not surprising that my Spanish skills deteriorated over time, both inside and outside the classroom.

I always thought my ability to perfect an American English accent was a positive attribute, however lately I have been questioning what parts of my Latine identity and Spanish language I gave up in the process of ‘fitting in’ or ‘passing’. Considering my personal experience, I recognize the importance of language in shaping Latine identity and the detrimental effects that linguistic discrimination can have on a student's academic success. With this in mind,

I have made a conscious effort to allow my participants to naturally switch between English, Spanish, and Spanglish during the interviews. This is my way of challenging the English-only dominance that is often observed in most educational studies conducted in the US.

Role of Researcher

The researcher in this study had the following responsibilities:

1. Gather testimonios from five female members of Latine-oriented student groups at a major public university in the Pacific Northwest referred to in this study as University of Oregon. This was done interviews were done at a coffee shop off campus and were guided by a semi-structured interview protocol. Each interview lasted approximately 2 hours. This resulted in overall ten hours of interview data from interviews.
2. Gave two presentations at Latine-focused student groups to discuss microggressions and community cultural wealth. After the presentations, all students were provided with a QR code where they would be able to answer a qualtrics survey. This survey was 100% voluntary and anonymous. It comprised the same interview protocol questions as the interviews completed in Step 1. This data will provide a more generalized view of UOregon's campus culture, so as not to rely on just five individual testimonios or perceptions.
3. Collect, transcribe, and anonymize interviews with 5 participants that were both surveyed and interviewed. This translated into roughly eight hours of interview transcripts. Code transcripts with In Vivo coding using Atlas.ti software.
4. Insert 65 survey participant data into Atlas.ti. Code using in vivo coding in the first round and causation coding in the second round. Both techniques of coding are informed by researcher Johnny Saldaña (2016).

Limitations

The first limitation of this study is that I am only interviewing 5 Latine female-identifying students and I surveyed 65 Latine students online. This is a small percentage of the Latine community at University of Oregon. Therefore although this is rich data, it cannot be generalized as every Latine student experiences.

The second limitation that needs to be addressed is the assumption that Latine students are comfortable discussing microaggressions with a researcher whom they have just met. While the topic of Cultural Community Wealth is not taboo, microaggressions are often difficult to discuss, especially in the current political climate. As a Latine student attending the same predominantly white university, I have personally experienced microaggressions on and off campus due to my ethnicity. Attending a Latine Support Group on campus has also exposed me to other Latine students who have shared similar experiences of microaggressions at University of Oregon. However, it is crucial to acknowledge that the students who participated in my interviews or surveys may not have encountered any microaggressions during their time at University of Oregon.

Introduction to Participants

The total number of Latine participants I was able to recruit was N=65. Of those 65, 60 participants only filled out the anonymous survey. The remaining five participants filled out the survey and also took part in the semi-structured interviews.

Interview Participants

The following table describes the age, gender, and heritage of my interview participants. While I could collect more demographic information such as their birthplace and what cities they grew up in and their majors, I do not feel comfortable sharing this information. University of

Oregon has a very small, tight-knit Latine community and if I included the hometown and birthplace of these participants, they run the risk of them being identified by their peers or faculty members.

FIGURE 12

Figure 12-Interview Participants Demographic Information

Interview Participants Demographic Information				
Pseudonym	*Age*	*Gender / preferred terminology*	*Heritage*	*First Generation student?*
Ximena	20	Female / Latine	Mexican heritage from both parents.	Yes
Charlie	21	Female / Latina	Mexican heritage from both parents.	No
Selena	18	Female / Latina	Salvadoran heritage from both parents.	Yes
Gabriela	20	Female/ Hispanic	Father is Mexican and Mother is American.	Yes
Julia	20	Female / Latina	Mexican heritage from her mother and Guatemalan heritage from her father.	Yes

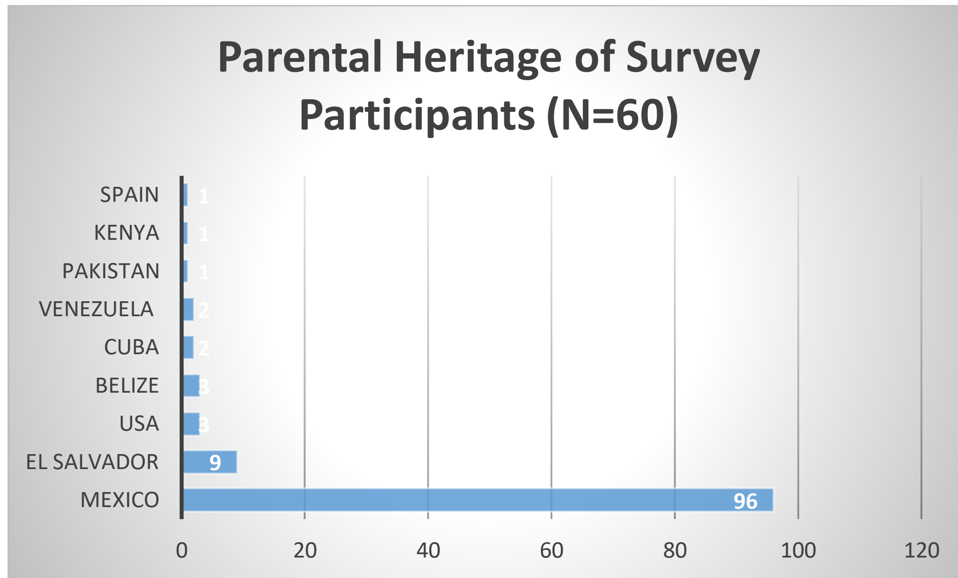
Survey Participants

Since the demographic information of five survey participants has been previously stated, statistics for the remaining 60 participants who completed the online survey will be presented. The median age of the participants was 20 years, and 68% of them identified themselves as first-

generation students. Regarding gender, ten participants identified themselves as male, one as non-binary, and the remaining 49 as female. The tables below provide details on the participants' heritage and place of upbringing.

FIGURE 13

Figure 13-Parental Heritage of Survey Participants



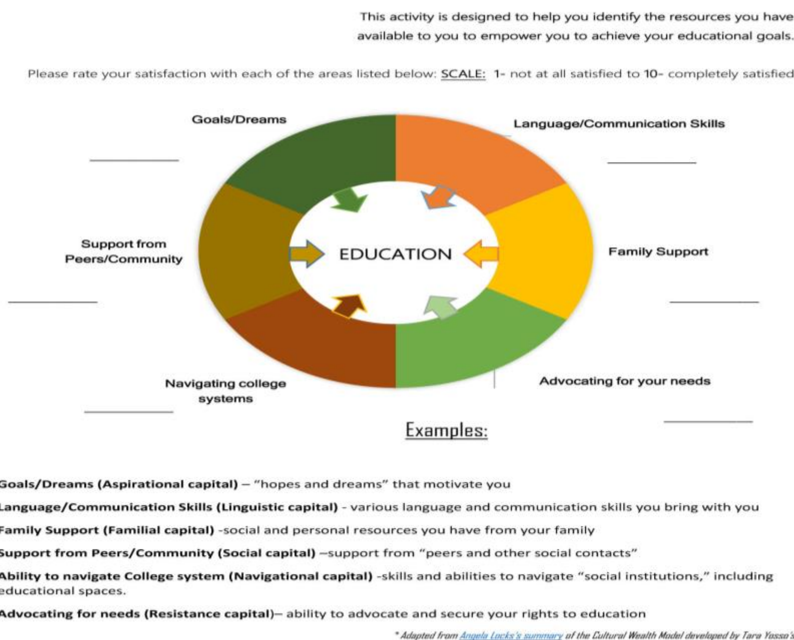
As the chart above details the heritage of 60 participants, there are 120 parents' home countries to be accounted for. The largest group of parents was from Mexico (n=96), followed by El Salvador (N=9), the USA (N=3), and Belize (N=3). It is interesting to note that beyond Latin American countries, some participants reported Spanish (N=1), Pakistani (N=1), and Kenyan (N=1) heritage. The following chart illustrates the place where participants grew up. I deliberately did not ask where participants were born as that could expose non-US citizens. Instead, I asked where they spent most of their childhood, regardless of birthplace or nationality.

FIGURE 14

Figure 14-Where Participants Grew Up

Data Collection

To begin the interview process with my five Latine participants, I asked them to individually number the community cultural wealth worksheet, from the most to the least important topic, which allowed me to gauge what was most pertinent to them. (Appendix A)



This activity is designed to help you identify the resources you have available to you to empower you to achieve your educational goals.

Please rate your satisfaction with each of the areas listed below: SCALE: 1- not at all satisfied to 10- completely satisfied

Goals/Dreams ________

Language/Communication Skills ________

Family Support ________

Advocating for your needs ________

Navigating college systems ________

Support from Peers/Community ________

EDUCATION

Examples:

Goals/Dreams (Aspirational capital) – "hopes and dreams" that motivate you

Language/Communication Skills (Linguistic capital) - various language and communication skills you bring with you

Family Support (Familial capital) -social and personal resources you have from your family

Support from Peers/Community (Social capital) –support from "peers and other social contacts"

Ability to navigate College system (Navigational capital) -skills and abilities to navigate "social institutions," including educational spaces.

Advocating for needs (Resistance capital)– ability to advocate and secure your rights to education

** Adapted from Angela Locks's summary of the Cultural Wealth Model developed by Tara Yosso's*

Following this short activity, the interview protocol (Appendix B) was used to guide my questions concerning microaggressions and community cultural wealth. To illustrate, Participant Ximena, Familial, Community, and Goals and Dreams were enumerated as the top 3 most important categories. Taking this into account, I only asked Ximena the relevant questions to those categories.

Step 1 : According to Ximena's handout, her most important CCWealth categories were:

1. Social = Support from peers and community

2. Family Support

3.Goals and Aspiration

4.Advocating for one's needs

5. Navigating college systems

6.Linguistic Capital

Step 2: Taking this into consideration, I focused our two-hour semi-structured interview on the following relevant categories/ questions from my IRB-approved interview protocol.

*Social

-growing up did you participate in any cultural or community events?

-If yes, how did you participate? If not, why didn't you participate?

-Have you found similar events like this at UO?

*Familial

-Do you live near your family?

-How often do you see your family?

-If you do not get to see them often, how do you stay in touch (whatsapp, facetime, etc)?

-How involved are they in your education?

-Do you share your university experiences with them?

*Goals and Dreams (Aspirational)

- Who inspired/inspires you to attend higher education?

- What is the main reason you decided to apply to university?

- When you are feeling overwhelmed what pushes you to continue in higher education?

The same process was used for all five of the semi-structured interviews I conducted. Overall, this could best be described as semi-structured interview because although I did use the questions below to guide me, I also allowed for transitions into other topics of conversation. The following chart shows all the questions that were generated and IRB-approved that I used to answer research questions 1 & 2.

Questions from Interview Protocol (appendix 2) that will answer research questions 1 + 2
RQ1: How can an emerging HSI better serve their Latine students by considering their community's cultural wealth?
Social
Growing up, did you participate in any cultural or community events?
If yes, how did you participate? If not, why didn't you participate?

Have you found any similar events like this at UO?
Familial:
Do you live near your family – aka mother, father, or siblings?
How often do you get to see them?
If you do not get to see them often how do you stay in touch? (ex: facetime, whatsapp, emails, phone calls)
How involved are they in your education? Do they ask about your class, classmates, grades, and clubs?
Do you share your university experiences with them? Why or why not?
Navigational
Who in your family has attended university in the US?
Applying to colleges can be really overwhelming. What was one of the things you found the most difficult to navigate about your application? Your first year of college?
Is there anyone in your family who pushed or supported you to attend higher education?
If yes, how have they helped you pursue your higher educational goals?
Linguistic
How many languages do you speak?
At what age did you learn them?

Did you have to participate in any kind of English as a second language class?
Do you ever code-switch between English and Spanish (Spanglish)?
Who do you codeswitch the most with (friends, family, siblings)?
In what spaces on campus do you feel comfortable codeswitch?
Are campus spaces you feel uncomfortable codeswitching in – why?
Do you agree or disagree that a big part of being Latine is speaking Spanish? Why/why not?
Resistant
What were/are some of the barriers you've faced while attending college?
Can you please provide a specific example?
Who in your life was able to help/support you navigate those obstacles?
Did these barriers affect your experience at UO?
Do you feel like you have a better handle on them now? if yes, who/what helped you past these obstacles? if not, what do you wish UO provided to help you overcome that obstacle?
Aspirational
Who inspires/inspired you to attend higher education?
If no one inspired you, what is one of the main reasons you choose to apply to university?

University course load can be very difficult to juggle – homework, tests, and class schedules. When you are feeling overwhelmed what pushes you to continue in higher education?
How can an emerging HSI better serve their Latine students by considering their perceptions of racial microaggressions? *These questions were posed to all participants, regardless of the categories they found most relevant on the community cultural wealth wheel
Racial Jokes
Racial jokes are jokes that are a bit controversial and try to stereotype students due to their race or ethnicity. Most of these jokes are followed by comments like "don't be so sensitive" or "it was just a joke". While on campus, have you ever been subjected to a "joke" which you felt was a little racist towards Latino/a/x?
Have you ever been subjected to these jokes off campus (Eugene in general)?
Interpersonal Microaggressions
Being Latin(o/a/x) do you feel like you belong at UO? Why do you feel like you (do/do not) belong?
Have you ever been subjected to non-verbal attacks by your classmates or faculty? Sometimes things are not said, but you can definitely feel it (stares/someone moving away from you) that has something to do with being Latino/a/x

Have you ever been subjected to harsh words/ verbal attacks by your classmates or faculty because you are Latino/a/x?
Institutional Microaggressions
Being Latina/o/x where on campus do you feel safe? Are there any spaces where you feel unsafe or uncomfortable?
Do you feel represented in the UO student body?
Have you ever been the only Latino/a/x in one of your classes?
Have you ever been the only student of color in one of your classes?
Have you ever met a faculty member of the same race/ethnicity as you?
Do you agree or disagree with the statement that UO is a diverse university?
Does it surprise you to hear UO is a historically white university?

These same questions are the basis for the qualtrics survey that was shared at Latine-focused student clubs during winter 2023. The exact wording and structure of the qualtrics survey I used can be found in Appendix 3.

Data Analysis

To begin with my plan was to interview five Latine undergraduate student at the University of Oregon to pinpoint how the university was currently doing to support them and what could be improved on. Upon collecting 10 hour of interview audio from these five participants, I began to code to distinguish trending themes. To honor students' reactions to the

testimonios, preliminary in vivo codes noted statements verbatim (Creswell, 2013; Saldaña, 2016). Upon doing this, I soon realized in depth interviews with 5 participants was not enough to highlight overarching themes for at most only 3 participants mentioned the same theme leaving me unsure oif how prevalent they really were. I wanted to avoid convoluting or misrepresenting their responses, which is why I decided to use my semi-structure interview in a qualtrics format to collect more student responses. My 5 interview subjects were also filled out the qualtrics survey, so I could equally compare them to other participants. My finally N of 65 participants survey results gaves me more clear and distinguished primary and secondary themes that coding my 5 individual interviews did not supply.

With my 65 participant responses, I repeated in vivo coding and for my second round of coding, I purposefully focused on common themes and occurrences on campus, having gained a better understanding of them. Following Saldaña's (2016) method of causation coding, I examined the trigger or rationale behind interactions to analyze microaggressions at UOregon. Unfortunately, fallacies or stereotypes about students of color are still prevalent (Valenzuela, 1999; Garcia, 2019). To categorize microaggressions according to Latine stereotypes, I used causation coding, arguing that harmful microaggressions can result from the continued prevalence of fallacies among classmates and faculty members when interacting with Latine students. I choose to use causation coding because it is my understanding that if you know the reasoning or cause behind a harmful interaction, you can get to the root of the problem. The codebook I created for microaggressions is as follows:

Causation reasoning for microaggression / Stereotypes (Second coding)		
Stereotype 1	SDG	Corrupt/ Angry / Dangerous
Stereotype 2	SDT	Diversity Token
Stereotype 3	SEP	English Proficiency
Stereotype 4	SF	Food
Stereotype 5	SI	Immigration
Stereotype 6	SNC	Name Calling
Stereotype 7	SNE	Not Latine Enough
Stereotype 8	SINT	Intellectually behind their peers

This will be explained in detail in Chapter 4: Findings. Regardless a survey excerpt and how it was coded can be found below to obtain a rudimentary understanding of this coding technique.

> *Just today (January 19, 2023), I entered an elevator that already had one individual on it, a white-presenting professional staff member. Upon seeing me enter, they grabbed their belongings tighter (implying that I would try to make a grab at the items) and moved further into the wall to put distance between myself and them. When we finally reached the bottom floor, they immediately threw themselves to get off the elevator before me and get away from me. This is an example of several of the microaggressions listed above.*

Labels - Microaggressions> Non-Verbal> Faculty to Student

First Round of Coding - In Vivo Coding> Words highlighted in bold

Second Round of Coding - Causation Coding> why did this microaggression occur?

Stereotype 1	*SDG*	*Corrupt/ Angry / Dangerous*

Creating Connections

To collect data for this dissertation, I first conducted five in-depth interviews. Then I sent the survey link to 65 people, including the five interviewees, resulting in a total of five interview

transcripts and 65 surveys. When sorting through my data on Latine students, I wanted to focus on the participants who provided rich and complex data. This is not to say every participant's experience is not important or valid, but rather to understand that not everyone wants to talk openly about sensitive topics. Talking about their belongingness at PWI, their family as a support system, or verbal attacks can be triggering for students of color. Taking this into consideration, I abstained from pushing participants to talk about incidents they did not want to talk about. Sharing was not mandatory, and all survey participants were compensated regardless of what lived experiences they chose to share.

