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Islas, Liliana

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The Role of Facebook in Latino Transfer

College Adjustment

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

in Education

by

Liliana Islas

2018

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

The Role of Facebook in Latino Transfer

College Adjustment

by

Liliana Islas

Doctor of Philosophy in Education

University of California, Los Angeles, 2018

Professor Douglas M. Kellner, Chair

Latinos are the largest minority in the U.S., yet they hold the least number of conferred

college degrees compared to their total population. Despite these low numbers, Latinos have

grown exponentially in colleges and universities. Presently, the University of California has six

out of its nine undergraduate campuses designated Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI). HSIs

require a Latino student population of 25 percent or higher. It is important to note, however, that

these institutions are structurally and culturally white. Latinos have been found to experience a

culture shock when entering higher education (Yosso, 2005). Sixty-percent of Latino students

begin their post-secondary education at community colleges, and they, too, experience what is

known as transfer shock: a dip in students' GPA when entering their senior institution. As such,

tools that may mitigate these various adjustments are explored. Most college aged students do

not know of a time before the world wide web. More than 90 percent of the college going

population uses Facebook. Given that Latino students continue to encounter marginalizing

experiences in higher education, the function of Facebook was explored for Latino community transfer students during their adjustment period.

Transfer students' adjustment periods are one to two academic terms (Laanan, 1995). A virtual ethnography of participants' Facebook was conducted that included semi-structured interviews that took place at the end of participants first term (December of entering year) and at the end of their second term (March and April). The study found that Facebook functioned as (a) a navigational tool, (b) coping mechanism, and (c) as a political platform and asset. Facebook as a navigational tool is important for first-generation college students. Facebook use a as a coping mechanism was important for Latino students, especially given that at the time of adjustment and transition to their senior institution, negative political rhetoric about Latinos and immigration policy. The ability to bridge social capital was particularly important for Latino transfer students, as they name family and peers a source of support. Facebook as a political tool and asset was important given the political climate—namely, Donald Trump's anti-immigrant and dehumanizing platform—during Latino transition.

The dissertation of Liliana Islas is approved.

Daniel G. Solorzano

Tyrone C. Howard

Dimpal Jain

Douglas M. Kellner, Committee Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2018

DEDICATION

To the transfer community

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This dissertation was completed because of my family, friends, and mentors. Thank you, from the bottom of my heart.

First, I would like to thank my grandma, Carmen Ruiz. Your sacrifice, love and support will be felt for generations to come. To my parents, Liliana Villalobos-Cooks and Troy D. Cooks, thank you for the continued love, and support. There is no limit to what you would do for your children and grandchildren. I thank God both for of you every day. To Nene, thank you for always being there for me, no matter what shenanigans I manage to get myself into. To my siblings, Damien and Troy, I love you both beyond words. You both have turned into the best man I know, Dad. I am so proud to be your sister.

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VITA

Liliana Islas

Education

University of California, Los Angeles	June 2010
M.A. in Education	

University of California, Los Angeles   June 2009
B.A. in Women Studies
Minor in Education

East Los Angeles Community College   June 2006
IGETC Certificate

Professional Experience

Assistant Director   2017-Current
University of California, Los Angeles
Academic Advancement Program

College Academic Mentor (CAM)   2011 - 2017
University of California, Los Angeles
College Academic Counseling

Research Consultant   2016
Department of Justice
University of California, Los Angeles
The Center for Policing Equity

Peer Advisor/Mentor   2007 - 2010
The Center for Community College Partnerships
University of California, Los Angeles

Peer Advisor/Mentor   Summer, 2008
The Center for Community College Partnerships
University of California, Los Angeles
University of California Transfer Opportunity Program UCTOP

Peer Advisor/Mentor
The Center for Community College Partnerships   Summer 2007, 2008
University of California, Los Angeles
Summer Intensive Transfer Experience (SITE)

Student Tutor II   2003 - 2006
East Los Angeles Community College
Educational Talent Search (TRiO)

Selected Presentations

Research Paper   November, 2013
Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE)
St. Louis, Missouri
Facbooking: Exploring Latina/o Identity Development on Social Networks
Liliana Islas

Research Paper   November, 2013
Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE)
St. Louis, Missouri
Constraints and Incentives: How Two Universities Respond to Negative Racial Campus Events
Christine Mata, Reuben DeLeon, Liliana Islas

Professional Affiliations

American Educational Research Association (AERA)

Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE)

Council for the Study of Community Colleges (CSCC)

American Association of Hispanics in Higher Education (AAHHE)

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Alonzo took the seat across from me, and patiently waited while I tested both of my recorders. He looked confident. He sat up straight, with his hands folded on the white, glass table of the small conference room. The window was open, and I could not help but notice how quiet it was outside. It was the end of finals week. Students were beginning to leave campus for their winter break. I sat down, scooted my chair in, and asked if he was ready. He nodded, and I pressed record.

Liliana: Okay. So how has your transition been to UCWC?

Alonzo: Difficult.

Liliana: Okay. In what ways?

Alonzo: I was part of a program in community college where they prep us for transferring and I would hear people say it's going to be hard, it's going to be difficult, and it was in my head, but it's one thing hearing it and knowing it's going to be difficult, and then going through it is a different beast.

Liliana: Yeah.

Alonzo: Coming here to UCWC has been difficult in great part because of the population here. I do see myself as a minority. So that was a big shock, a culture shock.

Liliana: Okay.

Alonzo: It has been hard in the sense that as I mentioned before, we're here, and like, as soon as we get here, we're told okay, you need to start thinking of grad school. What are you going to do after this? And the time is so limited. And when I compare it to people who come from right after high school, I kind of envy the time that they have here,

because UCWC has so many resources. Has so many opportunities and I would wish to have more time to enjoy them all.

Liliana: Yeah.

Alonzo: So yeah, it has been difficult. My first quarter was the worst. Like, everything happened at once. It's not just academics. It's living on the hill, it's finding your groove, finding your space. So, you really have to manage all those things at once. And I guess it is part of growing up. But it's difficult, yeah.

Alonzo describes the various adjustments community college transfer students go through when they enter their senior institution. This raises questions about whether or not the UC system is sufficiently supporting Latino community college transfer students in acclimating themselves to their senior institution, and what should be done to mitigate these negative experiences. This is especially important since transfer students are expected to complete their degrees in two years, rather than the four years that freshman students have.