I recognize and appreciate that these are difficult topics to discuss; so, prior to collecting my survey responses during two Latine-focused student groups, I conducted an hour-long workshop on community cultural wealth, campus climate, and microaggressions. During these workshops, I tried to build a rapport with my future participants by sharing about my own community support systems that helped me overcome the verbal attacks I had endured on campus. I did this purposely, so my participants understood these are common occurrences faced by students of color at a PWI (Von Robertson et al, 2016). In addition, I wanted to set the tone in such a way that I did not come across as an outsider observing, but rather I was part of their community and understood what they experience regularly. In the testimonio framework, this is described as an innate understanding between the interviewer and the interviewee, preferably both from the same community (Latina Feminist Group, 2021). While my circumstances may not be identical to theirs, I want to emphasize that I am not an outsider doing intrusive research on another community's lived experiences. Historically, the basis of the anthropological lens is the idea of going into another community to observe as an objective outsider, removed from the social connections to make unbiased observations without emotional influence (Kerr & Sturm,

2019). While there is merit to this kind of scholarship, this is not the research I personally want to engage in. I needed my participants to understand that I go beyond being an ally to hopefully being equal. The process of collecting lived experiences, or testimonios, can be very difficult; therefore, establishing a connection with the participants that involved sharing similar experiences was essential to my research design (Latina Feminist Group, 2021).

I believe I was successful in building this connection, as 99% of the Latine students in the workshops decided to share their digital testimonios with me via the survey. For review purposes, I categorized the five open-ended questions in the survey related to CCWealth and microaggressions as digital testimonios. As explained by Benmayor (2012), digital testimonio is a signature pedagogy in the field of Latine studies, as it is characterized as an urgent call to action against social injustices. It is still based on lived experiences, but its digital nature challenges normative colonial standards' narratives and traditions about writing, allowing for wider dissemination. Other examples of digital testimonios are voice notes, blog posts, or short videos collected online (Medina, 1996, 2009).

In addition to the oral and digital testimonios excerpts included in Chapter 4, field notes are discussed throughout. It is important to describe the interactions noted during my field notes because it sets the stage for the connections I made with my survey participants. For example, occurrences such as a handful of participants refusing my gift card as compensation is a fieldnote worth highlighting because it exemplifies the rapport between me and my participants. More specifically, at my first workshop, where the majority were female-identifying Latine students of a median age of 20, one participant wrote the following message in the survey text box where they were expected to provide their email for their gift card: *" You are doing great work, keep the money".* Four other participants wrote similarly encouraging messages, also refusing the gift

cards. Although this was a small portion of participants at this workshop (10%), it resonated with me deeply because these individuals seemingly cared more about the research than the money. Before I left this female-focused Latine club, the president asked if I would be willing to come back and share my findings once I was done with the dissertation. She also asked if I could email her my dissertation defense date, as some members expressed interest in attending the important event. While some may brush this off as simple platitudes, I interpreted these interactions as a sign that my work is truly meaningful to this specific Latine community.

During the workshop, I explained each category with the help of relevant examples so the concepts did not seem so abstract. For example, I shared that, for me personally, familial capital is the most important form of CCWealth. I explained that, although I have lived in a different country from my mother for 12 years, I still call her every day religiously to discuss my day and what was happening back home. I expanded on this by adding that her emotional support is what helps me succeed in graduate school and that is why familial capital is so important to me. I then proceeded to ask if anyone else wanted to share their thoughts and called on three different participants; they highlighted aspiration, navigational, and resistance capital. I explained to the participants that, in the survey distributed at the end of the workshop via QR code, they would be asked to rate the six types of capital in order of importance. In addition, all participants surveyed were asked to describe in a sentence why their top capital was so important to them. Below is the true example of how this question looked on the Qualtrics survey that all participants (n = 65) took on their phones.

According to researcher Tara Yosso, there are certain things Latinx/a/o students need in order to be successful at school. More specifically there are six categories that are most important to students. Can you number the following categories from 1- 6, one being the most important and six being the least important to being successful at this university.

Goals/Dreams (Aspirational capital) – "hopes and dreams" that motivate you

Language/Communication Skills (Linguistic capital) – various language and communication skills you bring with you

Family Support (Familial capital) -social and personal resources you have from your family

Support from Peers/Community (Social capital) -support from "peers and other social contacts" such as friends or classmates

Ability to navigate College system (Navigational capital) skills and abilities to navigate "social institutions," including educational spaces.

Advocating for needs (Resistance capital) ability to advocate and secure your rights to education

After ranking all the types of capital in the order of importance, the participants were prompted in the survey with the following question:

CCW-Y

In one sentence, could you describe why the top category from your ranking is so important for you?

Example: I ranked support from peers/social as category #1. I think support from peers is most important because you need friends to support you in college.

Upon finishing my workshop, I was contacted by another Latine group on campus about visiting them and conducting the same workshop, as they had heard positive reviews about my previous event. This kind of participant recruitment could be described as snowball sampling, as it was organic and very much based on word of mouth (Saldaña, 2018). I had never planned on visiting or surveying a second student group on campus but decided to do so, as they reached out

to me out of interest. The second Latine student group that I visited in Winter 2023 was much smaller and only had twenty members who completed my survey and share their lived experiences. I had told the group president beforehand that I did not have the funds to pay every participant as I did in my first workshop. I admittedly honestly that it was not something I had budgeted for, as a workshop for a second Latine student club was not in my original data collection plans. The student group president assured me that the members were more interested in the information and that raffling off the remaining gift cards would be more than enough. Luckily, I was able to allocate funds and compensate everyone with $25 worth of gift cards as in the first workshop. It's important to note that, in this second workshop, I also had three participants (15%) that filled out the survey but did not provide their names for the gift cards and left encouraging messages instead. These occurrences during data collection are relevant because they set the stage for the relationship I tried to forge with my participants, where we both shared intimate and vulnerable lived experiences as students of color (Latina Feminist Group, 2001).

I chose to conduct semi-structured interviews with five survey participants to allow for more rich data and detailed testimonios that could not be collected during a 10-minute survey. These semi-structured interviews lasted a median of 1 hr 30 mins. Furthermore, throughout the chapter on findings, I describe my observations and participant comments that received during the 1-hr-long workshops. The emotional testimonios that some participants chose to provide exemplify this complex connection I forged that goes beyond the standard professional interviewer-to-interviewee relationship. Some testimonios shared in the following sections are uplifting and courageous, while others are raw and haunting. Taking this into account, the testimonios analyzed and coded in the following section are made up of the real participant emotions, and I would be remiss if I do not offer a trigger warning for the readers.

CHAPTER 4 : FINDINGS

In the following sections, I share the results of my survey (n = 65) and excerpts from the semi-structured interviews I conducted with five of these survey participants.

Finding According to RQ1: Community Cultural Wealth

According to Yosso (2005), Latine communities have a specific cultural wealth. Her model of community cultural wealth (CCW) (2005) acknowledges marginalized communities' strengths and encourages them to identify their experiences, skills, and knowledge as positive contributions. Unfortunately, these forms of wealth are not traditionally recognized in a PWI, which includes most universities and colleges in the United States (McClain & Perry, 2017). Yosso's (2006) extensive reworking of the original Bourdieuean cultural capital theory is a perfect example of how academic theories are not universal and sometimes need to be modified to better represent the needs and characteristics of communities of color. In her research, Yosso makes references to how scholars of color have tried to rectify traditional cultural capital frameworks by highlighting outsider knowledge (Collins, 1986), *mestiza* knowledge (Anzaldúa, 1987), and transgressive knowledge (Hooks, 1994). These theories, much like CCWealth, allow a person of color to capitalize on their cultural strengths instead of concentrating on what others may claim to be cultural weaknesses or deficits. In addition to this, I specifically incorporated Yosso's cultural wealth because her position as a Latina academic who works with the Latine community means she has an innate understanding of this specific culture (Latina Feminist Group, 2001). As described in the literature review, CCW is divided into the following six categories:

FIGURE 15

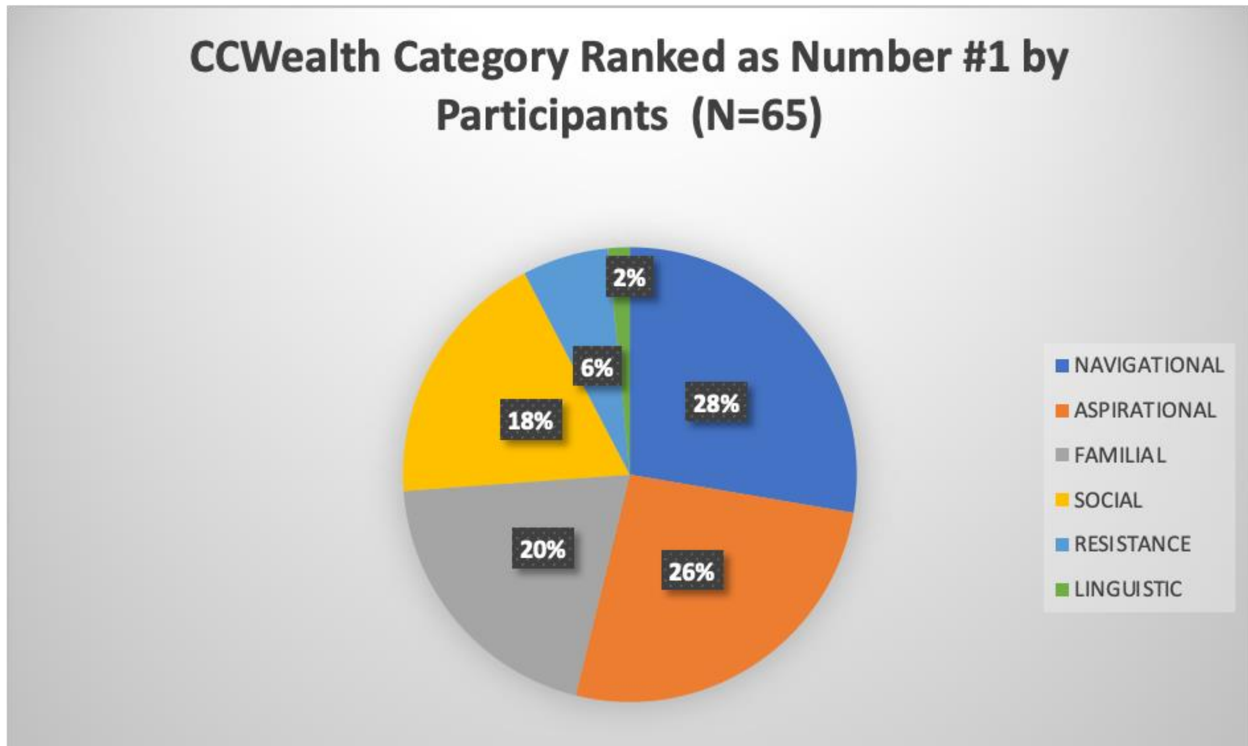
Figure 15-Categories of Community Cultural Wealth

Categories of Community Cultural Wealth		
Type of capital	Official Definition	Shorthand used in both workshop and survey
Aspirational	Is the capacity to preserve hope for future dreams despite actual and imagined obstacles. This is intended to represent the aim of education to achieve economic mobility despite inequalities.	Goals and dreams
Linguistic	Students' capacity to acquire communication skills via varied situations such as code-switching, switching between languages (translanguaging), or routinely translating for others	Language and communication skills
Familial	This term refers to the social and personal human resources students possess before starting higher education. These resources are derived from their extensive family and community networks.	Family support
Social	Support of peers and other social contacts such as friends or classmates	Support of peers/community
Navigational	Ability of pupils to traverse "social institutions," particularly higher education spaces. This is especially prevalent among first-generation students.	Ability to navigate the university system
Resistance	It derives from the struggles of communities of color to advocate and secure equal rights. This capital is derived from historical legacy of social justice enacted by their parents and community members.	Advocating needs
Note: These categories are from Yosso. (2005). Whose culture has capital? Race, Ethnicity and Education, 8(1), pp. 69–91		

Analyzing the CCW of Latine students at an emerging HSI is essential because it helps understand the student of color's mindset and personal priorities. If an institution of higher education truly wants to support this community of color, it must understand what areas of their

life hold the most cultural wealth or importance. The following table delves into the numerical results of the Qualtrics survey.

FIGURE 16
Figure 16 - CCWealth ranked by participants



The results of the Community Cultural Wealth survey question resulted in the top four most important categories being Navigational (28%) Aspirational (26%), Familial (20%), and Social (18%), so I chose to focus my discussion on these four areas. As discussed in the Methodology section on page 79, after ranking all the types of capital in the order of importance, the participants were prompted to answer the following short question: "In one sentence could you describe why the top category from your ranking is so important to you. Example: I ranked support from peers/social as category #1. I think support from friends is most important because you need friends to support you in college". The following section discusses the student rationale or digital testimonios for their most important category and what this signals about the Latine

participants' values in this study. Each capital subsection starts with four to six digital testimonios and then the discussion notes and analyzes the common themes.

Digital Testimonios Concerning Navigational + Aspirational Capital

The following excerpts were selected from survey participants to describe why they consider navigational capital to be of utmost importance to them (28%). All the words in bold were highlighted during In Vivo coding.

Navigational Capital

I think the university system is designed to root out those who lack the proper knowledge and experience, so coming in knowing how to navigate the application and college process is really important. Navigating these institutions is very difficult when you do not have any previous information or help to access the resources many white students either do not need or already know.

— Sara, a 19-year-old Latina of Columbian and Bangladeshi heritage

I think navigating the college system is important to understand because these spaces were not made for Latinx folks, they were made by white peoples for white people. Therefore, it can be very difficult to navigate being in college.

— Sofia, a 21-year-old Latinx of Mexican heritage

Making sure I have the right access and needs to my education is important to me as a Latinx student and also a female student that goes to a predominantly white school.

— Alex, a non-binary Latinx of Mexican American heritage

I think that providing resources and support in this area is critical for Latinx students to be successful in higher education, especially in navigating a predominantly white space.

— Cylia, a 19-year-old Latina of Mexican heritage

The four examples above were included in the analysis of the "Navigational" capital because they illustrate themes such as the "outsider" and the struggle that students of color experience at higher education institutions. All four excerpts above discuss the difficulty of navigating and negotiating spaces that were not made for students of color, specifically referencing race as a defining factor. More specifically, all four excerpts above reference the white race when discussing other students, spaces, or predominantly schools. This allusion to race affecting students' educational trajectory is well-documented, especially in higher education studies. More specifically in higher education, Whiteness is accepted as the norm and impacts the physical space, instruction, activities, and how individuals at these institutions think (Gusa, 2010; Harper & Hurtado, 2007). Iverson (2008, 2012) discovered that institutional Whiteness can have notable negative effects, such as the categorization of students of color as "outsiders". This is just one of the many examples that illustrate how institutional racism can be ingrained in universities or colleges. Taking this into account, no amount of racial or social justice initiatives on campus can create changes unless the role of Whiteness is questioned as well. Gusa (2010) created the phrase "White blindness" to describe how color evasive behaviors shows up in institutional policymaking decisions when other races are noticed or surveilled, but White racial behavior is never publicly addressed. While the terminology white blindness can be problematic due to its ableist nature, the theory behind Gusa’s terminology shows how color evasive

behaviors can ultimately shape the experiences of all students and may contribute to hostile campus environments, as they provoke further harassment and discrimination (Gusa, 2010).

In addition to references to the white race and Latine students feeling like outsiders, in vivo coding showed that the navigational capital is also intertwined with the identity of being a first-generation student. A first-generation student is an individual who is the first in their family to attend a 4-year institution and/or earn a bachelor's degree. Some examples of student digital testimonios that reference this are as follows:

The ability to navigate a college system is very important because I feel as a first-generation student would be very helpful to have a guide to college

— Valentina, a 21-year-old Latina of Mexican heritage

I think having the ability to navigate the college system because for a lot of first-generation students it can be scary or confusing to do things on our own and many times we are not being taught how things work or could look like. And some support would be really appreciated.

— Alejandra, a 19-year-old Latina of Mexican heritage

I ranked the ability to navigate college system as number one, because it's extremely difficult to find any assistance as a first generation student.

— Maria Jose, a 21-year-old Latina of Mexican heritage

When your parents don't know how to apply for college or know what FAFSA is. It is hard to figure out if you can even go to college. I am grateful for what my high school gave me, but after you leave it is up to you to figure out college by yourself.

— Martina, a 19-year-old Latina of Mexican American heritage

Hispanic Students are often times overlapping with first generation students and students do not have the resources or knowledge to navigate college, such as how to apply for financial aid, scholarships, talking to advisors, applying for jobs, grad school and much more.

— Maria, a 21-year-old Latine of Venezuelan heritage

As a Latina first generation college student, not being able to navigate higher education was one of the biggest barriers and sources of isolation through my time at the (University of Oregon). I would constantly miss out of opportunities and find myself steps behind my peers because I was unaware of they way that institutions works.

— Dulce, a 21-year-old Latina of Mexican heritage

As we can see from the five testimonios above, a predominant theme is "first-generation students" and the unique obstacles they face. There is a notable relationship between being a first-generation student and the type of higher education institution they choose to attend. It has been documented that a PWI has, on average, 46% first-generation students, while minority-serving institutions have higher rates. HSI can have up to 64% first-generation students, meaning this is the kind of institution that commonly recruits and retains first-gen students (NASPA, 2017). According to the responses to the eighth question on demographics, "*Do you identify as a*

first-generation student?", 68% of Latine students surveyed for this dissertation identify as the first generation. This goes in line with the data presented by Clayton et al. (2017) and overall national trends, whereby students of color make up the majority of first-generation students currently enrolled in universities (NASPA, 2017).

Another variable worth highlighting about first-generation students' parents' educational qualification, which has been determined to be one of the most significant indicators of persistence and completion of higher education degrees (Choy, 2001; Nunez & Cuccaro-Alamin, 1998). Choy (2001) determined that, in terms of student success, a parent's highest level of education was more influential than their socioeconomic status, academic preparation, or even parental participation. Therefore, at an emerging HSI, which in theory attracts higher levels of first-generation students, initiatives should be focused on retention and providing student support.

A similar overlap of being a first-generation student was also found in the next CCWealth category, "Aspirational" capital (26%).

I rated Goals and Dreams as my category #1 because I am always working hard to reach the dream of graduating college and that encouragement to keep going past the adversity is important to success in a PWI.

— Claudia, a 19-year-old Latina of Mexican heritage

I ranked goals and dreams first because my goals are fueled by not just me, but my family. I feel like I am here because of my parents and their sacrifices. Whenever I doubt myself or question why I am here, I think of my core reason which is my family. They constantly remind me to do it for me, however, I am representing us all.

— Gina, a 21-year-old Latina of Mexican heritage

I think the aspirational aspect is most important to me because this degree is not just for me. It is for my family and my community. The privilege to access this level of education could be a way to attain social mobility in hopes of having better quality of life is what keeps me going through the horrific times that come with navigating school.

— Julissa, a 22-year-old female Latine of Mexican heritage

I ranked aspirational capital as number one as because I want to honor my parents sacrifices and work to get me here. Even through the toughest times my dreams and goals is what keeps me wanting a better future

— Zoe, a 18-year-old Latina of Mexican heritage

I said Goals / Dreams for number one because a lot of us Latinx students are the first in our household to go to college/ first gen. Therefore having these goals and dreams to motivate you is very important

— Mayra, a 19-year-old Latina of Mexican heritage

In terms of aspirational capital, areas of importance to the participants were dreams, adversity, first-generation, and family. If University of Oregon authentically wants to support its Latine students and, by extension, hopefully, recruit more students to reach the federal requirement of 25%, then it should make the effort to focus its initiatives on these specific areas where students feel they are struggling. The digital testimonios above reference this struggle with the following phrases: *going past the adversity*; *sacrifices*; *even through the toughest times; going through the horrific times that come with navigating school*.

I am highlighting these phrases to illustrate that educational studies on first-generation students show they must work much harder to achieve the same level of success as their non-

first-generation classmates. For example, after three years of college or university classes, first-generation students are more likely to work more hours, drop out of a 4-year university in their second year, have fewer credit hours, and experience difficulties getting on-campus housing and so resort to living off campus (Choy, 2001; Pascarella et al., 2004). According to Choy (2001), after five years, first-generation students exhibit a lower persistence rate and degree completion rate (13%) than their non-first-generation classmates (33%). All of these figures are concerning and show why a university must offer extra support and resources to help first-generation students so they can successfully complete their degrees.

To illustrate how first-generation students miss out on essential tips and information, I share here a testimonio from a 19-year-old Mexicana first-generation student at University of Oregon. This was Ximena's response to if she ever felt out of place on campus.

Yeah, I want to say that my what I guess one of the biggest examples was my freshman year, it was during COVID. So everything was online. Nothing was in person. So not only was I not meeting people, but every time I was walking into my classes, a lot of the teachers would start off asking how everybody was doing, how freshman year was treating them. And people would constantly talk about like, how their parents told them about what a college experience should look like, how their parents advise them on what to do. Basically, it felt like everybody that I was around in classes, even if it was teachers, advisors, it constantly felt like, everybody wasn't giving me their own personal advice. They were telling me things that somebody else told them, which made it very difficult . . . I don't have parents that can vouch for that same experience… So it was just very difficult. It once again felt like high school where I had to learn everything on my own, but also pick myself up on my own, and also preach for myself and advocate for myself when I was succeeding, or when I was doing things right. So I definitely felt very alone my freshman year. And that was definitely one of the I think, one of the weakest parts

or experiences that I had, where I felt like, just like this environment, not just higher education, but (University of Oregon[2]) specifically wasn't for me.

The poignant feeling Ximena described of being a fraud because she lacked the same "knowledge" or "experiences" as her peers is referred to in academia as imposter syndrome. This theory was first studied among high-achieving women (Clance & Imes, 1978). Their work was further expanded on by several academics, some of who believed that imposter syndrome is especially pertinent among students of color and/or first-generation students in higher education (Edwards, 2019). In addition, Edwards' research and Ximena's testimonio both illustrate how being first-generation and a student of color can lead to a decreased sense of belonging.

Overall, considering the digital testimonios concerning aspirational and navigational capital, the Latine students that ranked them as their top priority did so because these two capitals help them negotiate various detrimental factors such as feeling like an outsider, the unspoken Whiteness in structures, and the overall lack of knowledge or difficulty because of being a first-generation student. All these detrimental factors are important to keep in mind because University of Oregon's HSI initiatives should not only promote aspirational and navigational capital but also be mindful of the negative effects that first-generation and/or Latine students are more likely to experience during their university careers.

Digital Testimonios concerning Familial and Social Capital

The third category of CCWealth that was found to be pertinent to participants was familial capital. To illustrate the importance of the family connection, nuclear and extended, among Latine students, excerpts from the online survey are presented found below.

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[2] **Identifiable participant details were struck from original transcript using ellipsis*

Familial Capital Testimonios (20% of Participants)

I very much identify more closely with my Latino heritage, and because of that I know that not only my grandparents but my cousins and aunts and uncles did not get the same opportunities I do living in the US. I need to be able to support them, and live up to my family, and push myself so I can take care of my family as they age. I feel it is my responsibility to be able to financially take care of my parents and my family.

— Emma, a 19-year-old Latina of Chilean heritage

Mi familia sacrifice everything in hopes I can experience a life they never could.

— Teresa, a 21-year-old Latina of Salvadorian and Belizean heritage

I believe that family support is the most important because without it,i don't think I would be able to pursue my own goals and dreams. In a sense I feel like my goals and dreams are there's also

— Josefina, a 22-year-old Latina of Mexican heritage

I ranked family support as category #1. I think support from family is valued because in latinx families it's the center of everything and can give you motivation during college.

— Manuela, a 22-year-old Latina of Mexican heritage

All four of the digital testimonios above point to how crucial family support systems are to Latine students. Words such as *sacrifice, motivation, experiencing a life they never could,* and *financial responsibility* illustrate the strong family bonds that characterize Latine communities specifically. This is a strong contrast with the ideals of individualism and meritocracy that characterize US society (Bullock, 2013; Williams & Reppond, 2020). Traditional PWI universities and colleges are structured in a way that rewards individual success whether it be based on each student's GPAs, individual scholarships, or once-a-year individual awards in every

department. All of these individual milestones narrowly focus on each student's trajectory to graduation but do not take into account one element of motivation for college persistence—family ties. To graduate diverse future leaders and promote a diverse workforce, administration, and faculty must understand that investing in the paths of students entails investing in their families as well (Covarrubias, 2021). Familial support and pride influence Latine perseverance in higher education; therefore, it is a crucial area of interest at an emerging HSI. To illustrate this, I share a testimonio by interviewee Gabriela, a 21-year-old Mexican-American:

Once you constantly keep closing the door on someone, how do you expect them to, you know, keep trying to open another one. And it's really hard. And I think the only reason why I had the perseverance to keep doing it, like regardless of anytime somebody shut the door on me was because I, you know, had a mom that constantly supported me, like, my mom thinks I'm the brightest person on this planet. And it motivates me very much, my brother thinks I'm the most hardworking person he's ever met. All my friends, you know, give me this emotional support to do things. But not everybody has that. You know, not everybody has a family that supports everything they're doing.

The familial connection to parents and siblings is an essential component of Latine students' lives, despite many of them relocating to University of Oregon. Several participants commented during the workshop that despite not living in the same home or city as their parents, they still spoke to them numerous times a week if not daily. This goes in line with the existing literature on the strong familism pride among Latines even as they enter adulthood (Covarrubias, 2021). This serves as another example that Latine communities, much like indigenous communities, are anchored in community and family as opposed to a more popular individualistic mindset (Rincon et al., 2020). This theme was also touched on in the short

answers relating to community/social capital. For example, participant Maria Fernanda, a 21-year-old Mexican American Latina, described how both familial and social capitals were important to her because *"in college your friends are your family".* Furthermore, another participant noted the comfort of being with others that look similar to you:

> *I rank family support because we all start from low income and work our way up. Going to an institution of high population of white people is hard. And being around our own skin is more comforting.*
>
> *— Camila, a 20-year-old Latina of Mexican and Nicaraguan heritage*

Although this participant's family connections are the most important, she also takes comfort in being in the company of others of *"our own skin*", which can be inferred as individuals who look like her or the Latine community in general. The overlap of familial and social capital was found throughout survey responses on CCWealth. This is not surprising, as there is a very small numerical difference between Familial (20%) and Social Capital (18%). As illustrated by participant Luciana, a 21-year-old non-binary Latina of Cuban heritage,

> *#4 (social capital) is one of the most important to me, because i felt extremely alienated first year, and although i was grateful to have great resources, i felt truly more able to succeed once i found a community.*

My fieldnotes show students' comments continually referencing a floor where Latine students could choose to live with 20 or so members of their community or an academic

residential community. Many of the older undergraduates at the workshops expressed it was not well-known or publicized when they came to UOregon but they heard good things from younger peers. Interview participant Selena described how discovering this mini Latine community in the residential halls of a PWI made all the difference for her pre-college nerves:

> *I ended up on this (website) page that said, arcs[3] are first-year, like figs[4]. So the first-year programs, and then I see their Latinx arc, and I'm like, What is this? And I was just like, oh my gosh, Latinx students, like we're living in the same dorm. So there was a little form that you have to fill out to apply to be in the arc. . .And so I write this whole little thing. You know, I've poured my heart into it, into why I want to be in the arc. And I want to say maybe a couple weeks later, I get a call from someone just being like, hey, so like, we have your decision, like, do you want to hear like now we're not and I'm on the phone and like, I had to think about it, because I (have) really bad social anxiety. . . And so I was just like, yeah, and she tells me that I got in and I was just like, oh my gosh, thank you so much. And then I hang up and I started screaming. Like I told my parents I was just like, like, not only am I going to school, but I'm going to be like in this like, Arc and like, it's like a dorm where like apparently only like Latinx students are in there.*
>
> *— Selena, a 19-year-old female of Salvadorian heritage*

This particular testimonio shows how a Latine-specific dorm created a sense of community for this first-generation freshman at UOregon. She expanded on this experience during our one-on-one interview, saying her parents were very happy and much more at peace with her living in this specific dorm. Selena noted that, although it was not even a whole floor of a dorm building, it went a long way toward making her feel more comfortable and at ease at a PWI. To emphasize this point, the following testimonio given during an in-depth interview with

---

[3] ARC stands for an academic residence community already established at University of Oregon dormitories. They are voluntary and can be categorized according to common interest, ethnicity, or even major, such as a sizeable business student ARC.

[4] Figs refers to first-year interest group already established at University of Oregon.

Charlie discusses how when she first arrived at UOregon, she struggled to find a community and how her living situation did not make the transition easier.

> Interviewee question: *What were some of the culture shocks you felt when you walked into the dorm?*

> *Charlie: I guess not seeing Latinos everywhere. Thankfully, my roommate, she was Latina. I guess we shared that little cultural thing. But other than that, there was just a lot of white people. And like, I was like, where are the Mexicans hiding? Like, are they in their dorms? Or like, are they just eating tacos somewhere? I don't know. So yeah, it was kind of a big culture shock. Of course, like if you go to their (University of Oregon official) website, they're like, we're super diverse. And they have pictures of all these like Asian students and black students and Latino students. And then you get here and you're like, What the fuck? Yeah, like, where are they? Yeah, one of my sister's friends also went here. She was like a non-traditional student. And she told me she's like, yeah, just go to the Multicultural Center. And I'm like, I don't have to do that, like, why do I have to find everyone hiding in this one shared room? They should just show up everywhere (at University of Oregon).*
>
> *— Charlie, a 21-year-old Chicana of Mexican heritage*

Selena's and Charlie's experiences of dorm living seriously influencing their college experience coincides with the existing educational research on this topic. Cheng's (2005) study discovered that 42 students selected resident halls as the most crucial area on campus to find a sense of community. According to Wagner et al. (2019), students in higher institutions learn about themselves, society, and university hierarchies outside of class, particularly in their living environment. Scholarship has also revealed extremely diverse perspectives on the climate for racial diversity in college residence halls, with white students having a more positive and hopeful sense of such spaces than their BIPOC peers. This is consistent with studies on the campus racial climate, according to which students of color are more perceptive of covert and overt forms of

racism (e.g., Rankin & Reason, 2005; Johnson, 2003). Several qualitative research studies have shown how racist environments affect students of color living in residential halls who are forced to continuously defend their race, ethnicity, or culture from their white peers (Hotchkins & Dancy, 2017). Hotchkins and Dancy's (2017) study also noted that students of color who resided on campus frequently sought out areas outside their residence halls to escape or avoid frequent microaggressions.

My survey found various instances of microaggressions occurring outside the classroom and in residential halls and the student center almost exclusively. Verbal microaggressions will be discussed in the second half of this chapter in much more detail. However, one example that happened in a dorm bathroom at University of Oregon shows how something as innocent as washing your face in public spaces can result in verbal harassment.

> *My freshman year of college I was washing my face in the shared bathroom in my dorm hall. I always put a headband or bandana around my head when I wash my face. This particular time I had put a bandana on, and I was washing my face when a white girl in my hall walked in the bathroom and said "You look like a real chola"*
>
> — *Sandra, a 22-year-old Latina of Mexican heritage*

The microaggressions detailed above show how a derogatory term *chola* was directed toward a Latine student by her white dorm neighbor, with no provocation. This testimonio illustrates how microaggressions in residential halls are an unfortunate reality for Latine students and having a Latine-specific dorm building could help ameliorate the frequency of these interactions. If University of Oregon would start to offer an optional residential hall specifically

for the 25% of Latine students they plan to recruit, they would be following the trend of other PWIs throughout the nation. Other institutions have developed themed living communities for students of color in light of the racialized realities in dormitories (Patton et al., 2017; Sáenz, 2010). Through these living arrangements, underrepresented students have better chances of finding a community and/or a built-in support system (Sáenz, 2010). To be fair, residential halls for underrepresented students are not without their own controversy. Patton et al. (2017) discussed how BIPOC dorm initiatives can encounter significant public criticism based on erroneous allusions that institutional segregation is being upheld by these residence halls. However, these dorms are optional and not mandatory for students of color. To illustrate this, the current Latine ARC at University of Oregon is open to Latine students but also anyone else interested in living there. To be clear, non-Latine students have applied and been accepted into the Latine ARC and Latine residential floor at University of Oregon. By expanding the Latine ARC beyond a floor to a whole residential hall and keeping the same open-door policy for all students, UOregon would give students of color more options. The provision of more options translates into more safe or secure spaces, where microaggression may be lessened.

It is understandable that Latine students, a mere 15% of the PWI student body, can get lost among the masses of 20,000 undergraduate UOregon students. Taking this into consideration, Latine students may commandeer certain small "secure" spaces and attempt to foster their community connections there, such as the Multicultural Center. In the context of this project, the Latine academic residential community would also be classified as a small-scale "secure" space for Latine students. As previously touched on in the literature review, a low sense of belongingness can play a detrimental role in familial and social capital. To further understand student perspectives on the topics of safety, belongingness, and diversity, I analyzed the

responses to the microaggression matrix section of my survey. The microaggressions matrix included questions that discuss the actual or perceived quality of interpersonal, student, and faculty interactions on campus. Therefore, it involves instructors, staff, administrators, and other students' degree of respect for students of color's needs, abilities, and potential (Hurtado, 1992; Rankin, 2001). The complete list of 10 questions can be found in Appendix 4.