As a former first-generation, community college transfer student myself, I understand how and why being able to navigate your senior institution in a timely manner is particularly important. Due to the short amount of time transfer students have at their senior institution, the most common stressor students vocalize is that they feel like they "hit the ground running." They may even miss opportunities because they are not aware of upcoming deadlines given that some program applications (e.g., study abroad applications) are due almost one academic year in advance. This rapid timeline would mean transfer students would have to apply to programs as soon as they enter their senior institution. This can feel overwhelming as students are simultaneously orienting themselves to their new environment and adjusting academically and socially. Helping community college transfers navigate their senior institutions in a timely

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manner is important so that they can take full advantage of the University's resources and opportunities.

Most college students today do not know of a social life without the world wide web. Social Media Technology (SMT)[1] is widely used, and has become a part of the fabric of American life. Facebook, in particular, has been found to be a large part of the college-going culture (Martinez-Alemán & Wartman, 2009). Therefore, we cannot talk about student experiences today without discussing the role of Facebook in those experiences. Given that Latino undergraduates experience a culture shock when they enter post-secondary education (Yosso, 2005), and have been found to have higher levels of stress than their White counterparts (Munoz, 1986), inquiry into tools that may mitigate those experiences must be investigated.

Background of the Problem

Latinos are the largest and most rapidly growing minority population in the United States. According to the 2010 census, 50.5 million Americans identified as Latino. The Latino population is upwards of 16.3 percent of the total U.S. population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011). The demographic shift is already seen at universities and colleges. In fact, the number of Latino students attending college rose by 24 percent in the 2009–2010 academic year (Fry, 2011). Despite these statistics, Latinos only hold 8.1 percent of bachelor degrees (U.S. Department of Education, 2011). Latinos have the lowest number of post-secondary education relative to their population. Thirteen percent of Latinos hold bachelor's degrees, compared to 53 percent of Asians, 39 percent of Whites, and 19 percent of Black students in 2010 (Fry, 2011).

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[1] Social Media Technology (SMT) refers to ". . . web-based and mobile applications that allow individuals and organizations to create, engage, and share new user-generated or existing content, in digital environments through multi-way communications" (Davis, Deil-Amen, Rios-Aguilar, & Gonzalez Canche, 2012, p. 1).

Helping Latino students get through the educational pipeline has been difficult, to say the least. It has been found that Latinos often do not graduate or transfer to a four-year degree-granting institution (Moore & Shulock, 2010). Most notably, literature also speaks to seemingly insurmountable obstacles faced by Latino community college students in their efforts to transfer to a four-year university (Ornelas & Solorzano, 2004; Rivas, Perez, Alvarez, & Solorzano, 2007; Solorzano, Acevedo-Gil, & Santos, 2013). Some of those obstacles include issues with childcare, working full-time, and familial responsibilities (Ornelas & Solorzano, 2004).

The small number of Latinos that are able to navigate their way through community college, and gain admission to a four-year university are met with yet another trying obstacle: the transfer shock phenomenon. Originally coined by Hill (1965), the transfer shock phenomenon is a term used to reference transfer students' dip in academic achievement when first entering the university. Transfer shock is said to only lasts for one to two terms as transfer students quickly recover from this drop in GPA, similar to freshmen drops in grades when transitioning from high school to college (Laanan, 1996, 1998). The transfer shock phenomenon is one of the most widely known obstacles that transfer students encounter.

While the transfer shock has been found to create negative associations between the experience of it and the likelihood of completing their degree (Allen, Robbins Casillas, & Oh, 2008) and is important in understanding the various obstacles transfer students encounter when entering their senior institutions, what is more concerning is that Latino students often encounter a culture shock when entering post-secondary education (Yosso, 2005). Culture shock includes feelings of isolation, alienation, racial and gender discrimination (Yosso, 2005). Moreover, when discussing key factors to Latino undergraduate success, students identify family, and peers as sources of support, followed by support staff such as college counselors, program

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administrators, and more (Hurtado, Carter, & Spuler, 1996). Latino students spoke to strong family ties, specifically identifying their families as strong sources of support (Castellanos & Jones, 2003; Yosso, 2005). While personal and emotional support from family is important for Latino students, peer support, and professional staff support was found to be equally important as it assisted students in navigating university (Castellanos & Jones, 2003).

Information online has never been more readily available as it is today. Two-thirds of Facebook users share news and information on the popular social platform (Shearer, 2015). A national study found that 100 percent of U.S. educational institutions reported some use of social media (Barnes & Lescault, 2011). Given that we now live in a networked society,[2] innovative ways to tackle our educational crisis are increasing inquiries through what some would deem unconventional. Educational researchers have already begun to explore the relationship of SMTs such as Facebook in relation to college outcomes. Research has examined student engagement, college adjustment, and social capital as it relates to student use of social networks (DeAndrea, Ellison, LaRose, Steinfield, & Fiore, 2012; Junco, 2011). It is no surprise that researchers are exploring the use of social media networks such as Facebook and its effects on college students' experiences, and outcomes at their educational institutions. Investigating ways in which historically underserved students use technology as they navigate institutions of higher education is one way we can begin to understand its role on students' adjustment and experiences in this rapidly changing technological environment. This study explores the use of social media

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[2] A networked society defined by Castelle and Cardoso (2005) "is a social structure based on networks operated by information and communication technologies based in microelectronics and digital computer networks that generate, process, and distribute information on the basis of the knowledge accumulated in the nodes of the networks" (p. 7).

technology for Latina/o community college transfer students during their adjustment period at their senior institution.

Statement of the Problem

According to The State of Higher Education in California-Latino Report (2015), "Transfer is an important pathway for Latino college participation and success, since about two-thirds of Latinos begin their higher education at a community college . . . " (p. 12). While most Latino students are not completing post-secondary education, it must be noted that there is still an overall upward trend of Latino students at UCs. In fact, UC Irvine is the newest UC to earn the Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) designation (Kopetman, 2017). HSIs are educational institutions that have a student population of 25 percent or higher (Laden, 2010). As of today, five UCs out of the nine that serve undergraduate students are HSIs (HACU, 2018). UC Davis is said to follow by the 2018–2019 academic year (The Regents of the University of California, Davis Campus, 2017). Across the UC system, 23 percent of the student population is Latino (Freeling, 2015). However, research continues to finds that students of color often encounter marginalizing experiences in post-secondary education (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Rendon, 1994; Reyes, 2011; Solorzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000; Torres & Hernandez, 2007). Research on attrition has often left out the socio-historical context for students of color (Jain, Herrera, Bernal, & Solorzano, 2011). These racialized contexts determine how these students experience education (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). The continuous stresses, and obstacles Latino students experience in post-secondary education warrants inquiry into how UCs are supporting this growing demographic of students.