The addition of microaggression matrix tables to Chapter Four was purposefully done because as touched on during the literature review, these questions are based on student perceptions and interactions on campus. Considering this, it is impossible to discuss CCWealth without mentioning microaggressions, as microaggressions always influence students' CCWealth. Some examples of Latine perceptions collected with the Microaggression Matrix (MAGG Matrix) that also aid in helping understand CCWealth can be seen below

FIGURE 17

Figure 17-MAGG Matrix Question #2: Belonging

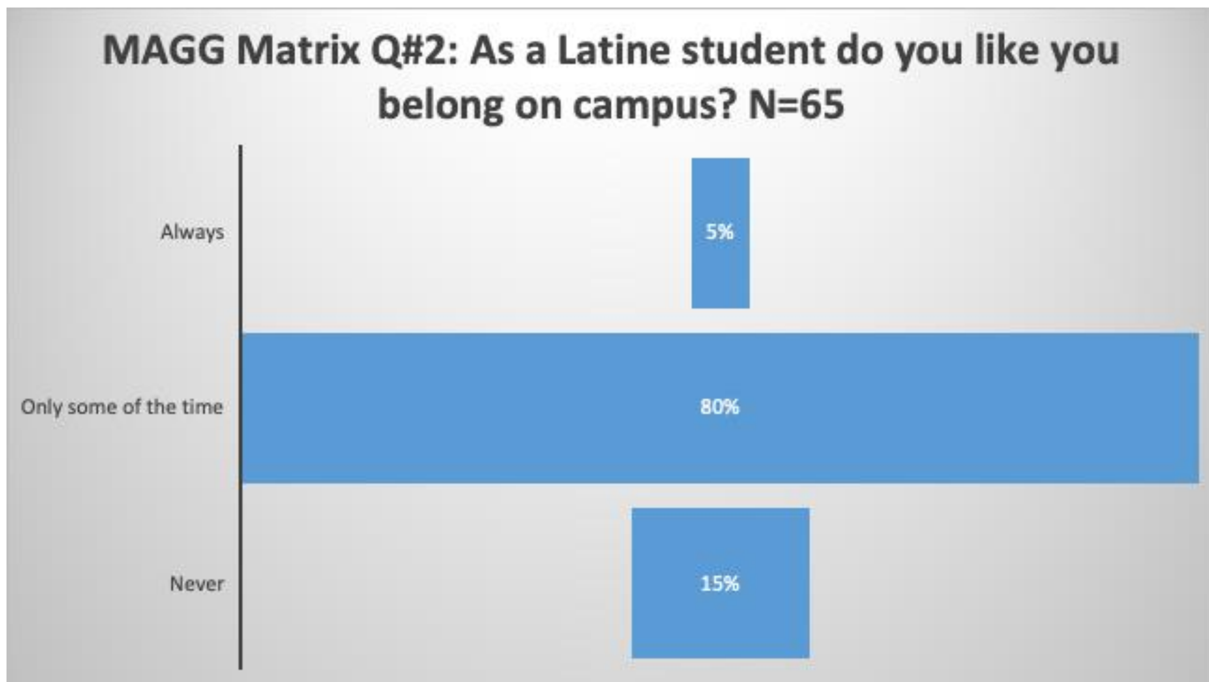


FIGURE 18

Figure 18-MAGG Matrix Question #5: Safety

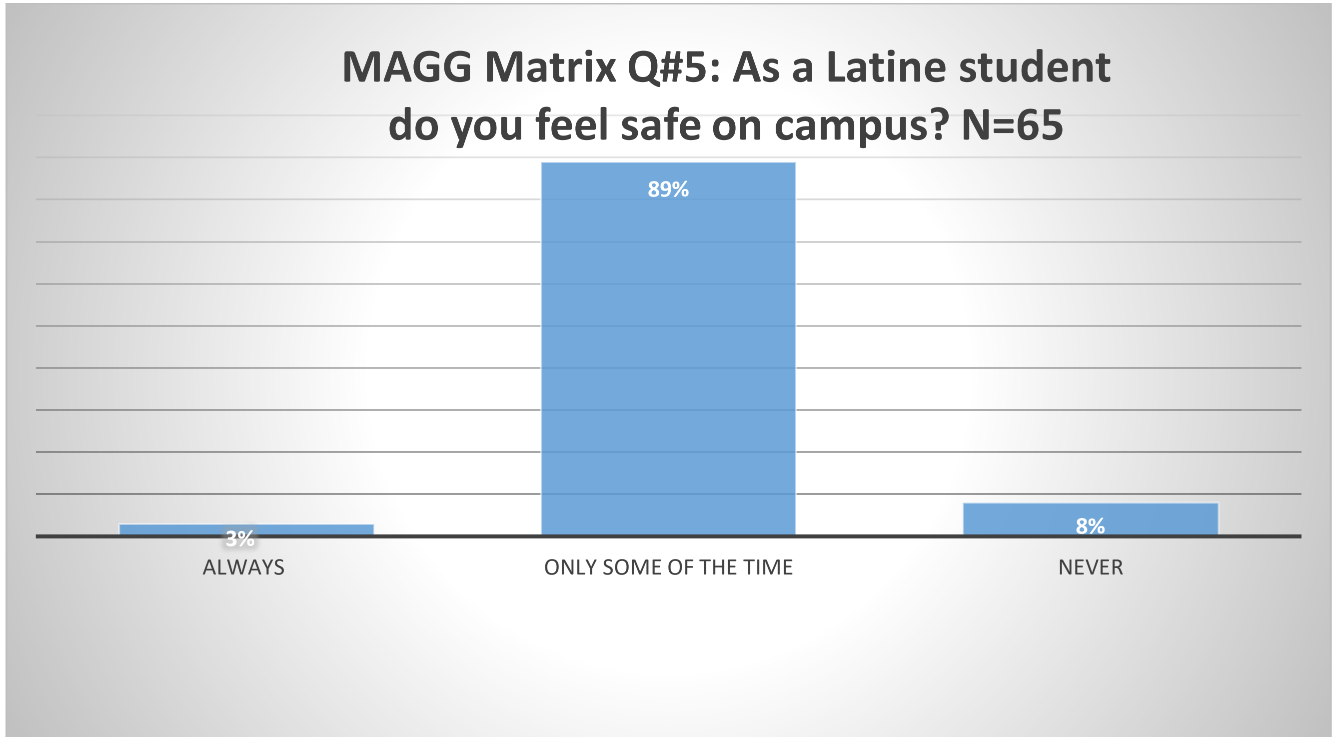
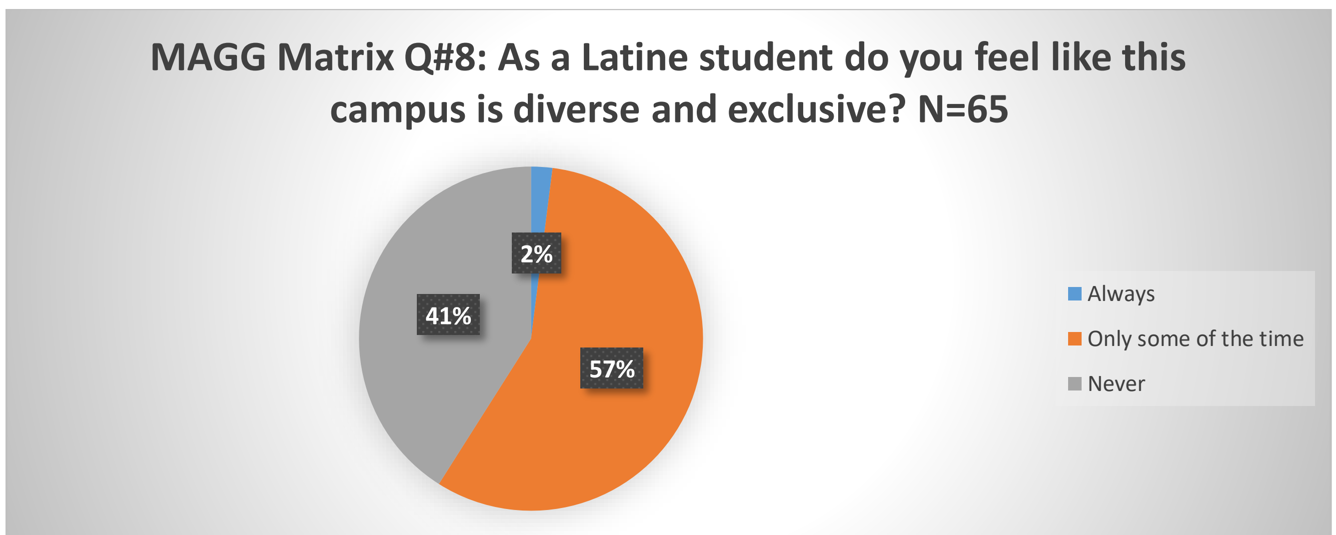


FIGURE 19

Figure 19-MAGG Matrix Question #8: Diversity



Looking at Microaggression Matrix Questions 2, 5, and 8 (Tables 17, 18, and 19), we can gain a better understanding of Latine perceptions at this specific emerging HSI. As previously mentioned, the numerical survey data gives us a more general or macro representation of CCWealth and microaggressions factors on campus, whereby the 1–5 sentence digital testimonios speak to the micro level or one individual's experience. All three of the above questions relate to the internal feelings of the participants at a PWI and how it affects their sense of community on campus. Looking at the charts above we can conclude the majority of Latine students do feel like they sometimes belong on campus (80%) only some of the time. This is a sharp contrast to students who never feel like they belong (8%) and minimal amount (3%) of Latine students who always feel like they belong. Belongingness among students of color is important to focus on because of its influence in their school behavior.

According to scholar DeLeon Gray a sense of belonging at school entails experiencing acceptance, respect, inclusion, and support in a learning environment. Furthermore Gray notes that students who feel like they belong at school are typically more energized, more likely to stay on task and more likely to choose to be in the present and collaborative in the school environment. On the other hand, students who do not feel a sense of belonging struggle to devote their entire cognitive resources to tasks and frequently struggle with their emotional health, as students seek to avoid environments in which they feel alienated (Bowen, 2021). Taking into consideration 80% of students surveyed only 'sometimes' feel like they belong, the vast majority of Latine student do not have a high sense of belonging on University of Oregon campus. This is monumental information as this lack of belonging could negatively influence this communities academic and social endeavors on the UOregon campus.

As a disclaimer, it should be noted that all the participants of this study belong to Latine student-focused clubs. Therefore, their sense of belongingness on campus may differ from other Latine students that are not part of weekly clubs where they get to meet with large groups of people of the same ethnicity and routinely celebrate cultural events together. Regardless the belongingness question has negative results, which should be a main concern during the emerging HSI transition. According to survey results for Question 5, only a small percentage of of Latine students (8%) feel unsafe on campus; so this need not be an area of concern for University of Oregon during the HSI transition.

The responses to Question 8 (Table 19), however, are the most concerning, as a small number of Latine students surveyed classified the university as diverse and accepting. For example, 41% of participants said that they never felt the university was diverse and accepting, and 57% said they only felt that way some of the time. Very few of the student surveyed (2%) said the university always feels diverse and accepting. One could theorize that this finding highlights an area of concern, as it goes against the ideals posted on the university website and promotional materials. For example, the university website claims that they employ an IDEAL framework, which stands for Inclusion, Diversity, Evaluation, Achievement, and Leadership (University Official Website, 2023). Unfortunately, survey results show that this is not reflected in students of color's experiences on campus, especially not University of Oregon's Latine students.

Throughout the workshop, my fieldnotes noted this dissatisfaction and unexpected comparisons that were made to Oregon State University, which is in the same state as University of Oregon. Oregon State University has a comparable student body, with only 8,000 more students than UOregon, and has also publicly discussed aspirations of becoming an emerging

HSI. In my workshop fieldnotes, I noted a 21-year-old female Mexican American participant who shared the anecdote that her older sister chose to attend Oregon State University and was surprised to see that UOregon's rival school had a dedicated Latine Cultural Center since the 1970s. To be fair, UOregon is much further ahead in the game in terms of faculty of color representation and a successful Spanish Heritage Program than Oregon State University. That does not, however, cancel out that Oregon State University has a dedicated cultural building for the Latine community on their campus for close to 50 years. University of Oregon has a Multicultural Center to accommodate its students of color, which is much appreciated, but it has limitations due to size and it being a shared space. For example, the second Latine workshop I conducted was at UOregon’s Multicultural Center, and although there were only 20 participants, half of them didn’t have seats and had to stand during the one-hour workshop. In addition, around 10 other students of color, not Latine, were in the same shared space doing homework, conversing with their friends or listening to music. This comparison between Oregon State University's Latine Center and UOregon's Multicultural Center is important because as discussed in the literature review, there is no specific protocol for becoming an HSI or emerging HSI. For this reason, scholars in the field always suggest looking at comparable universities in your area to see what works and doesn't for their Latine students (Laden, 2004).

The most surprising survey results on CCWealth were that these specific Latine students do not follow the trends of other researchers who put significant importance on the Latine student identity being linked to language use (Valenzuela, 1999). Of all the participants surveyed, only one individual ranked "Linguistic Capital" as being the most important type of capital. Lupe, a freshman at UOregon, gave her rationale for ranking linguistic capital as her most important category of CCWealth:

I would say language is a huge barrier for many people. I went to high school here is Eugene and there were students that didn't speak English and they believed that they couldn't succeed in school because of this barrier.

— Lupe, an 18-year-old Latina of Mexican heritage

This participant's thought process goes in line with scholar Valenzuela's findings that Latine students can struggle to achieve academic success without English language proficiency. Valenzuela refers to the subtraction or stripping away of Latine language and culture by forced assimilation as subtractive schooling (1999). Valenzuela's book is a seminal work in education. Therefore, at the onset of the project, I assumed subtractive language would be an issue for Latine students at UOregon. However, this hypothesis was incorrect, and this was not the case for 64 of the 65 participants.

Upon further reflection, I theorized some possible reasons our participants did not go through the subtractive schooling that Valenzuela wrote about. First, Valenzuela described the stripping away of one's language in order to succeed academically as a common occurrence in K-12 schooling, more specifically, a high school in her particular case. Therefore, the survey participants may have already experienced this "subtractive" process as younger students, before arriving at the University of Oregon campus. Secondly, I would argue that Valenzuela's seminal study took place 24 years ago in California, when the social/political environment was quite different. This is to mean that speaking Spanish was criticized even then, but not so openly by numerous politicians and even a president. In addition, Latine parents perhaps did not fear the consequences of teaching their children Spanish in terms of legally sanctioned racial profiling.

Since the election of the 45th president, the English-Only movement in the United States has reached a fever pitch, with an uptick in racial profiling and violent altercations due to the use of Spanish in public spaces (Bonilla-Silva, 2018).

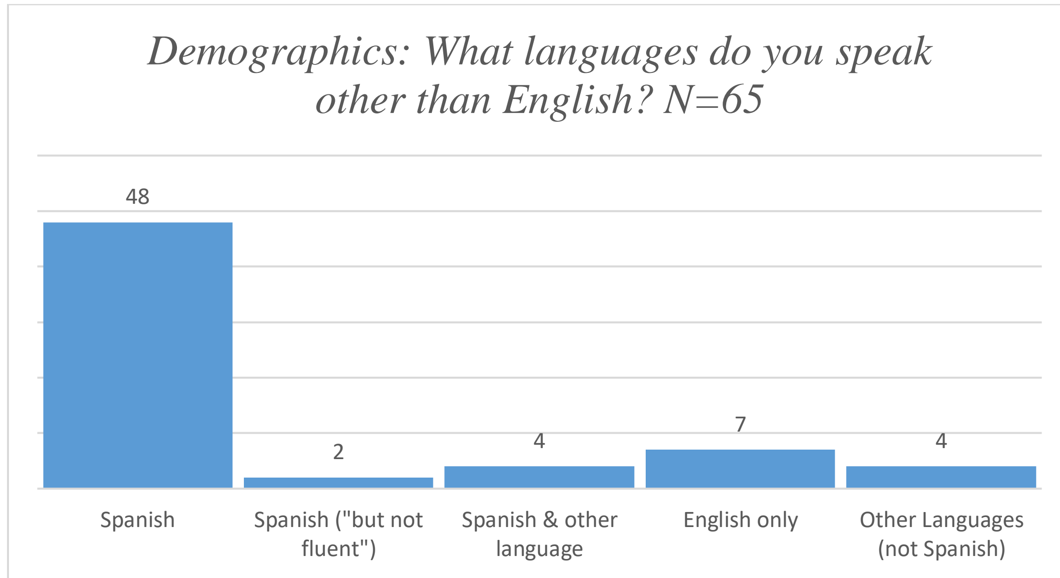
In certain social spaces, speaking a language other than English can, unfortunately, be met by a volatile sense of patriotism, and even public figures have reverted to verbally assaulting others with token phrases such as "he should speak English while in the United States"[5] (Bonilla-Silva, 2019). Racial profiling is very prevalent in modern society and even written into law with Arizona's SB1040, also known as the "Show me your papers" law where racial profiling is legally upheld by assuming one's undocumented status according to how an individual looks or sounds (Lugo-Lugo & Bloodsworth-Lugo, 2014).

Lastly, it is important to note that, according to my survey, language and identity are not intertwined for this younger Latine community at UOregon. According to the demographic survey results, only 10% of participants agreed with the statement that you have to speak Spanish in order to identify as Latine. The vast majority surveyed disagreed with this statement (90%), and one even made the comment in the accompanying text box that it was *"super old school"* to believe that stereotype. The chart below illustrates the second languages spoken by the 65 participants.

[5] Although this has occurred with several public figures such as Rep. Alexandra Ocasio-Cortez, this is a specific reference to the 45th president telling Rep. Jeb Bush via interview to "speak English while in the United States" in 2015 (Tani, 2015).

FIGURE 20

Figure 20 - Languages Spoken by Participants



To review, 89% of the interviewees self-identified as speaking a language other than English. As expected, Spanish was the most popular choice, with 54 of 65 participants speaking it. Other languages that came up as third languages were Arabic, Korean, Catalan, and the indigenous language of Mixteco. Seven of the participants identified as English monolinguals, but the heritage for all includes one or two parents of Latin American descent. The most surprising data in terms of linguistic capital was Latine-identifying individuals that spoke English and other languages such as Swahili (2) and Chinese (2). Therefore, it can be said that this is a very diverse group of multilingual Latine individuals. These students illustrate how being Latine is not monolithic and their language repertoire can or cannot include Spanish. Taking this into account, the varied demographic information may be one of the reasons for low linguistic capital among this group of Latine students.

Another reason mentioned during my in-depth interview with Gabriela may be a reflection of the social media phenomenon of the No Sabo Kids, which embraces first- and second-generation children of Latine families that do not speak 'proper' Spanish.

> *It's like a niche group, sorta where it's just like the (Latine) kids who grew up not speaking Spanish at all. Like, I guess at one point, their parents just decided not to teach them Spanish, which I understand why they wouldn't want to teach them and stuff like that. But they pretty much just get made fun of for like, just improper uses of Spanish. Like saying no sabo instead of no se. I know a lot of kids make fun of them, but like, cut them some slack. Like, it was not their choice.*
>
> — *Carolina, a 20-year-old Chicana of Mexican heritage*

To illustrate this, two Latine participants in this study who self-identified as English and Spanish speakers made a point to explain that they were not fluent in Spanish, just conversational, despite the survey not asking for these details. Lastly, I want to point out that language may not be that important to this group of Latine students because they go to a public 4-year university where taking a second language is a requirement to graduate. According to the number of language classes offered at UOregon, Spanish is a popular option and the only language that consistently offers online and summer options. In the 2022–2023 school year alone, there were 19 different sections of Spanish classes, averaging 26 students each (Peñalosa, 2023). In addition to this, there is a striving Spanish Heritage Language program at University of Oregon with a curriculum of seven distinct classes and over 90 students (Boyero Agudo, 2023)[6]

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[6] Peñalosa and Boyero Agudo (personal communication, April 2023) have worked for Romance Language department and Spanish Heritage Language program at University of Oregon for the last five years. Therefore, they have the authority to provide these student numbers with both programs.

Therefore, speaking with some fluency in a second language is the norm for students on the University of Oregon campus, and Spanish is widely taught/learned by non-Latine students. Of course, there is no way of pinpointing the exact reason for the low score of linguistic capital, as it is outside the purview of this study. Regardless, it is an interesting trend to highlight as we discuss CCWealth and a possible aspect to explore in future studies.

To conclude this discussion section on Latine experiences at UOregon, there are infinite ways to improve Latine belonging and sense of inclusion on campus. However, for the scope of this dissertation, I am purposely making connections to Yosso's theory of CCWealth. The results of my survey show that the most prevalent themes are navigational, aspirational, familial, and social capital among Latine students. Familial capital and social capital, the third and fourth most important categories, inevitably had a certain amount of overlap as both are related to the Latine sense of belonging and cultural rejection of individualistic values.

Finding According to RQ2: Microaggression Trends on Campus

As previously defined in the literature review section, Yosso et al. (2009) extended an older theory of microaggressions by applying the lens of critical race theory. They did this to investigate and comprehend racial microaggressions faced by Latine students in higher education. The authors determined there are three categories of racial microaggressions: interpersonal microaggressions, racial jokes, and institutional microaggressions. Further subsections of these categories are verbal and non-verbal microaggressions. As referenced in Chapter Two, Yosso et al.'s (2009) categories of racial microaggressions are as follows:

FIGURE 21

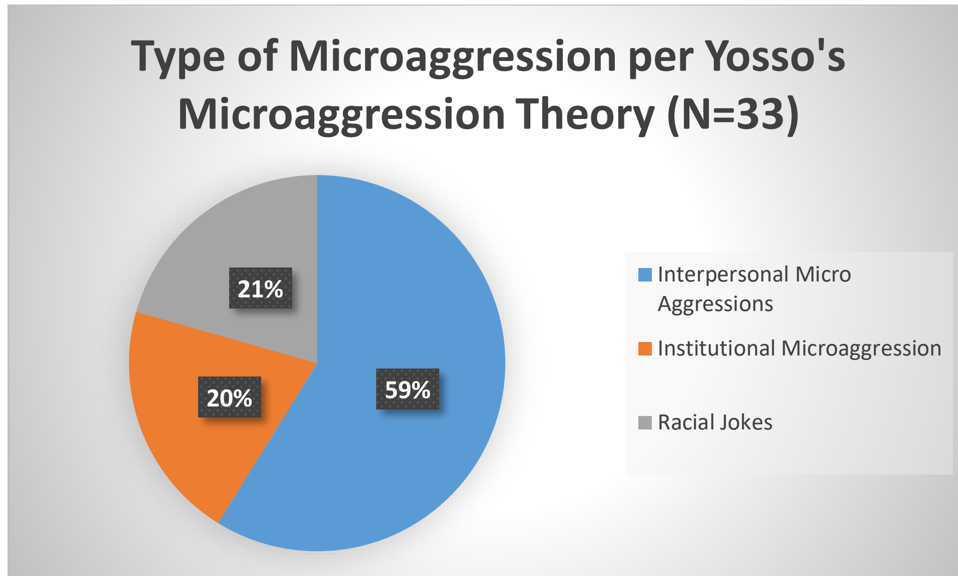
Figure 21-Categories and Subcategories for Racial Microaggressions

Categories and Subcategories for Racial Microaggressions	
Interpersonal microaggressions	are racial insults made to Latine students verbally or non-verbally by fellow students, teachers, teaching assistants, or other people in professional or social settings. Due to these persistent interpersonal assaults, Latine students may feel their presence on campus violates the "natural" condition or campus norms.
Racial jokes	Most frequently appeared in the form of offensive verbal statements under the guise of being a joke. They are made in the presence of, or directly to, Latina/o students in social circumstances. Racial jokes are attacks because of their undeniable purpose and reflect an alarming level of social acceptance of racial slurs and media stereotypes (such as *beaner* and *wetback*).
Institutional microaggressions	Creates barriers to building the community necessary for Latine student retention, such as little to no faculty of color, a curriculum with no readings from scholars of color, and a lack of diversity among students.
Subcategories for all three	Verbal and non-verbal microaggressions
Source: Yosso et al. (2009).	

By focusing on these three categories, Yosso et al. (2009) examined how Latine students specifically react to microaggressions and negotiate hostile campus climates.

FIGURE 22

Figure 22- Participant's types of Microaggressions



To begin, the table above shows that interpersonal microaggressions (59%) outweigh the other two types of microaggressions. Even when institutional microaggression (20%) and racial jokes (21%) are combined, they still do not occur as often as interpersonal microaggressions. It is important to note that only 63% of the Latine participants chose to share their lived experiences of microaggressions in this survey. This means that roughly, for every two participants in my study, only one recognized or purposely named what they experienced as microaggressions. However, all participants filled out the portion of the survey that asked about campus perception and racial climate that asked about overall feelings of exclusion or not belonging on campus (see Appendix 4 - Microaggression Matrix: 10 Questions). When students were prompted to describe microaggression on UOregon's campus, some compelling comments were made that highlighted the grey area of microaggressions.

So far I have not experienced a micro aggression or at least was not aware of it.

— Florencia, an 18-year-old Latina of Mexican heritage

I do not think I have, maybe I'm just used to it and don't notice it.

— Rodrigo, an 18-year-old Hispanic[7] *male of Mexican heritage*

This vagueness or uncertainty concerning microaggressions was most notable when discussing institutional or non-verbal microaggressions. For example, this is a non-verbal microaggression coded as interpersonal and institutional > student to student.

Furthermore, participant Isabela, a 19-year-old Chicana, added the following:

It feels systemic in a lot of ways. Like no one ever says "I hate latinas". But in a lot of ways, I feel unwelcome in most spaces. No one wants to talk to you, no one wants to collaborate with you, no one wants to work with you. So I feel unvalued or that I made the mistake of coming here.

Non-verbal microaggression produced interesting data because, as seen in the excerpt above, they are enacted by peers, classmates, and even in specific spaces where some Latine students do not feel welcomed. Despite this compelling non-verbal microaggression, they were particularly difficult to code, as it is impossible to decipher another person's movements, for example, if the Latine student is being stared at by their white classmate because they are Latine

[7] In the survey, I asked participants what term they use to refer to themselves: Latina/o/x/e, Hispanic or Other. Incorporating testimonio framework means allowing participants to represent themselves the way they want. For this reason, every testimonio participant is described using their preferred term.

or because they are reading the text on the Latine student's sweater. I cannot feasibly code non-verbal microaggression because I am missing the other individual thoughts/words from this interaction. Overall, I was utterly surprised by the number of testimonios I was able to collect that recounted microaggressions on UOregon campus. Isolated from the other data and put into microaggression-specific table on Word, it resulted in 23 pages of data. However, taking into account the scope of this dissertation, I will only highlight two unanticipated and striking microaggression variables I found while coding my data.

Mechanisms of Causation Coding

To gain an overall better understanding of my findings, I believe it is important to revisit the exact steps used in Causation Coding. Once I collected my 43 microaggressions from Latine students, I took the following steps to code them.

Steps for Coding Microaggressions (Categorization)	
Step 1	Verbal or Non-Verbal Microaggression
Step 2	Institutional, Racial Joke, or Interpersonal Microaggression (Yosso, 2009)
Step 3	Student-to-Student or Teacher-to-Student
Step 4	Causation Coding: what stereotype is behind this microaggression?

After completing these precise steps, I decided what causation stereotype could be behind this interaction. The seven stereotypes from my codebook were as follows:

Causation coding for microaggression / Stereotypes (Second coding)		
Stereotype 1	SDG	Corrupt/Angry/Dangerous
Stereotype 2	SDT	Diversity Token – Individual / Food / Culture
Stereotype 3	SEP	English Proficiency
Stereotype 4	SI	Immigration
Stereotype 5	SNC	Name Calling
Stereotype 6	SNE	Not Latine Enough
Stereotype 7	SINT	Lacking Socially / IQ

My complete coding method is exemplified by the following microaggression:

> *When speaking Spanish with my mom on the phone, after hanging up being told that I should really speak English in America.*
>
> *— Bianca, a 19-year-old Latina of Mexican heritage*

Step 1> Verbal Microaggression

Step 3> Interpersonal

Step 3 > Student to Student (student specified this in the next survey question)

Step 4> Causation Coding: cause or stereotype behind this interaction?

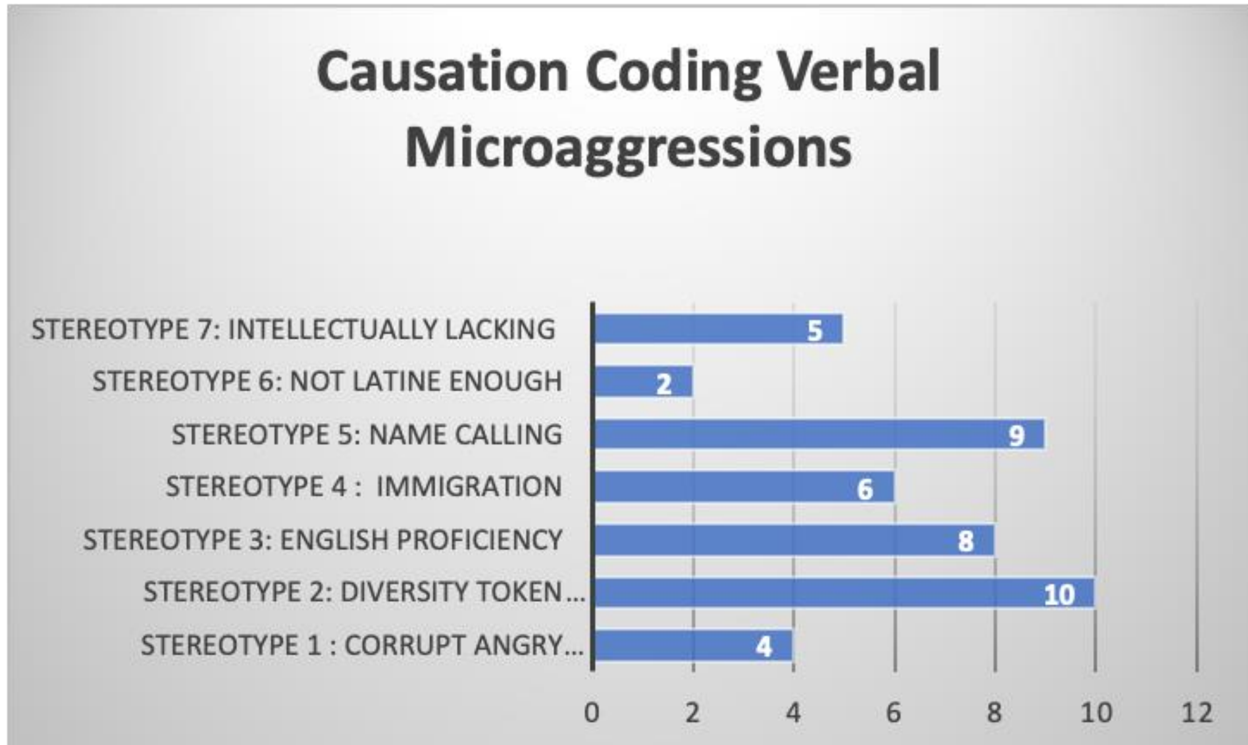
Stereotype 3: English Proficiency

This original coding method was time-consuming but resulted in a multitude of data and trends on microaggression. For example, of the data on microaggression collected from the participants, 36% were coded as non-verbal microaggressions, whereas 64% were coded as verbal microaggressions. In this dissertation, I focus my findings and discussions more on verbal microaggression for two specific reasons. First, the participants reported frequent verbal microaggressions. Secondly, verbal microaggressions are the only microaggression that I could feasibly code using causation coding. As previously discussed, non-verbal microaggression proved to be difficult to categorize using causation coding, because theoretically there is no way to decipher what Latine stereotype is influencing an individual to, for example, stare at their

classmate. The following table shows the causation coding for verbal microaggressions and what the most common stereotypes causing this interaction were.

FIGURE 23

Figure 23- Causation Coding Verbal Microaggressions



The following subsection is a longer and more detailed analysis of Verbal Microaggressions and the top three stereotypes causing them: tokenizing, name calling, and English proficiency. As an emerging HSI, UOregon has limited funds and capability to improve the experiences of Latine students on campus. Therefore, I am choosing to stick to the original purpose of this project and pinpoint the most pressing issue, which is the causation of verbal microaggressions directed toward students.

In my survey, 62% of the participants that said they had experienced a microaggression, were then instructed to describe the microaggressions in an open-ended text box. The exact wording of this prompt was as follows:

> *"If you would like to share a story of microaggression you have experienced on campus, you may do so below. As a reminder, this survey is 100% anonymous. If you feel uncomfortable sharing or have never experienced a microaggression on campus, you may write N/A in the space below."*

In response to this particular prompt, some of the participants chose to write down only one incident, while others chose to share up to three. In addition to these microaggressions, the five in-depth interviews I conducted yielded an average of two microaggressions per interview. Therefore, after two workshops and in-depth interviews, I collected 43 unique verbal microaggression anecdotes from 33 participants. In the following subsections, I focus on the two findings I found most thought-provoking:

A) Causation for teacher-to-students verbal microaggressions: Tokenizing and English Proficiency

B) Causation for student-to-student verbal microaggressions: Name calling and English Proficiency

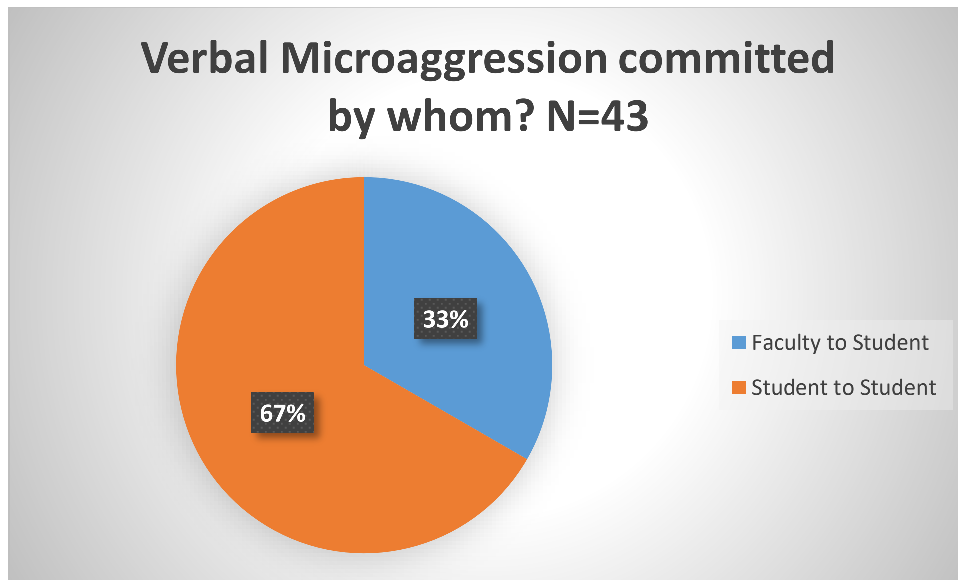
Microaggressions between Teachers and Students: Tokenizing

The majority of incidents of verbal microaggression were coded as the interaction between students, that is, student to student (67%). This aligns with the findings that peers, or young adults in the same age range, are more likely to interact on campus such as in the

residence halls (Foste, 2021). On the other hand, although it is in the minority, 33% of verbal microaggressions are exhibited by a teacher or administration member against a student.

FIGURE 24

Figure 24-Verbal Microaggressions committed by whom?



Overall, in educational institutions, microaggressions may manifest as messages conveying insensitivity to students of color from instructors or personnel. Teacher-to-student microaggressions have been documented in the literature and can be more prevalent among older student group such as high school or university students. For instance, Steketee et al. (2021) provided numerous examples of how instructors or educators can inadvertently commit these microaggressions in their classrooms. A poignant example is when an educator exhibiting astonishment when Black or Latine students solve a math problem correctly, followed by excessive praise, may convey to these students that they were not expected to know the answer, given that Black and Latinx students are not typically regarded as intelligent.