Most studies only compare GPAs, paying little regard to other factors that influence college adjustment, such as the social component of college adjustment (Bahr, Toth, Thirolf, &

Masse, 2013; Tinto, 1993). Literature on social media and college adjustment are scant, and pay little attention to Latino transfer student use, leaving the largest minority group in the United States virtually out of the conversation (Junco, 2011; Nalbone, Kovach, Fish, McCoy, Jones, & Wright, 2016; Nehls & Smith, 2014). Moreover, differences in Facebook usage can work to have either positive or negative outcomes (Junco, 2011). Most researchers of online social networks all agree that students can use these sites in advantageous ways (Davis et al., 2012; Ellison, Steinfield & Lamp, 2007; Junco, 2011; Nalbone et al., 2016; Robleyer et al., 2010). However, research in this area must shift to understand more nuanced ways in which social networks like Facebook may be useful in college adjustment. More importantly, exploration of Latino community college transfer students and the role of Facebook during the college adjustment period has yet to be explored. Additionally, only a handful of studies have investigated college adjustment and social media in general (Nehls & Smith, 2014; DeAndrea et al., 2012; Nalbone et al., 2016; Raacke & Bonds-Raacke, 2013).

Purpose of the Study

This study will fill the gap in the knowledge regarding college adjustment[3] for Latina/o transfer students, in regards to understanding the function of social media during students' adjustment period to their senior institution. This has been found to be during students' first and second terms (Glass & Harrington, 2002; Eggleston & Laanan, 2001; Thurman, 2007). More importantly, findings will give us a better understanding of not only the kind of support that social media can provide and that is important for Latino community college transfer students, but *when* that support should be introduced and available.

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[3] For the purposes of this study, college adjustment will used to encompass both academic and social adjustment.

Research Questions

Due to the dramatic increase in Latina/o student enrollment at postsecondary institutions, the negative experiences of students of color and the ubiquitous presence of Facebook on college campuses, the following questions guide my research:

1) What is the function of SMT, specifically Facebook, as Latino community college transfer students transition into a culturally White, highly selective four-year university?

1a) What Facebook ties are most important for transfer students to create and maintain during their transition?

1b) Do patterns in Facebook activity among Latino transfer students change during their adjustment period? If so, why?

Research Design

My inquiry is guided by longitudinal, qualitative, and virtual ethnographic methods to explore the significance of students using social media technology during their adjustment period. I am specifically focusing on Latino students given the large shift in demographic makeup at the University of California system (Freeling, 2015). Additionally, intersectional, marginalized identities have been found to be at an increased risk of attrition (Murphy & Murphy, 2018). As such, participants in my study were community college transfer students who identified as Latino, first-generation, and low-income.

Moreover, I chose to conduct a longitudinal study due to students' adjustment periods lasting an average of two terms (Glass & Harrington, 2002; Laanan, 2001). Individual, semi-structured interviews after their first and second terms allowed me to address my third research question regarding changes in use during different terms. Additionally, conducting students' virtual ethnography of their own Facebook account during their first two terms allowed me to

refer to secondary data during our semi-structured interviews for additional and tailored interview probing for participants' interview.

Theoretical Framework

Since research finds that students of color have marginalizing experiences on college campuses (Hurtado, 1994; Hurtado et al., 1996; Solorzano et al., 2000; Yosso, 2005), this study is guided by the use of Critical Race Theory (CRT). Critical race theory allows me to analyze the ways in which race and racism, among other intersecting forms of oppression, influence college adjustment for Latino transfer students. In particular, I use Latino Critical Theory (LatCrit), which emerged from Critical Race Theory in order to address additional forms of oppression that are unique to Latinos' experiences and for which CRT could not account (Yosso, 2005). For example, LatCrit accounts for citizenship status, migration, language, and more facets of Latino perspectives.

Limitations

Although all three of my research questions were answered, there were limitations to my qualitative study that were unavoidable. One of those limitations is generalizability to all community college transfer students. Since my research looked at participants who identified as first-generation, low-income, Latina/o students, the findings of my study are not generalizable to all community college transfer students at UCs. Second, the small number of participants, 14 to be exact, might not represent the majority of community college transfer student experiences and Facebook use during their adjustment period. Third, my data collection was done during the 2016 United States presidential election. The outcome of the presidential election had negative effects on my participants' emotional and psychological state. This was particularly due to Trump's promise to deport millions of people who were undocumented. Additionally, the

sample was taken from a highly selective UC. Generalizability to different types of four-year institutions is limited as well. Lastly, a certain degree of subjectivity can be found since I was a former community college transfer student, and I also identify as Latina.

Definition of Terms

In order to aid readers that might not be familiar with Facebook terms, the following list of terms will be useful in reference to Facebook's platform and its functional areas:

Timeline: Used to be called "wall." It is the where users post status updates, pictures, check-ins (showing users' network where they are) and share their experiences.

Status Update/ Post: This function allows you to publish whatever is on your mind that you would like to share with your network. The status update will appear on participants timelines.

Friend[ed/ing]: Acceptance of the friend request allows reciprocal access to one another's profiles. Access to Facebook *Friends'* profiles allows further access to pictures, videos, and text.

Page: Pages created on Facebook is a public profile created for entities such as celebrities, brands, causes, businesses, and other organizations. Pages do not have friends. Instead they build "fans." However, Pages works similarly to "friending" someone in that "fans" are able to see posts, picture, events, and other status updates in their feeds.

Like: Is a button feature that allows users to show support for a specific photo, status updates, posts, pages, comments, etc. After users "like" something, it will update their feed and let their "friends" know.

Feed: It is a list of newly published content from your Facebook network. It includes updates from friends, and pages that have been "liked."

Repost: This function allows you to *re*-publish whatever you would like to share with your network. For example, this could be an article, picture, or another member's post. The status update will appear on participants' timelines.

Summary

Today, Technological innovation has changed our social interactions. Most college-aged students do not know a life without social media technology. While research on social media technology is relatively new, what is not new is research that consistently finds students of color have marginalizing experiences (Rendon, 1994; Reyes, 2011). Students use Facebook to organize and manage almost every aspect of their social and academic lives (Martinez-Alemán & Wartman, 2009). Since most researchers agree that Facebook *can* have a positive effect on students' experience (Davis et al., 2012; Ellison et al., 2007; Junco, 2011), it cannot be ignored when investigating Latino transfer students' adjustment periods. Moreover, the large increase of Latino students at UCs (Freeling, 2015) warrants inquiry into tools that might be helpful in easing Latino transfer students' transition into their senior institutions.

Organization of Dissertation

The next chapter is the literature review. It is divided into four sections. The first section discusses the state of Latino education. The second section reviews transfer student college adjustment literature. The third section synthesizes Latino student experiences and factors that aid persistence, as well as degree attainment. The fourth section discusses Facebook literature as it relates to student use. Lastly, the chapter ends with a concluding summary relating all sections.