Personally, I found the teacher-to-student variable thought-provoking due to the difference in authority that a faculty member has over a student (Elliot, 2009). According to Elliot (2009), students' impressions of their teachers are influenced by a multitude of subtle, often short interactions. Therefore, verbal microaggression puts (Latine) students in a peculiar position of having to attend class and earn a passing grade, while trying to limit their interaction with their professor due to the conscious or unconscious bias they project. For example, it is tricky to avoid a classmate in a certain class who has made an offensive comment about you, but you can sit at another table and choose not to work or engage with them. However, it is virtually impossible to avoid a professor in their own classroom. Therefore, although teacher-to-student verbal microaggressions are in the minority (33%), they are still worth addressing during the emerging HSI transition. To illustrate the influence these interactions can have, I share four salient examples:

> *One of my professors joked on repeated occasions if it would be easier for me to understand the content if he explained it in Spanish. I had only ever spoken English to him.*
>
> *— Cecilia, a 19-year-old Latina of Mexican heritage*

Coded as: Verbal Microaggression > Interpersonal >Teacher to Student >
Stereotype 3: English Proficiency

> *My weight lifting teacher made us run laps and called me "speedy Gonzalez" and then proceeded to call me a "troublemaker". Like what*
>
> *— Lucia, a 21-year-old Latina of Mexican heritage*

Verbal Microaggression > Interpersonal > Teacher to Student >
Stereotype 5: Name Calling

There was a professor, that confused me and another section mate of mine. We don't have similar name we aren't the same ethnicity (he is Filipino and brown, im Afro-Latino). And every time i would do something wrong he'll confuse me with him and never corrected himself. That's when I went to talk to two higher ups and they went to talk to him about how he was messing up our names. At this time I really felt so out of place, there was not as many POC in that class and him messing up my name…[8] *I haven't felt welcomed my first year here everything was just so overwhelming.*

— Andres, a 19-year-old Latino of Mexican heritage

Verbal Microaggression > Interpersonal > Teacher to Student >
Stereotype 2: Diversity Token- Individual*
**rationale -BIPOC students are interchangeable for this teacher*

As a part of the Political Science major who is deeply interested in studying Latin American politics, I have been in classes in which various offensive comments have been made. More recently, taking classes about politics of Latin America has led to me hearing people describe Latin America as a "corrupt" and "backwards." Being one of the only Latine students in the class is has been incredibly difficult to see that is how my culture is being viewed.

— Anabel, a 19-year-old Latina of Mexican and Salvadorian heritage

Verbal Microaggression > Interpersonal > Teacher to Student >
Stereotype 1: Corrupt/Dangerous *(use of the word "corrupt")*
Stereotype 7: Lacking Socially *(use of the word "backwards")*

[8] Identifiable information, such as the student sharing their name and saying it is not that hard to pronounce, were struck from the original transcript using ellipsis. This was done to protect the participant's identity.

After sharing their experiences of verbal microaggressions, the participants were prompted to explain who perpetuated this microaggression. The exact wording of the survey prompt was "To clarify was the microaggression(s) described above were committed by: Fellow Student / Professor or Admin/ Other, please describe in the following text box."

Anabel, who spoke of her experiences as a Political Science major, selected all of the above, meaning both her professor and her classmates made offensive comments about Latin America. By analyzing these four digital testimonios, we can truly see how momentary interaction leaves a lasting impression on students (Elliot, 2009). These negative interactions could potentially not only affect a student's perception of that teacher but also their grade in their class, as they may feel uncomfortable. According to scholar Claude Steele (1995), students of color negotiate stereotype threats throughout their education, even though they do not want to confirm negative beliefs or stereotypes about their race, ethnicity, or culture. This is very draining for students of color, and Steele (1995) has found that it results in reduced academic focus and performance. For example, on a previous page, I mentioned an incident of verbal microaggression where a female student named Cecilia asked a teacher for help to understand a concept and he joked that perhaps she would understand better if he could explain it in Spanish. If we apply the stereotype threat theory to Cecilia's situation, we see that she does not want to prove the negative stereotype that as a Latine she has low English proficiency. A good way to avoid reinforcing negative stereotypes about her English proficiency is to not ask the teacher to re-explain concepts she fails to understand in class. Another way is to avoid interactions with this teacher who makes racial jokes by not going to him during his office hours. Both of these hypothetical responses to

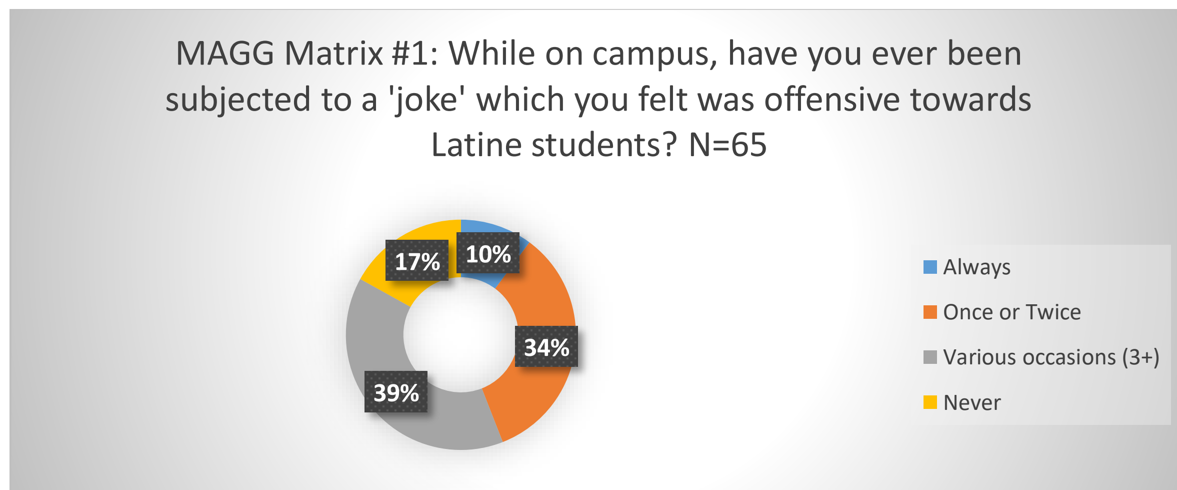
stereotype threat could result in lower concentration and understanding in class, potentially resulting in lower final grades.

Upon reviewing the coding data, I determined that faculty members who enacted verbal microaggression were relying on the most outdated stereotypes such as lack of English proficiency (Stereotype 3) and diversity token (Stereotype 2). Although they were fewer faculty-to-student microaggressions (33%), the potential academic side-effects suffered by Latine students who experience this are very concerning. In Chapter Five, I discuss the possible implications of these findings.

Causation for Student-to-Student Verbal Microaggressions

In this subsection, I delve into the causation trends I noted in student-to-student verbal microaggression. After analyzing Latine students' lived experiences as expressed through their digital testimonios, I noted a distinct difference between teacher-to-student interactions and student-to-student interactions. Before getting into individual student testimonios of student-to-student interaction, I set the stage with the Microaggressions Matrix data that all 65 participants provided at the beginning of the survey. In the following section, only roughly half of these participants said they recognized these incidents, such as jokes, as microaggressions.

Figure 25- MAGG Matrix Question #1: Racist Jokes



According to Yosso et al. (2009), part of racial jokes is the use of derogatory names and terms popularized by media stereotypes. Their study specifically cites the use of offensive terms such as *wetback* and *beaner* as examples of racial jokes. Almost 15 years later, these derogatory terms continue to be used as racial jokes on university campuses. More specifically, controversial terms such as *wetback, beaner, illegal, chola,* and *spic* were noted in 12 different incidents of verbal microaggressions. As previously discussed, verbal microaggressions are much easier to identify and prove, as you can rely on the words directed to you, as opposed to nonspecific gut feelings and physical movements of non-verbal microaggressions (Rodriguez, 2020). Racial jokes characterized by name-calling (Stereotype 5) or racial slurs were found exclusively in student-to-student interactions. Two examples of these interactions can be found below:

> *There has been a moment where my latinx friends and I were walking. As we turn the corner of one of the building we hear a boy yell to his group of friends look there's beaners. That is something I will never forget and I am always in shock when I remember about that.*
>
> — *Luisa, a 20-year-old Latina of Mexican heritage*

> *It wasn't so much a microagression but more of a racial attack. A resident went into my hallway (where I was an RA) and started saying "wetbacks, illegal immigrants" and various different things. He lived in the latinx scholars academic residential community.*
>
> — *Esther, a 19-year-old Latina of Salvadorian and Mexican heritage*

To summarize, 51% of the Latine students reported verbal microaggressions on the UOregon campus. Nonetheless, the majority discussed it happening only once or twice. In

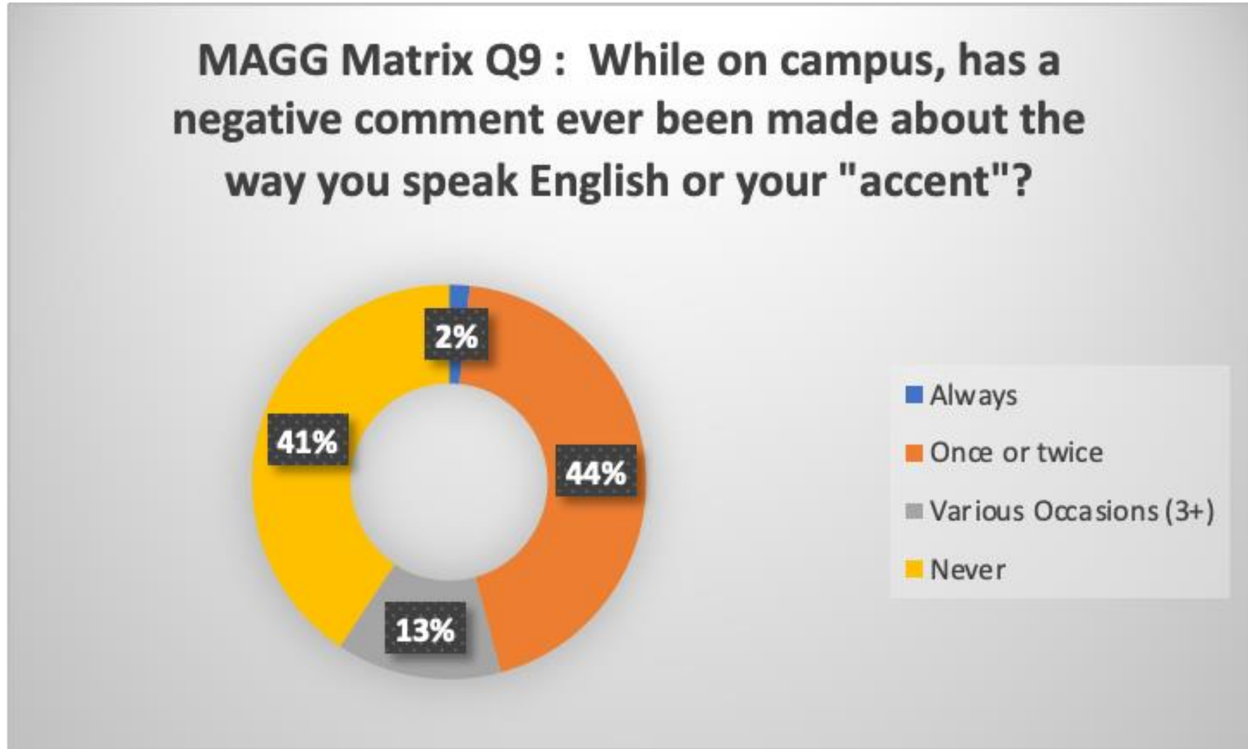
addition, only one person reported verbal microaggressions always happening on campus (1.5%). This is encouraging, as it shows that microaggressions are not constant and may be singular events for Latine students on the University of Oregon campus.

These findings of Latine-directed hate speech being used on campus are not surprising. Latine individuals are more likely to be assumed as foreign, non-native, and illegal than any other BIPOC group. This is referred to as presumed illegal micro aggressive experience (PRIME) and happens more often to Latine individuals and/or Spanish speakers (Barrita, 2021). Some academics may argue that words such as 'wetbacks, illegal immigrants, beaners' are not at the level of hate speech and are merely considered microaggressions. However for the purposes of my analysis, I am informed by Emma McClure's definition, whereby both hate speech and microaggressions consist of diminishing the dignity and autonomy of BIPOC individuals (2020). McClure makes the keen observation that much like hate speech, microaggression can led to and be the predecessor to acts of violence. For example talk of "Asian spies" and "foreign alliances" preceded state sponsored Japanese internment campus. Similarly microaggressions made by radio announcers to 'clear our the land of cockroaches' preceded and even to a degree incited the massacre of Tutis in the Rwandan genocide. Both examples presented by McClure show how microaggressions with no evident racial slurs can still cause emotional and physical harm to BIPOC communities (McClure, 2020). There despite the argument of freedom of speech, any hate speech or microaggression that may incite violence to BIPOC individuals is something emerging HSI need to address head on.

In addition to these racial slurs or hate speech, the majority of the participants surveyed also discussed being on the receiving end of negative comments about their accent or English proficiency.

FIGURE 26

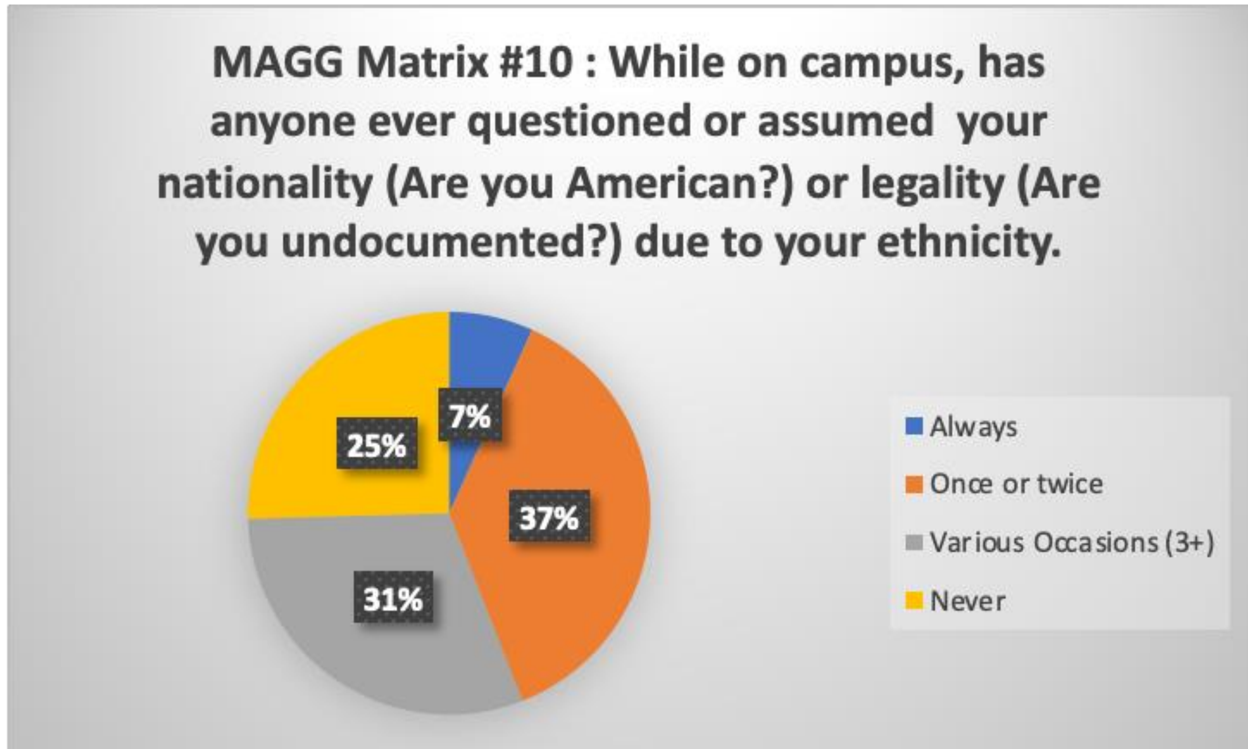
Figure 26-MAGG Matrix Question#9: English "Accent"



It should be noted that although I did not collect information on nationality, I did learn from heritage description that only four of the 65 participants I surveyed were born outside the United States. This is, of course, not a sign of not being American citizens, as they may be naturalized or in the process of doing so. Despite the small amount of Latine participants born outside the United States, 74% of the Latine participants reported being asked about nationality or legality while on campus (FIGURE 26).

FIGURE 27

Figure 27-MAGG Matrix Question #10 : Legality



Only 25% of the participants said that they were never asked about nationality or documented status, while the rest (75%) faced these questions to varying degrees. On a positive note, most reported this happening only once or twice (37%), and only 7% said that they always had to deal with these invasive questions. Of course, assumed illegality is not limited to University of Oregon or even university campuses. It is well-documented that the racial profiling and assumed illegality of Latine individuals have increased exponentially in the United States since the 2016 elections (Bonilla-Silva, 2019). It is for this reason when discussing possible recommendations in Chapter Five, there should be a focus on assumed illegality and students' use of racially charged hate speech on campus.

CHAPTER 5 : CONCLUSION

The word "servingness" in Hispanic Serving Institutions entails going beyond enrolling students to supporting them in meaningful ways (Garcia, 2019). The goal of my dissertation project has always been to learn how to best serve my Latine community, especially those who have been marginalized and oppressed by our educational systems. Through this experience, I acknowledge, recognize, and feel better prepared to serve these students as faculty members. Through the use of testimonios, I am able to recognize the impact that Latine students' lived experience at a PWI. In addition, considering the overwhelming amount of data I was able to collect for this small-scale project (N = 65), there is no doubt in my mind that these testimonios can positively inform both the existing research base and on-campus decision-making processes. Students' lived experiences at an emerging HSI give more realistic representations of the accessibility of the university's current programs, services, and training. Having resources on campus for Latine students is commendable, but only Latine students on campus can truthfully describe if the programs are working, what they are missing, or if they even know about them. Through this study's participants, not only do I have a better understanding of University of Oregon's Latine student population but can also provide recommendations for how emerging HSIs such as this one can better cater to the Latine students' needs during the HSI transition.

Taking this perspective into consideration, the concluding chapter touches on both recommendations for future research and for emerging HSIs. To begin this chapter, I revisit the findings relevant to the first and second research questions. Then, using the two theories of Cultural Community Wealth and Microaggressions, I discuss recommendations for an emerging HSI to consider if they want to improve the experience of Latine students on their campus.

Discussion of Research Question One

This section addresses the topic, "How can an emerging HSI better serve their Latine students by considering their community cultural wealth?"

Navigational Capital and Aspirational Capital

If a school that qualifies as an emerging HSI wants to increase its Latine student population, it should start to analyze and pinpoint why Latine students may be lacking connections on campus. Enhancing community cultural wealth involves recognizing and encouraging marginalized communities to identify their experiences, skills, and knowledge as positive contributions. Aspirational and navigational capitals were deemed the most important CCWealth categories for the 65 Latine students surveyed. It is not surprising navigating higher education and relying on hopes and dreams are so essential for Latine students as the majority are first-generation students. According to the responses to the eighth question on demographics, "*Do you identify as a first-generation student?",* 68% of the Latine students surveyed for this dissertation identify as first-generation. This goes in line with the findings of Clayton et al. (2017) and overall national trends, according to which students of color make up the majority of first-generation students currently enrolled in universities (NASPA, 2017). First-generation students do not have anecdotes from their parents or other family members to help them navigate higher education.

Studies have shown that first-generation Latino students face specific disadvantages that their white first-generation peers do not. For example, Latine first-generation students face feelings of inadequacy, low expectations from their professors and peers, and a general lack of confidence in "academic" language. This lack of confidence in the academic language is a result of racial environments in which bilingualism is frequently perceived negatively in Latine

students, while it is viewed positively if possessed by one of their white counterparts. (Sanchez-Connally, 2018). In addition, first-generation Latine students report more familial responsibilities, more of a "culture shock" to be surrounded by fewer BIPOC students at a PWI, and more reluctance to interact with authority figures such as faculty (Sanchez-Connally, 2018; Suarez-Orozco & Suarez Orozco, 2011; Jack, 2016). These are just a select few of the unique obstacles Latine first-generation students endure. Bearing this in mind, an emerging HSI must provide specialized resources for Latine students to fill in this gap and gain confidence, such as with targeted first-generation workshops.

Aspiration capital draws on one's dreams of future achievement. When reviewing digital testimonios related to aspirational capital, many Latine students referenced the importance of higher education to gain social mobility and economic stability. This accomplishment was not only for them but also for their family or community. To this end, BIPOC representation on emerging HSI campuses is essential. Latine faculty and administrators can be aspirational for Latine students because they show how university degrees translate into successful professional jobs (Castellaños & Jones, 2003). Other non-traditional ways of incorporating aspirational role models on campus include inviting professional BIPOC guest speakers who can inspire Latine students to pursue different educational or career paths (Shelton & Thompson, 2023).

Social Capital and Familial Capital

Familial capital refers to connections and reciprocal support to one's own family, whether it be nuclear and/or extended. Familism, for instance, reflects a strong connection among Latine family members (Sabogal et al., 1987; Valdés, 1996). This promotes a social structure in which familial needs take precedence over one's individual needs (Corravubias, 2021). This can prove to be a source of tension for Latine students, as the collective mindset is at odds with the

individualist goals of higher education. Emerging HSIs need to be considerate of this, as Latine students report more engagement in familial responsibilities than their white counterparts (Telzer & Fuligni, 2009). Despite being in a different physical space than their family, they still rely on them for support and want to incorporate them into their university life. Taking this into account, servingness requires investment in Latine families, not just the individual students (Corravubias, 2021). Including parents via social media or on-campus events is highly recommended. In addition, emerging HSIs should be cognizant of the fact that first-generation students have an overwhelming influence on whether or not their younger siblings choose to earn an undergraduate degree and where they will attend (Delgado, 2020). Therefore, emerging HSI should invest in Latine familial capital not only because it is valuable to Latine students but also because it serves as an avenue for recruiting future Latine students who may be current Latine students' younger siblings and extended family members.

If UOregon applies for emerging HSI and hopefully one-day HSI federal grants, they could use that grant money for larger solutions such as creating larger and more accessible Latine community spaces. In the case of University of Oregon, a much-wanted Latine Cultural Center was mentioned numerous times throughout survey data because Latine students crave a space where they could build community. Funds and actions need to follow up with diversity statements to exemplify true commitment (Castex, 1994). According to the literature, there are other non-traditional ways to include social capital on campus that were not highlighted by the participants. For example, faculty relationships, campus engagement, and family support have also been identified as ways to foster more social capital in higher education (Sandoval-Lucero et al., 2014). Based on the research by Sandoval-Lucero (2014), there is a significant overlap between social capital and familial capital.

Unexpected CCWealth Findings: Linguistic Capital

According to the results of my survey, language and identity are not intertwined in the UOregon Latineo youth community. The demographic survey showed that only 10% of respondents concurred with the statement that speaking Spanish is required to identify as Latineo. The vast majority of respondents (90%) disagreed with this statement, and one even remarked in the accompanying text field that this stereotype was *"super old school".* This goes against the existing seminal theory of subtractive schooling by Valenzuela (1999) whereby the Spanish language is integral to the Latine student identity. This points to a new trend among modern Latine university students, whereby their identity is not monolithic in terms of language. Unexpected second and third languages were Arabic, Korean, Catalan, and Mixteco. Only 10% of my participants were English monolinguals, therefore pointing to a second theme of Latine students taking bilingualism as a given for their generation. Although Spanish is still the most commonlyspoken language after English, straying from the mold and embracing other languages is not out of question either. Although the linguistic capital perspective is unique, the overall theme of Latine diversity goes in line with the existing literature that the younger generations of Latine students understand that their language and culture are not monolithic and are choosing to celebrate those differences (Munoz et al., 2021).

Discussion of Research Question Two

This section addresses the question "How can an emerging HSI better serve their Latine students by considering their microaggressions?"

RQ#2: Microaggressions: Teacher to Student / Student to Student

This subsection delves into microaggressions that the participants reported in digital and interview-based testimonios. It also touches on the theory of "White blindness" to describe how race evasive behaviors show up in institutional policy decisions when other races are noticed or surveilled, but White racial behavior is never publicly addressed (Gusa, 2010). These judgments ultimately shape the experiences of all students because, when institutions exhibit White blindness or other factors that contribute to hostile campus environments, they provoke more harassment and discrimination (Gusa, 2010). Therefore, in order to decrease microaggressions at an emerging HSI, they must realistically view their racial politics on campus as to how their history as a predominantly white institution influences incidents of microaggressions.

Teacher-to-Student Microaggressions: English Proficiency

As I mentioned in Chapter Four, the median age of the participants was 20 years old, and the majority of students had been at University of Oregon for more than one academic year. One or two incidents of microaggression in two to three years spent on the UOregon campus gives hope that this is not a widespread problem and can be dealt with during the HSI transition. In order to address verbal microaggressions in general, we must review the stereotype that causes these interactions. Both teacher- and student-motivated microaggressions rely on the tokenizing of students of color, which has been a prominent theory in existing educational research (Niemann, 2016; Steele & Aronson, 1995; Sulaiman, 2005). Taking into account the wealth of knowledge that already exists on the tokenizing of students of color, I prefer to highlight teacher-to-student microaggressions caused due to stereotypes pertaining to Latines' English proficiency.

According to the Microaggression Matrix, 55% of the Latine students I surveyed have been subjected to comments about their accents or back-handed compliments about how good their English is while on campus. For Latines, English language proficiency is unfortunately linked to politicized topics such as immigration and acclimating to the dominant culture in the United States (Dowling et al., 2012). This is an outdated stereotype, as it has been documented that ESL students from K-12 schools are more likely to be born in the United States than abroad[9].

I want to focus on this stereotype that teachers, and students to a lesser degree, are perpetuating on Latine students in higher education because of the fallacy in its rationale. In order to attend University of Oregon or any other higher education institute, all undergraduate students must achieve a certain level of proficiency in English in order to excel academically, graduate high school, and meet the admission requirements. Therefore, the assumption that a Latine student "can't speak English" or "can't understand" a university lecture is not only offensive, it is factually incorrect for the majority of undergraduate students on this campus. The ability to not only be accepted but attend and complete classes at a majority English speaking University is demonstrative of their proficiency.

If a student asks for accommodations because they are unable to comprehend a lesson (such as a copy of the instructor's slides), then an instructor should try to help them. However, for a teacher to assume that a Latine student needs accommodations due to an assumed lack of English proficiency is insulting, as they are basing this solely on the students' ethnicity and the stereotypes associated with the Latine community. I believe educators at emerging HSIs must be explicitly explained that this stereotype is outdated and must never assume a student's

[9] Per the US Department of Education quote on the Pew Research website. https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/10/25/6-facts-about-english-language-learners-in-u-s-public-schools/

proficiency unless they specifically bring it up with you. Another important point to discuss with faculty members is that not all Latine students speak Spanish, and even for those that do, this in no way means they can't also be proficient in English.

Student-to-Student Microaggressions: Name Calling

To combat student-to-student microaggressions, there needs to be a franker discussion of what qualifies as hate speech and what vocabulary is not acceptable on a diverse university campus. According to my survey results, words such as *wetback, spic, beaner, illegal,* and *chola* were referenced more than 10 times in verbal microaggressions between students. The liberty at which these words are used is shocking because they are racial slurs with a long historical background. "Wetback" refers to an assumed illegal immigrant who crossed the Rio Grande to arrive in the United States, while "beaner" tokenizes Latine food (i.e., poor Latino agricultural workers were described as bean-eaters). I would like to give the benefit of doubt to students committing these verbal microaggressions that they are unaware of what the words truly mean and just repeat phrases they have heard in the media. Perhaps, if they are taught the historical background, they would understand why such words are highly offensive and unacceptable.

Lastly, it must also be kept in mind that due to the historical bias of police or law enforcement against BIPOC communities, many Latines do not feel comfortable reporting these incidents to authorities. In fact, Latines who are victims of hate speech or bias are more likely to seek support and guidance from friends and family (social and familial capital) than to officially report an incident. According to a recent report by the National Institute of Justice[10], only 8% of Latines that experience bias, such as hate speech, report it to the authorities or institutions. Thus, to combat student-to-student microaggressions, an anonymous reporting system is necessary.

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[10] Please note this is from the 2021–2022 large-scale study conducted by four public universities https://nij.ojp.gov/topics/articles/experiences-victimization-among-latinos-studies-confirm-significant-victim-mental

However, educating students at this emerging HSI about the history behind racial slurs and why they are not acceptable via a mandatory Ethnic Studies class or Latine History class could be more effective and wide-reaching.

Unexpected Findings on Microaggressions

Concerning the findings from responses to the second research question, I think it is essential to highlight one concrete unexpected finding. Finding out that teachers were the cause of verbal microaggressions was a shock to me. This is not only due to the difference in power dynamics between teacher and student (Elliot, 2009) but also the precarious position teachers are in in this digital age. In our modern society, teachers, much like other individuals can fall victim to the "cancel culture" by way of online videos or voice recordings (Rom & Mitchell, 2021). This has spiked exponentially, with students recording Zoom meetings and using their cell phones to record in class and posting on Instagram, Tik Tok, or websites such as Professor Watchlist and Campus Reform. To be clear, this is not an issue of cancel culture, but one of a lack of awareness. There needs to be greater awareness among teachers, whether it be through workshops or mandatory diversity training, about the struggles BIPOC students face due to stereotyping. No educator, regardless of seniority, is above learning new ways to engage their students of color and should strive to create an inclusive environment in their classroom for everyone. Bringing together the positive impact of student empowerment and anti-racist pedagogical training for faculty can result in lasting and measurable progress. As the findings show, more teachers need to be aware that stereotyping or racializing their students has serious consequences in the digital age, but more importantly, can negatively impact student belonging and student success. As an educator, I know mistakes are possible, especially when dealing with a 40-hour course. However, mistakes are also an opportunity to apologize and do better in the

future. Emerging HSIs are in the precarious position of trying to recruit and retain their Latine students. Research has shown BIPOC students are more likely to persist and succeed in classrooms where they feel a connection with an educator, especially one that believes that they can succeed academically (Tinto, 2002).

Recommendations

As shown in Chapter Four and the field notes of my workshops, participants referenced what is lacking at this specific emerging HSI and what could better serve their academic and personal educational experiences. Through interviews and digital testimonios, I was able to gain a deeper understanding of the Latine students at this public PWI. Their testimonios and survey results painted a more vivid picture of who they are, what types of cultural capital they value, and what occurs during their time on campus that affects their education. The participant testimonials produced rich data, which is why emerging HSI should focus on them during the crucial transition period. When emerging HSI recruit more Latine students to meet the federal requirement of 25%, they must consider what these specific students want and need from their institution. The following is a summary of seven suggestions that were collaboratively produced with participants via interviews, surveys, and workshop discussions. All of these recommendations specifically target emerging HSI who want to improve Latine supports and resources on their campus to reach the federal 25% enrollment requirement.

1) Provide outreach opportunities that promote Latine familial capital on campus with events such as campus visit opportunities for younger siblings and Spanish-only orientation weekends (addresses promoting familial capital).

2) Collaborate with the Latine community on campus to start mentoring initiatives such as an optional hermanita/hermanito program between Latine freshmen and sophomores (promoting social capital).

3) Create a variety of spaces on campus where Latine students can congregate for social or academic purposes, such as a Latine Cultural Center or building for the Latine classes to accommodate this growing population (social capital). These infrastructures should grow in accordance with the student population. For example, a shared room on the UOregon campus is not size-appropriate for their current strength of 5,000 Latine students.

4) Support and develop on-campus programs for Latine first-generation students and the unique obstacles they face, such as being racialized on campus, faculty and peers having low expectations of them, and the constant scrutiny of their English proficiency, as discussed previously. While a general first-generation program is helpful, it is important to recognize that Latine students, much like other BIPOC students, have unique experiences that white first-generation students do not have to deal with. Therefore, it would be a necessary step to strongly and creatively publicize and advertise available resources at BIPOC student groups and make an effort to disseminate this information at freshman orientation. Merely designing these programs is not enough; emerging HSIs must continually inform students about the available programs and services that will facilitate their integration into the college social community (navigational and aspirational capital).

5) Implement a zero-tolerance hate speech policy as per which racial slurs such as *beaner, wetback,* and *spic* would not be tolerated; words such as these fall into a grey area, as they are not curse words, but are still completely unacceptable. Inform students explicitly of the policy in

the freshman year itself. Establish a campus culture in which students feel secure and an online reporting system for hate speech is easily accessible, anonymous, and well-publicized in student common areas. While an existing reporting system exists at University of Oregon, I would venture it is not effective, since most students are unaware of it and all participants surveyed admitted they never reported microaggressions that they shared in their testimonios to the university authorities (addresses microaggression: student to student, name calling).

6) Provide faculty, staff, and administrators with ongoing training on how to serve the diverse student population and what being an ally at an emerging HSI entails (addresses microaggression: teacher to teacher, tokenizing)

7) Provide additional cultural awareness and pedagogy courses on Latine history and culture. If an emerging HSI wants to support the Latine community, it must make an effort to inform all students by dispelling media stereotypes and fallacies. They can do this by providing a mandatory Ethics or Latine history class for all students regardless of their race or ethnicity (addresses microaggressions due to tokenizing and English proficiency).

Conclusion

There was one particular passage in my collection of testimonios that stuck with me throughout this project. Testimonios are normally based on past experiences, feelings, and emotions. However, this particular testimonio stuck with me because it was so pragmatic and straightforward in explaining why Latine students do not feel seen on campus. As succinctly explained by Isabel Cristina, a 19-year-old female Hispanic of Salvadorian heritage:

> *For starters, (University of Oregon) is a predominantly white college. Additionally, there is no space(s) like the (Indigenous Cultural Center) or the Black Cultural Center for the Latinx students. On top of that, the Spanish major falls under Romance Languages and the Latinx Studies falls under Indigenous, Race, and Ethnics Studies. . .Basically, we just want the same opportunities.*

This testimonio struck a chord with me because it gets to the root of the problem at an emerging HSI. For example, an emerging HSI such as University of Oregon has made great strides in the last two decades by building the Indigenous student cultural center (2002) and black student centers (2019). Building neither was an easy feat and was achieved after years of student demands and activism. I must reiterate that, most Latine students are not looking for academic preference or special perks on campus. What they are looking for is to be treated as equals. They want to feel like a valued part of their university community. Thus, if an HSI is not willing to invest in infrastructure and curriculum changes for this community, then emerging HSI Latine allyship can be viewed as performative.

At every one of my workshops, students shared stories of past teachers, administration members, or peers who have undervalued their abilities or culture. Despite that, these Latine students continue to persist. Even by walking on a college campus, they are breaking barriers, as only one in four Latine individuals aged 24–29 has a college degree (Pew Research Center, 2022). Unfortunately, like most students of color, Latine students must overcome several obstacles to achieve their educational dreams. They strive in the face of adversity, but that does not mean they don't need institutional support or for others to advocate for them. This dissertation has taught me that Latine students at an emerging HSI require advocacy, change, and support more than ever. Latine students are constantly being funneled through a flawed

educational pipeline surrounded by bigotry and racial tension. Modern political tensions around ethnicity, Spanish language use, and immigration have only further marginalized this community and fed into harmful stereotypes. As previously mentioned, the Latine population is one of the fastest-growing BIPOC groups in the United States. They are second only to the Asian-Americans in the United States. Therefore, all universities should take notice that HSIs have gained popularity and that the population of Latine students will swell in the next decade.