The third chapter is my methods chapter. The first section describes the ethnographic/virtual ethnographic principles. The second section reviews the data collection

procedures, and participant profile, and the third major section reviews data analysis methods. I end with my positionality, limitations to the study and conclusion.

Chapter Four is my findings chapter. That chapter is organized by three major themes that answer the main research question along with the sub questions. After the introduction, the first section illustrates the first major theme: Facebook as a navigational tool. The second theme is Facebook as a coping tool, and the third theme illustrates Facebook as a political platform and asset. The conclusion summarizes my findings and analysis of these findings.

The fifth and final chapter discusses each theme and presents an analysis of the findings. The second major section identifies the contributions to practice. The third section explains the contribution to research and the fourth notes the contribution to theory. Lastly, I discuss future directions. The next section is a review of relevant literature.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW & THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter reviews literature in higher education of the state of Latino education. The goal of this section is to give the reader a bit more context to why Latinos are lagging behind in educational attainment. The next section of literature focuses on community college transfer, and college adjustment. It then specifically looks at Latino students, and the various types of support systems that have been found to work for them. The goal of that section is to review what we know about the transition itself, and the obstacles that specifically affect Latino transfer students when entering their senior institution. The next major section of the literature will give an overview of the history of Social Media Technology (SMT) and its large membership. I will then review SMT literature and what is known about its use in higher education. The goal of this section is to orient the reader to SMT, from its inception to what role it has today, specifically in higher education. The overall goal of this chapter is to gain a better understanding of the obstacles that Latino community college transfer students face, to review what is known about SMT and its role in higher education, and to situate my study within the gaps of the literature. Lastly, this chapter discusses the theoretical framework I use, Critical Race Theory. That section illustrate why these were the appropriate theoretical frameworks to use. This chapter ends with a concluding summary relating all sections.

Latino Education

In order to understand the state of Latino education, we must briefly discuss Proposition 209. Proposition 209 was a California ballot that was voted into effect in November, 1996. The proposition prohibited the use of sex, race, and ethnicity in public education, employment, and contracting (The State of Higher Education in California-Latino Report, 2015). The University of California saw a decline in admissions of Latino students from 1994 to 2013 (The State of

Higher Education in California-Latino Report, 2015). Recently, there has been increased media attention to the fact that more Latino students are being admitted to the UC system. While this is true, Latinos are still admitted at a lower rate when compared to their White counterparts, and are still underrepresented relative to the numbers of applications (The State of Higher Education in California-Latino Report, 2015). Highly selective institutions, like University of California, Berkeley, and University of California, Los Angeles have only seen a 1.7 percent increase in Latino student population, despite the 350 percent increase in Latino applications to the UC system (The State of Higher Education in California-Latino Report, 2015). Today, the UC system has 5/9 UCs that have a Latino population of 25 percent or higher, being deemed a Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSI; Freeling, 2015).

Moreover, in the past decade, the U.S has seen a steady increase in the Latino population. Although there has been an increase in the Latino student population, racial and socioeconomic differences in enrollment and degree attainment are startling and are a major concern to higher education researchers (Ornelas & Solorzano, 2004; Moore & Shulock, 2010; Reyes & Nora, 2012). While Latinos make up a significant portion of the population, they continue to face historically seated barriers in their pursuit of a postsecondary education (Reyes & Nora, 2012). Negative campus climate shapes Latino students' experiences on college campuses (Hurtado et al., 1996). And although numbers of Latino students attending UCs are increasing, they are still low when compared to their overall population, especially at highly selective institutions (Moore & Shulock, 2010). As we strive to close the achievement gap for Latinos, we must investigate tools that may allow students to navigate higher educational institutions with more ease .

California: Community Colleges

The California Master Plan of Higher Education was created in 1960 to assure that all students are successful (University of California Office of the President, 2007). In those efforts, all institutions, regardless of type (e.g., Community College, Cal State, and UCs) are expected to communicate and collaborate with one another as community colleges are not only there to offer open access to vocational training, and developmental courses, but are there to also facilitate the transfer function (University of California Office of the President, 2007).

California has the largest community college system of higher education in the nation. It has 113 community colleges and 72 districts (CCCCO, 2016). Latino students are concentrated in community colleges (Moore & Schulock, 2010). Junior Colleges are now the pathway to the bachelor's degree (Rivas, Perez, Alvarez, & Solorzano, 2007). Moreover, in California alone, the transfer rate for Latino community college students is disproportionately low at 23 percent (College Opportunity, 2015). Out of the 23 percent of Latino students that transferred to a four-year institution, 63 percent transferred to a California State University, 16 percent to private four-year, and 13 percent transferred to a University of California (College Opportunity, 2015). Additionally, over half of all Latinos who were enrolled in college were first-generation students[4] (Reyes & Nora, 2012), further increasing the marginality of first-generation, Latino transfer students in the UC system. The next section discusses the University of California system, and the shift in student population.

University of California

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[4] For the purposes of my study, first-generation college students will be defined as those whose parents did not graduate or attend college in the U.S. The reason in including participants that parents may have attended or had some form of post-secondary education in another country still navigate institutions of higher education here like a first-generation college student.

Although there is a large educational gap in Latinos' bachelor attainment, their overall

enrollment is on a slow incline (The State of Higher Education in California-Latino Report,

2015). Most HSIs are unique by the fact that they are created and categorized by numbers of

enrolled Latino students in areas were there has been growth, either by birth or immigration, at

historically White universities (Hurtado & Ruiz, 2012). Conversely, Historically Black

Universities (HBU) or Tribal Universities were explicitly set up to serve populations that were

previously excluded through policy and practice (Hurtado & Ruiz, 2012). The growth of Latino

students in post-secondary education presents some challenges and some opportunities to

transform an institution's structure, campus climate, and culture (Hurtado et al., 1999; Hurtado &

Carter, 1997).

In addressing the demographic shift at UCs, it is important that we understand Latino

experiences as they socially and academically enter into educational institutions that are

structurally and culturally White (Hurtado & Ruiz, 2012). As four-year institutions seek to

bolster their levels of degree attainment for Latino students, they must take into serious

consideration the barriers that Latino students encounter in the transfer process, and the

accompanying transitions such as financial constraints, cultural incongruity,[5] and familial

responsibilities (Ornelas & Solorzano, 2004).

The return on college degrees has increased, and so has demand on gaining entrance into

more prestigious universities (Education pays, 2006). Enrollment at highly selective UCs is

important for a few reasons. Students that graduate from elite universities enjoy higher premium

earnings than others (Edie et al., 1998), suggesting that equity is one reason (Dowd, et al., 2008).