It is crucial for emerging HSI to invest in a quality educational experience for its Latine students. I find the testimonies of my participants compelling, as they are all a call to action. As educators, we must seek out innovative ways in which we can better serve all of our students and create inclusive learning environments. Valuing and promoting students' cultural capital is essential, especially for BIPOC students who already feel like they don't belong at PWIs (Garcia, 2019). As explained by Mayra, a 19-year-old Latine of Mexican heritage,

> *I think it would be important for the university to acknowledge all their students of color. Many students of color can be first gen and during hard times one definitely feels like they don't belong. The university needs to do something to let their students of color know that they are valued students*

What current students want to see are tangible financial commitments and initiatives for their community. This will not be a quick or easy fix, but it will be the kind of investment Latine students need to see at an emerging HSI. At both workshops I conducted, my field notes detailed pragmatic discussions about the time needed for change and how these changes would probably not be implemented until after most of the students being surveyed had already graduated. Regardless, Latine students want to see this investment in their community, even if only future

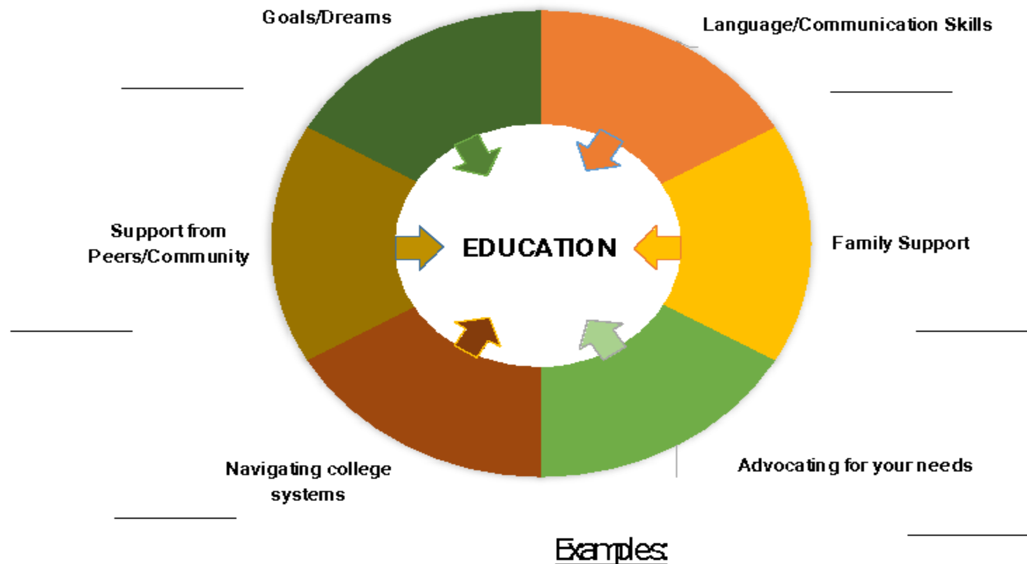
students benefit from new cultural centers, residence halls, or a new Latinx Studies major. This generation of Latine students has seen diversity statements and public declarations of inclusion, but they want to see the actions to back them up. Therefore, if an emerging HSI such as UOregon truly wants to retain Latine students and potentially recruit more members of this tight-knit community, tangible long-term investments need to be considered. Students want to be heard, and as administrators and faculty, we must nurture an environment where we listen. Overall, Latine students will choose to invest four years in an emerging HSI where their needs are met. Realistically, very few will want to invest in an institution where current Latine students struggle to feel seen or heard.

APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY CULTURAL WEALTH HANDOUT FOR INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS

CULTURAL WEALTH WHEEL

This activity is designed to help you identify the resources you have available to you to empower you to achieve your educational goals.

Please rate your satisfaction with each of the areas listed below: **SCALE:** **1**- not at all satisfied to **10**- completely satisfied



Examples:

Goals/Dreams (Aspirational capital) – "hopes and dreams" that motivate you

Language/Communication Skills (Linguistic capital) - various language and communication skills you bring with you

Family Support (Familial capital) -social and personal resources you have from your family

Support from Peers/Community (Social capital) –support from "peers and other social contacts"

Ability to navigate College system (Navigational capital) -skills and abilities to navigate "social institutions," including educational spaces.

Advocating for needs (Resistance capital)– ability to advocate and secure your rights to education

[11]

[11] This worksheet was created Gurley, Alexandria February 28, 2019. It is a free resource and can be found the UNT Digital Library https://digital.library.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metadc1464202/.

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL FOR 5 LATINE PARTICIPANTS

Note:
Step 1: Ask participants to fill out CCWealth Wheel (see Appendix A)
Step 2: According to areas which they rated the highest, the following groups of questions will be asked

Questions from Interview Protocol (Appendix 2) that will answer research questions 1 + 2
RQ1: In thinking with Yosso and Solorzano, how does community cultural wealth shape transnational Latinx students' educational experience?
Social
Growing up, did you participate in any cultural or community events?
If yes, how did you participate? If no, why didn't you participate?
Have you found any similar events like this at UO?
Familial:
Do you live near your family – aka mother,father,siblings?
How often do you get to see them?
If you do not get to see them often how do you stay in touch? (ex:facetime, whatsapp, emails, phone calls)
How involved are they in your education? Do they ask about your class, classmates, grades, clubs?
Do you share your university experiences with them? Why or why not?
Navigational
Who in your family has attended university in the US?
Applying to colleges can be really overwhelming. What was one of the things you found the most difficult to navigate about your application? Your first year of college?
Is there anyone in your family who pushed or supported you to attended higher education?
If yes, how have they helped you pursue your higher educational goals?
Linguistic
How many languages do you speak?
At what age did you learn them?

Did you have to participate in any kind of English as a second language class?
Do you ever codeswitch between English and Spanish (Spanglish)?
Who do you codeswitch the most with (friends, family, siblings)?
In what spaces on campus do you feel comfortable codeswitch?
Are campus spaces you feel uncomfortable codeswitching in – why?
Do you agree or disagree that a big part of being Latinx is speaking Spanish ? Why/why not?
Resistant
What were/are some of the barriers you've faced while attending college?
Can you please provide a specific example?
Who in your life was able to help/support you navigate those obstacles?
Did these barriers affect your experience at UO?
Do you feel like you have a better handle on them now? if yes, who/what helped you past these obstacles? if not, what do you wish UO provided to help you overcome that obstacle?
Aspirational
Who inspires/inspired you to attend higher education?
If no one inspired you, what is one of the main reasons you choose to apply to university?
University course load can be very difficult to juggle – homework, tests, class schedules. When you are feeling overwhelmed what pushes you to continue in higher education?
RQ2 : According to Yosso's theory, what are the recurring microaggressions that Latinx transnational students experience?
Racial Jokes
Racial jokes are jokes that are a bit controversial and try to stereotype students due to their race or ethnicity. Most of these jokes are followed by comments like "don't be so sensitive" or "it was just a joke". While on campus, have you ever been subjected to a "joke" which you felt was a little racist towards Latino/a/x?
Have you ever been subjected to these jokes off campus (Eugene in general)?

Interpersonal Microaggressions
Being Latin(o/a/x) do you feel like you belong at UO? Why do you feel like you (do/do not) belong?
Have you ever been subjected to non-verbal attacks by your classmates or faculty? Sometimes things are not said, but you can definitely feel it (stares/someone moving away from you) that has something to do with being Latino/a/x
Have you every been subjected to harsh words/ verbal attacks by your classmates or faculty because you are Latino/a/x?
Institutional Microaggressions
Being Latina/o/x where on campus do you feel safe? Are there any spaces where you feel unsafe or uncomfortable?
Do you feel represented in the UO student body?
Have you ever been the only Latino/a/x in one of your classes?
Have you ever been the only student of color in one of your classes?
Have you ever met a faculty member of the same race/ethnicity as you?
Do you agree or disagree with the statement that UO is a diverse university?
Does it surprise you to hear UO is a historically white university?

APPENDIX C: QUALTRICS SURVEY FOR LATINE WORKSHOP PARTICPANTS[12]

Default Question Block

Informed Consent Process For Online Survey

Hello, I am asking you to complete an online survey created by me, Bobbie Bermudez Bonilla from the University of Oregon. To clarify, I am surveying Latinx undergraduate students at the University of Oregon. Recently, the university shared plans that they want to become a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI).

As part of this lengthy endeavor, I want to collect student opinions to get a better understanding of how our university can better support the Latinx community inside and outside the classroom. If you choose to be in the study, you will complete this online survey. This survey consists of 18 questions and will take 15 minutes or less to complete.

As a sign of appreciation for your time, all students that complete the survey in its entirety aka (100%) will be part of a raffle to receive a $25 gift card. This gift card will be sent via email, 48 hours after you complete the survey.

Your answers will be confidential, anonymous and your personal information will not be shared. You can stop the survey at any time. When your survey results are transcribed, all identifying information will be omitted and you will only be referred to as "Latinx undergraduate" in my dissertation. Being in this study is optional and I thank you for your time.

Questions about this study? Please contact Bobbie Bermudez Bonilla at bxb@uoregon.edu

If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant, you can call the UOregon Institutional Review Board at 541.346.2510

If you agree, please sign your initials below.

[ ]

Before we begin I would like to collect some information about you.
Please write in your age below.

[ ]

What year are you at your current university?

- ◯ Freshman / 1st year
- ◯ Sophmore / 2nd year
- ◯ Junior / 3rd year
- ◯ Senior / 4th year
- ◯ [ ] Other

What is your major at your current university?

[ ]

y.d1.qualtrics.com/Q/EditSection/Blocks/Ajax/GetSurveyPrintPreview?ContextSurveyID=SV_6MbFYDmNICaMTg&ContextLibraryID=UR_aXYN... 1/6

[12] This was provided to all Latine participants after my one-hour workshop on community cultural wealth and microaggressions. I provided a QR code in my PowerPoint and also made it available through tinyurl.com/UnidosUO

Do you consider yourself a first generation student or the first in your family to attend / one day graduate from a university.

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ [ ] Other (please explain in the space provided):

What gender do you identify with?

- ◯ Male
- ◯ Female
- ◯ Non-binary
- ◯ [ ] Other

Do you identify as Latinx/a/o/e?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

What terminology do you prefer when talking about yourself?

- ◯ Latina
- ◯ Latino
- ◯ Latinx
- ◯ Latine
- ◯ [ ] Other
- ◯ Hispanic

Tell me more about your family heritage. What country are your ancestors from: (Example: I was born in Oregon, but my mom is Mexican and grandfather is Cuban)

[ ]

What languages other than English, do you speak:

- ☐ Spanish
- ☐ Portuguese
- ☐ [ ] Indigineous Latin American language such as
- ☐ [ ] Other, please specify:
- ☐ None of the above

If someone was to argue that in order to be Latinx you HAVE to speak Spanish would you....

- ◯ Agree - speaking Spanish is essential to identifying as Latinx
- ◯ Disagree- you can be Latinx and not speak/understand Spanish
- ◯ [ ] Unsure (please explain your reasoning in the space below)

Write one sentence about what the American Dream means to you aka
" To me, the American Dream means......"

According to researcher Tara Yosso, there are certain things Latinx/a/o students need in order to be successful at school. More specifically there are six categories that are most important to students. Can you number the following categories from 1- 6, one being the most important and six being the least important to being successful at this university.

Goals/Dreams (Aspirational capital) – "hopes and dreams" that motivate you

Language/Communication Skills (Linguistic capital) – various language and communication skills you bring with you

Family Support (Familial capital) -social and personal resources you have from your family

Support from Peers/Community (Social capital) -support from "peers and other social contacts" such as friends or classmates

Ability to navigate College system (Navigational capital) skills and abilities to navigate "social institutions," including educational spaces.

Advocating for needs (Resistance capital) ability to advocate and secure your rights to education

In one sentence, could you describe why the top category from your ranking is so important for you?

Example: I ranked support from peers/social as category #1. I think support from peers is most important because you need friends to support you in college.

The following questions will focus on microaggressions. Essentially microaggressions are much more covert ways that students of color are treated differently than their white peers. Please consider your experiences on this specific campus and answer the following as truthful as possible:

	Never	Once or twice	On various occasions (3+ times)	Always
Racial jokes are jokes that are a bit controversial and try to stereotype students due to their race or ethnicity. Most of these jokes are followed by comments like "don't be so sensitive" or "it was just a joke".	○	○	○	○

	Never	Once or twice	On various occasions (3+ times)	Always
While on campus, have you ever been subjected to a "joke" which you felt was offensive towards Latinx students?				
As a Latinx student do you feel like you belong on this campus.	○	○	○	○
Have you ever been subjected to covertly racist non-verbal incidents by your classmates or faculty? Sometimes things are not said, but you can definitely feel it (stares/someone moving away from you) that has something to do with being Latinx	○	○	○	○
Have you ever been subjected to harsh words/ verbal attacks by your classmates or faculty because you are Latinx?	○	○	○	○
As a Latinx student, do you feel safe on this campus?	○	○	○	○
Have you ever been the only Latinx or student of color in one of your classes?	○	○	○	○
At this university, have you ever met a teacher the same ethnicity as you?	○	○	○	○
Do you feel like this campus is diverse and inclusive?	○	○	○	○
While on campus, has a negative comment ever been made about the way you speak English or your "accent"?	○	○	○	○
While on campus, has anyone ever questioned or assumed your nationality (Are you American?) or legality (Are you undocumented?) due to your ethnicity.	○	○	○	○
Have you ever felt like a teacher treated you differently or had negative preconceptions about	○	○	○	○

	Never	Once or twice	On various occasions (3+ times)	Always
you due to your ethnicity?				

If you would like to share a story of microaggression you have experienced on campus, you may do so below. As a reminder, this survey is 100% anonymous. If you feel uncomfortable sharing or have never experienced a microaggression on campus you may write N/A below.

To clarify was this microaggression(s) described above was committed by a ....

- ◯ Fellow Student
- ◯ Professor or Admin Member
- ◯ ________ Other
- ◯ All of the above
- ◯ None of the above, I have never experienced a microaggression on campus

Retention refers to keeping students enrolled at a university for four or more years. This university has a current retention rate for keeping Latinx students enrolled. If you had to guess what percent of Latinx student currently enrolled at this university, end up completing their degree.

- ◯ 25 % of Latinx student currently enrolled will finish their degree
- ◯ 50 %
- ◯ 75 %
- ◯ 100 %
- ◯ ________ Other , please specify

What are two things this university is currently doing well in terms of supporting Latinx students. (Check off your top two below)

- ☐ Celebrates diversity on campus
- ☐ Celebrates languages other than English on campus
- ☐ Gives platform for students of color to share their thoughs/opinions
- ☐ Diverse classes curriculums that include authors of color
- ☐ Hiring more faculty of color
- ☐ Mentoring opportunities with Latinx staff or upperclassmen
- ☐ ________ Other, please specify:
- ☐ None of the above

What are two specific things this university needs to improve on (in the future) to support their Latinx students.
(Rank in order 1= most important/ 8= least important)

More financial aid for Latinx studies

More Latinx focused classes (Latinx History & Culture class as a requirement for all students)

More Latinx focused events + clubs on campus

More Latinx community outreach (visit local high schools, presence at Latinx community events)

Culturally responsive training for faculty and staff

More educators of colors (aka more representation)

More mentoring events with Latinx faculty or upperclassmen

Other (please specify / if this is left blank please rate as number 8)

Is there anything extra you would like to share about this university possibly becoming a hispanic serving institution that was not covered above?

- Yes, I think.....
- No

Would you mind being contacted in the future about a zoom interview? It will be scheduled at your convenience, 30 minutes in length and another Amazon gift card will be provided as a sign of appreciation for your time.

- Yes I would be willing to do a 30 min zoom interview
- No I would not like to do a zoom interview

Thank you for completing this survey. Please write in your email below and your amazon gift card will be sent to you within 48 hours. I appreciate your honesty and time.

Powered by Qualtrics

APPENDIX D- MICROAGRESSION MATRIX : 10 QUESTIONS

Verbatim Questions displayed on Qualtrics Survey	Never	Once or Twice	On Various occasions (3+ times)	Always
1. Racial jokes are jokes that are a bit controversial and try to stereotype students due to their race or ethnicity. Most of these jokes are followed by comments like “don’t be so sensitive” or “it was just a joke”. 2. While on campus, have you ever been subjected to a “joke” which you felt was offensive towards Latinx students?				
3. As a Latinx student do you feel like you belong on this campus.				
4. Have you ever been subjected to covertly racist non-verbal incidents by your classmates or faculty? Sometimes things are not said, but you can definitely feel it (stares/someone moving away from you) that has something to do with being Latinx				
5. Have you ever been subjected to harsh words/ verbal attacks by your classmates or faculty because you are Latinx?				
6. As a Latinx student, do you feel safe on this campus?				
7. Have you ever been the only Latinx or student of color in one of your classes?				
8. At this university, have you ever met a teacher the same ethnicity as you?				
9. Do you feel like this campus is diverse and inclusive?				
10. While on campus, has a negative comment ever been made about the way you speak English or your "accent"?				
11. While on campus, has anyone ever questioned or assumed your nationality (Are you American?) or legality (Are you undocumented?) due to your ethnicity.				
12. Have you ever felt like a teacher treated you differently or had negative preconceptions about you due to your ethnicity?				

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