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[5] Cultural Incongruity is a concept that describes how students' perceptions of how their personal
and cultural values fit with the prevailing values and culture of the University.

Also, additional benefits that students enjoy at highly selective institutions are: (a) a greater likelihood of graduation, and (b) significantly more access to professional or graduate study (Carnevale & Rose, 2004). This next section will review literature on what we know about college adjustment for community college transfer students.

<p style="text-align: center;">**Transfer Student College Adjustment**</p>

Research indicates that entering a four-year educational institution requires numerous adjustments to new environments and institutional culture. These adjustments include advising and planning, faculty-student interaction, financial aid, rigorous academics, campus size, large classes, new friends, and new location of the senior institution (Cejda, 1994; Laanan, 1996, 2004; Townsend, 1995). Research has found that most transfer students experience difficulty in adjustment early in their transition (Laanan, 1996, 1998).

Flaga (2002, 2006) discusses findings from the qualitative dissertation study she conducted with 35 transfer students in their first year at their senior institution. Pulling from that data, Flaga (2006) found five dimensions to the process of transfer transition assessed through three different environments: academic, social, and physical. The five dimensions through these three different environments are: (a) learning resources; (b) connecting and familiarity; and (c) negotiating and integrating. Learning resources were tools that each student used to familiarize themselves with the academic system and campus environment. Connecting was about developing relationships with others in social, academic, and physical environments; familiarity came overtime when the student became much more comfortable with the institution's academic environment. Negotiating involved adjusting their behavior and surroundings in order to be academically successful within the three environments, and integrating emerged as a developmental change from the student's relation to the three environments (Flaga, 2006).

According to Flaga (2006), integrating often included a shift in perception or identity. Given that literature on Latino students find that cultural incongruity is one of the reasons Latinos struggle in post-secondary education, the transition can be a significant problem (Gloria, Castellanos, & Orozco, 2005). As such, my research seeks to address issues that are unique to the Latino population. Moreover, Flaga's (2006) dimensions illustrate the complexity of adjustments transfer students encounter when entering and going through their senior institution.

Barbara Townsend (1995) conducted a study to identify barriers in the transfer process and retention efforts for transfer students at their senior institutions. Her study had a sample of 14 students of the 40 that formerly attended an urban community college and transferred into a private four-year institution. The sample was diverse as it used excerpts from White, African American, Latino, Asian, and international students. However, no data was given on the complete racial/ethnic makeup of the sample. Townsend (1995) found that transfer students considered themselves "self-reliant" in their transfer process. Students did not seek help from their community colleges, and relied on friends and family for information. Townsend (1995) believes that students saw themselves as "self-reliant" because they felt the institutions did not communicate with them.

Regarding the transfer process from community college to their senior institution, participants in the study found university representatives more helpful than community college staff (Townsend, 1995). Additionally, with respect to barriers at their senior institution, some students felt that academic work was more rigorous, and that faculty in comparison of their former community college were not seen as helpful as community college faculty in regards to guiding students to understand course content (Townsend, 1995). The negative perception of faculty at their senior institution led to some students describing the university's faculty attitudes

as being "the survival of the fittest" (Townsend, 1995).

Findings in Townsend's (1995) case study imply that transfer students are for the most part independent in regards to attaining information from their senior institution and more so depend on peers and family for support as they navigate their senior institution. Information and support from family and peers are important to transfer students in this study. Therefore, communication, information, and perceived support are equally important. Moreover, the academic environment plays a role in college adjustment as well. Indeed, the community colleges and four-year university environment is wholly different. The faculty and student interactions are different than what they had experienced in community college. Townsend's (1995) findings support McGrath and Spear's (1991) work, noting, "Faculty at community colleges generally concentrate on developing students' academic abilities rather than expecting [students] to demonstrate these abilities . . . " (p. 189). Students may not feel as supported from faculty in developing academic skills. Given that faculty interactions are important in college adjustment (Laanan, 1996, 1998), these negative faculty-student interactions can have a negative impact on Latino community college students' adjustment to their senior institutions.

A quantitative study by Wawrzynski and Sedlacek (2003) explores racial and gender differences in the transfer student experience. In particular, I will focus on their findings about racial differences in students' transfer experiences. The study focused on students' interests, expectations, and perceptions on their transition to their senior institution. The 2,492 incoming transfer students in the study represented 66 percent of the incoming transfer students and were a representative sample of the total incoming transfer population. They found that there is indeed a difference between race and gender in expectations, academic behaviors, and learning outcomes. Overall, students of color were generally expected to become a part of the university

by interacting with faculty and students outside of class. Regarding learning outcomes, students of color were more interested in establishing goals for educational experiences that would give them life-long skills (e.g., developing written and oral communication skills, reasoning skills, technology skills, leadership skills, etc.). For academic behaviors, a sense of community was important for students of color; and they were more likely to study with other students of color rather than White students (Wawrzynski & Sedlacek, 2003). Additionally, students of color were also more likely to review, revise, and prepare for class.

Wawrzynski and Sedlacek's (2003) study shows that there are racial differences in the transfer student experience. Socializing outside of class, acquiring life skills, and engaging in community behavior when studying indicates that students of color seek a more holistic experience from their senior institution. They seek skills that are transferrable to life outside of the university, and that will better prepare them for life post-graduation (e.g., interview skills, job skills, and more). Findings indicate that transfer students of color desire involvement that are mostly non-cognitive. In their study, Wawrzynski and Sedlacek (2003) deploy the term non-cognitive:

> . . . to refer to variables relating to adjustment, motivation, and student perceptions, rather than the traditional verbal and quantitative (often called cognitive) areas, typically measure by standardized tests (Sedlacek, 2004). Non-cognitive variables are equally, if not more important in shaping academic performance in college persistence decisions among students of color . . . (p. 490)

These findings indicate that non-cognitive behaviors (e.g., socializing with faculty outside of the classroom, studying with peers) are an important aspect of integration for students of color, and may assist in their overall college adjustment. Although transfer students have been found to be

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"self-reliant" (Townsend, 1995), it seems that social integration and peer support is very important to the transfer experience for students of color. A notable limitation to the Wawrzynski and Sedlacek (2003) study was that Latino students were only 6 percent of the sample, while 16 percent of students identified as African American and 14 percent identified as Asian or Asian American. However, the study gives us a better insight into the transfer experience for students of color.

Earlier research found that social integration may not be as important for transfer students as for freshman students since students reported being fairly "self-reliant" (Townsend, 1995); however, more recent research suggests that social integration and academic integration are intricately intertwined for transfer students (Bahr et al., 2012; Townsend & Wilson, 2009) and cannot be treated as mutually exclusive. For example, participation in study groups facilitates a type of social and academic integration that is mutually reinforcing (Deil-Amen, 2011). Additionally, research has also shown that transfer students "desire socially-orientated academic integration" at their senior institution (Townsend & Wilson, 2009). Since transfer students are more likely to depend on peers when navigating their senior institution, these types of connections can help transfer students navigate the UC system and, in some part, aid the many challenges of their transition and college adjustment.

The definition of academic adjustment or integration has changed over the years (Bahr et al., 2013). In discussing social and academic integration on overall college adjustment, one must note that integration is not the same as assimilation/acculturation. The notion of integration can be traced back to Tinto's (1975, 1987, 1993) influential research on student departure (i.e., dropping out). Tinto's (1993) persistence model is an interactionalist system, where students and institutions (through social and educational communities), continually interact over time in

informal and formal ways. The key component of interactionalist view is that persistence is based on the extent to which students become incorporated (and or integrated). Since interactionalist theory adheres to some of the basic premises that of an acculturation/assimilation framework (e.g., separation and incorporation), researchers have challenged Tinto's (1993) model (Hurtado, 1997; Rendon, 1994; Tierney, 1992; Yosso, 2005). The challenge to Tinto's work is that for students of color, assimilation fundamentally does not work. As mentioned before, students of color have found their cultural incongruity to be problematic when arriving and adjusting to post-secondary institution (Gloria, Catellanos, & Orozco, 2005).

For example, Tierney (1992) posits that American Indians value group membership over individualization and separation. Tierney (1992) argues that Tinto did not consider a very important part of Van Gennep's theory. Van Gennep's term "ritual" refers to a rite of passage in the same culture, while Tinto (1995) uses the term "ritual" to leave one's culture for another. As discussed earlier, students of color name family, peers, and community as an important part in their transfer experience (Townsend, 1995; Wawrzynski & Sedlacek, 2003). Applying Tinto's theory to transfer students of color would not be completely appropriate, especially since most research on Latino students finds that family and peers are an important part in college adjustment and navigating these institutions (Castillo & Hill, 2004; Gloria & Castellanos, 2003; Hurtado, 1994; Yosso, 2005).

There are also other obstacles that community college transfer students encounter at the University of California. UC institutions have been found to be challenging for transfer students, in part due to class sizes being larger than transfers students are used to, which can make for an intimidating environment (Bahr et al., 2013). The competitive academic culture and distant or unavailable faculty can add to the challenges of college adjustment for transfer students. Studies

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have shown that particular academic exercises and experiences like in-class collaborative learning (Townsend & Wilson, 2009) and working in labs (Reyes, 2011; Townsend & Wilson, 2009) assist in transfer students' integration and over college adjustment. Additionally, paid internships can reduce the need to work off-campus, and attending informational seminars can create learning opportunities while addressing barriers to academic and social integration (Reyes, 2011).

Academic and Social Adjustment

For the purpose of this study, the term college adjustment will be used as an umbrella term for academic and social integration. The reasoning behind this is due to the fact that more recent research suggests that academic and social integration is intricately intertwined (Bahr et al., 2012; Townsend & Wilson, 2009). However, central to the literature on transfer college adjustment focuses on the Transfer Shock Phenomenon. The term "transfer shock" was first coined by Hill in 1965 and is used to describe the academic adjustment period in which community college transfers experience a decrease in GPA during their first and or second term at their senior institution (Cedja, 1994; Laanan, 1996, 1998, 2001; Townsend, 1995). Cohen and Brawer (2003) attribute students' transfer shock experience to poor academic preparation during their time at community college. It is important to note that transfer shock is not universal (Bahr et al., 2013) and tends to be confined to certain disciplines such as math, physics, and life sciences (Cejda, 1997). For the purposes of this study, I use Nora's (1987) definition of academic adjustment, which is defined as a students' perception of their academic experiences with institutional agents, such as faculty and administrators as well as perceptions of their future career.

Given that community college transfer students have been found to experience what is

known as the transfer shock phenomenon, it is not surprise that the prevailing literature on

transfer student college adjustment would be in this area. However, in reviewing the literature, it

seems that the transfer shock phenomenon has received a bit more attention than it should have. I

come to this conclusion given that data about students who experience transfer shock is often

modest and short-lived (Diaz, 1992). But given that evidence has shown that community college

students who experience this create negative associations between the experience of transfer

shock and the likelihood of completing their degree (Allen, Robbins, Casillas, & Oh, 2008;

Ishitani, 2008; Pennington, 2006) it remains an important aspect of college adjustment for Latino

community college transfer students.

Although I will be using college adjustment to refer to both academic and social

adjustment, it is important to define both academic and social adjustment. Literature on transfer

student social adjustment explores the social dimension of post-transfer transitions (Flaga, 2006;

Townsend & Wilson, 2006, 2009). Gathered from the literature, social adjustment will be

defined as a student's perceptions and experiences, social-related activities that are informal

interactions with institutional agents, such as faculty, administration, peers, and a sense of

belonging (Nora, 1987). Findings suggest that the more socially integrated transfer students are

or become, the better acclimated they become at their senior institution (Flaga, 2006; Tinto,

1993). Again, we know that academic and social integration is seen as intertwined, and cannot

be thought of as mutually exclusive (Bahr et al., 2012; Townsend & Wilson, 2009). As such,

each form of adjustment may inform the other. In reviewing the literature for college

adjustment, there are some noteworthy differences between White students and students of color

regarding their experiences adjusting to their senior institution. The next section reviews

literature that is unique to students of color and their transition.

Transfer Transition and Students of Color

Transfer students of color experience their transition differently. Laanan (1996, 1998) found that there are greater experiential differences between students of color and White students with respect to levels of satisfaction, academic adjustment, and social adjustment to their senior institution. Townsend and Wilson (2009) posit that historically underrepresented students appear to face more challenges adjusting. Although some universities have adopted approaches aimed at addressing the transfer adjustment process, these methods are not attuned to the unique experiences of transfer students of color (Laanan, 1995). Laanan (2004) posits that the greater the difference between the sending and receiving institution (e.g., size, institutional culture, academic and social expectations), the greater the dissonance the student will feel, and the harder the transition will be. As we know, Latino students are concentrated at the community colleges (Moore & Shucklock, 2010), therefore, we can infer that students may have a hard time transitioning to their highly selective, culturally White UC institutions since they were the majority at their sending institution.

Cultural Incongruity

Some transfer students experience overt social discrimination or exclusion because of their gender, race, class, age, immigration status, and/or for being first-generation college students (Reyes, 2011). It has been found that a lack of diversity at the receiving institution can leave transfer students feeling alienated and socially isolated (Reyes, 2011). Diversity does not only mean diversity in the student body, but also in the faculty, staff, and personnel. For example, Laanan (1996, 1998) found that White transfer students interacted with faculty in and out of the classroom environment more than students of color. This finding indicates that students from underrepresented socioeconomic racial/ethnic background may benefit from

connecting with faculty of color who might share similar backgrounds and experiences (Reyes, 2011). Therefore, we can infer that faculty diversity is also important at students' senior institutions.

Other factors affecting college adjustment is when predominantly White institutions where prevailing norms, values and practices cater to White students (Chang, 2002). These types of environments may lead to unfriendly and, in some cases, even hostile environments for students of color. Research shows that cultural congruity plays a role in the psychological well-being and persistence of students (Gloria et al., 2005). We can assume that another positive outcome from cultural congruity can be fitting into the receiving institution's culture. Cerezo and Chang (2013) found that fitting into the university culture and connecting with peers play a key role in maintaining a suitable college GPA for Latinos navigating predominantly White institutions. Cultural congruity was found to be positively associated with academic adjustment. Most notably, increased feelings of connection to the university and student body lessened each student's perceived obstacles (Cerezo & Chang, 2013). Additionally, the self-sufficiency of transfers and strong connection to peers as sources of information (Townsend, 1995) necessitates that we investigate other ways information is disseminated between transfer students and their peers.

Perceived Support

Numerous studies have shown that perceived support is important for college adjustment (Schneider & Ward, 2003; Solberg, Valdez & Villareal, 1994). Solberg et al. (1994) found that academic stress, social stress, and perceived availability of social support accounted for 59 percent of the variance in college adjustment ratings. Schneider and Ward (2003) conducted a study that measured the strength of participants' Latino identities to the extent of how much

participants identified with their Latino culture, and to the extent participants considered their

Latino identity as an important part of their self-concepts. Questions were from a Likert-type

scale and were used to assess the importance of their Latino identity as it was related to overall

college adjustment. For example, ethnic identification scale had questions and prompts such as:

"To understand me, you would need to know that I'm Latino" (p. 542). Additionally, perceived

social support was measured with likert-types scales.

Schneider and Ward (2003) found that Latinos perceived support helped mediate the

relationship between and ethnic self-identification and college adjustment. The same study also

found that Latinos that strongly identified with their Latino culture were less adjusted to college

because they perceived less support in college compared to Latinos who identified less with the

Latino culture (Schneider & Ward, 2003). Moreover, participation in formal (e.g., college-

facilitated) and informal activities fostered feelings of inclusion (Schneider & Ward, 2003).

Conversely, perceptions of a negative campus climate intensified students' feelings of not

belonging. Connection and feelings of belonging are important for Latino students. Familiarity

with college resources, peers, and faculty has shown to be important for transfer students as they

navigate their senior institution (Laanan, 1996, 1998).

Familial Importance in College Transition and Adjustment

College transition may be especially difficult and stressful for students of color,

especially at predominantly or culturally White institutions where students are expected to

readily conform to college life and communication patterns (Kalser & Pistole, 2003; Kenny &

Perez, 1996). The U.S. Western value system emphasizes autonomy and independence (Kalser

& Pistole, 2003), which is in direct contrast to most of the Latino culture where family cohesion

and *familismo*—intergenerational familial ties—are highly valued (Santiago-River et al., 2002).

As such, family support is crucial to successful college adjustment, managing distress, academic persistence, and academic decision-making (Castillo & Hill, 2004; Gloria & Castellanos, 2003; Hurtado, 1994). Additionally, the value Latino students place on collective learning and familial ties helps explain why they are drawn to student groups on campus with strong ethnic identity orientations (Kalser & Pisotle, 2003); and why membership in ethnic student groups helps bolster academic achievement among this population. As discussed earlier, cutting ties with community and family, as Tinto's (1993) theory of departure suggests, might not work well for Latino transfer students' transition due to cultural differences that emphasize the importance and connection to familial ties.

Castro and Cortez (2017) conducted a qualitative study in order to examine Latino community college transfer student experiences. The study found that family played a role in the transfer process. The role their family played ranged from offering rides to campus, living with their family while they went to school, and also offering emotional and motivational support. They also found that Latino students highlighted feelings of racial isolation, which is not uncommon for Latinos (Castro & Cortez, 2017). Issues of exclusion were found of the receiving institution. Financial stress was also something that they experienced. Overall, Castro and Cortez (2017) argue that institutions need to acknowledge the lived realities and intersectionality between family and community. In order to do this, it requires institutional agents to understand the complexity of Latino student experiences. When this is done, it will illuminate ways in which the receiving institution may foster a transfer receptive culture, and transfer affirming culture (Castro & Cortez, 2017).

Latinos continue to report negative experiences in higher education, feeling alienated, discriminated against, and subjected to low-academic expectations, all of which make attrition in

higher education understandable and likely (Gloria & Catellanos, 2003). These experiences often cause Latinos to question their abilities, strengths, and contributions, resulting in doubt to their right to and role in higher education (Kamimura, 2006). Campus climate can dramatically affect students sense of belonging, achievement, and self-esteem (Hurtado et al., 1996). Despite these negative experiences, some Latino students persist in their navigation of higher education (Gloria & Segura-Herrera, 2004). Research on Latino students demonstrates their resiliency when facing these barriers (Borrero, 2011; Perez & McDonough, 2008).

Given the negative experiences of Latino students in the U.S. postsecondary education, my research seeks to understand college adjustment, specifically as it relates to transfer student transitions and the role that Facebook plays throughout that transition. Receiving institutions must increase their understanding of the dynamics of college adjustment for Latino students and investigate alternative and appropriate tools that can alleviate some of the negative experiences they encounter when transitioning from a community college to a four-year university.

Today, in the year 2018, the U.S. economic system is a "knowledge economy" and the use of social media technology (SMT) is ubiquitous. The socialization process has been altered as more and more people use SMT as a means to communicate, keep ties with friends, family, and colleagues (Ellison et al., 2007). In search for alternative methods and opportunities to adjust both academically and socially to their senior institution, SMT will be explored as a potential tool in transfer students' experiences. The next section of the literature focuses on research related to Social Networking Sites (SNS) and student use.

Technology and Media Literacy

Sixty-five percent of American adults are on social media, up 7 percent since 2005 (Perrin, 2015). The use of Social Media Technology (SMT) has skyrocketed, becoming a

consequential part of everyday American culture (Perrin, 2015). Our ability to contact and

communicate with others instantly across space and time has led to the cultivation of dynamic

venues for interpersonal collaboration support, self-expression, and fast and accurate retrieval of

information. As such, social media technology (SMT) has claimed its place among the most

used technological tools of today.

Given SMT's prominence, critical media literacy is extremely important as the use of

technology and social media continues to increase. Kellner and Share (2007) write:

Critical media literacy expands the notion of literacy to include different forms of mass

communication and popular culture as well as deepens the potential of education to

critically analyze relationships between media and audiences, information and power. It

involves cultivating skills in analyzing media codes and conventions, abilities to criticize

stereotypes, dominant values, and ideologies, and competencies to interpret the multiple

meanings and messages generated by media texts. Media literacy helps people to

discriminate and evaluate media content, to critically dissect media forms, to investigate

media effects and uses, to use media intelligently, and to construct alternative media. (p.

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Kellner and Share (2007) discuss the importance of critical media literacy as a pedagogical tool

and its power to reveal dominant ideologies, dominant values and power relations. Critical

approaches to assessing media, and its tools in all its forms (e.g., movies, TV shows, social

media technology, social networking sites, smart phones, etc.) are especially crucial. Media is

responsible in forging our very identities (Kellner, 2003). It shapes our ideas of what it means to

be male, female, our sense of ethnicity, race, class, sexuality and so on (Kellner, 2003). Keller

states: "[Media teaches us how to] dress, look and consume; how to react to members of

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different social groups; how to be popular and successful and how to avoid failure; [it also teaches us] how to conform to the dominant system of norms, values, practices and institutions" (p. 10). Kellner asserts media's influences, even in our most nuanced interactions and ways of being.

One of the most powerful SMTs is the social network, Facebook. Its virtual community elements enable users to socialize online in a way that is unprecedented. Facebook encourages users to share their experiences in real-time, and allows for various interactions such as going "live," adding video or pictures to their "story" as well as "status updates" with their network. Facebook is very much a part of America's social life. Moreover, Facebook is particularly popular with college students; 90 percent of college students have a Facebook account (Harvard, 2011; Martinez-Aleman & Wartman, 2009). Facebook has become a socialization tool for college students and is a large part of the college culture (Martinez-Aleman & Wartman, 2009). I will now discuss SMT from its inception to its use today.

Social Networks: Timeline

In 1997, a social networking site (SNS) called SixDegrees.com allowed users to create personal online profiles for the very first time (boyd & Ellison, 2008)—this meant that people could author their identities and create virtual networks with others online. From 1997 to 2001, code was written to support community tools that allowed structural variations around visibility and access to one another in forms of profile information, pictures, messages, comments, private and publicly articulated "friends" in the virtual world (boyd & Ellison, 2008). For conceptual

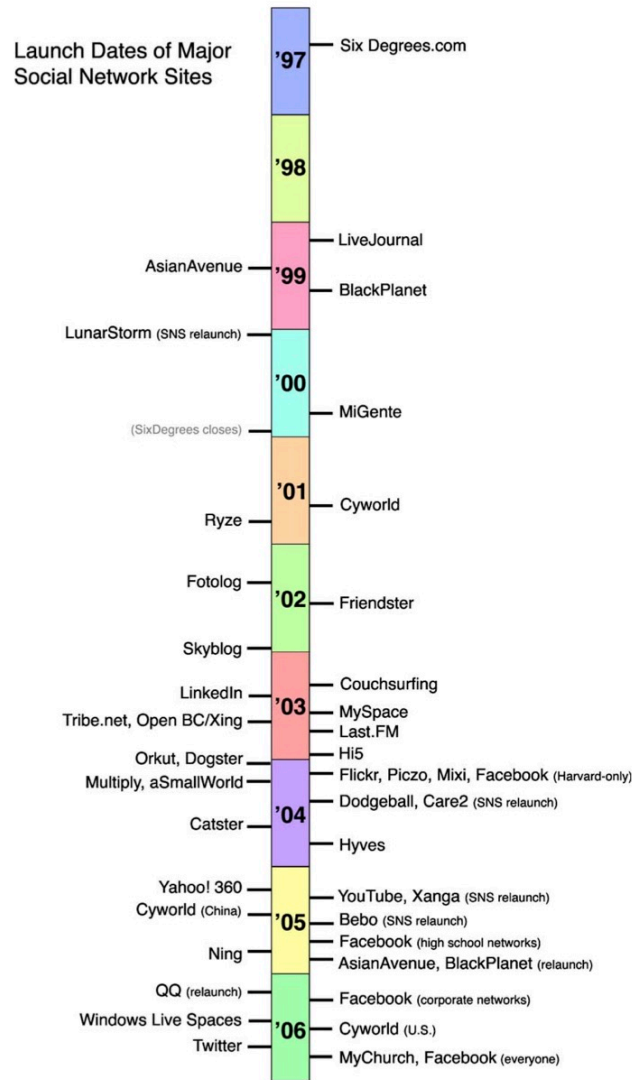purposes, the following is a timeline illustrating various social networks' launch date.

Figure 1 Timeline of the launch dates of many major SNSs and dates when community sites re-launched with SNS features

Figure 1. Timeline illustrating various social networks' launch dates.

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These structural variations around visibility and access are what differentiate social networking sites from one another (boyd & Ellison, 2008). Friendster launched in 2002 featuring a profile-centric layout, and in 2003 most SNSs—and all those that launched thereafter—adopted a similar design in hopes of gaining as much traction as Friendster had achieved. Profile-centric social networking sites focus on profile information, pictures, personal characteristics of users, such favorite books, favorite music, employers, group membership, etc. Other SNSs began sprouting, as their socially-organized platform attracted broad audiences ranging from professionals and business people (LinkedIn), to dog lovers (Dogster), and socialization networks (Myspace). In short, SNSs were here to stay.

Facebook's History

Facebook was created in 2004 by then Harvard undergraduate, Mark Zuckerberg (Cassidy, 2006). The original idea for Facebook came from his desire to create a student-accessible picture roster online, similar to those afforded to professors. Once "live," Facebook only allowed members to join if they had an active ".edu" email account, which made the site exclusive to college students (Cassidy, 2006). Membership began with Harvard students and soon after was available to students from other universities. In September 2005, Facebook expanded membership to high school students, professionals inside corporate networks, and eventually to the general public (boyd & Ellison, 2007); by May of 2010, *Time* magazine announced that Facebook had created its 500 millionth[6] active account (Fletcher, 2010). In the most recent data (from the second quarter), Facebook is said to have reached 2.23 *billion* users

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[6] Facebook measures monthly active users as users that have logged in during the past 30 days. Figures do not include Instagram or WhatsApp users (SMT's that Facebook owns) unless they would otherwise qualify as such users, respectively, based on their other activities on Facebook.

(Statista, 2018).

Number of monthly active Facebook users worldwide as of 2nd quarter 2018 (in millions)
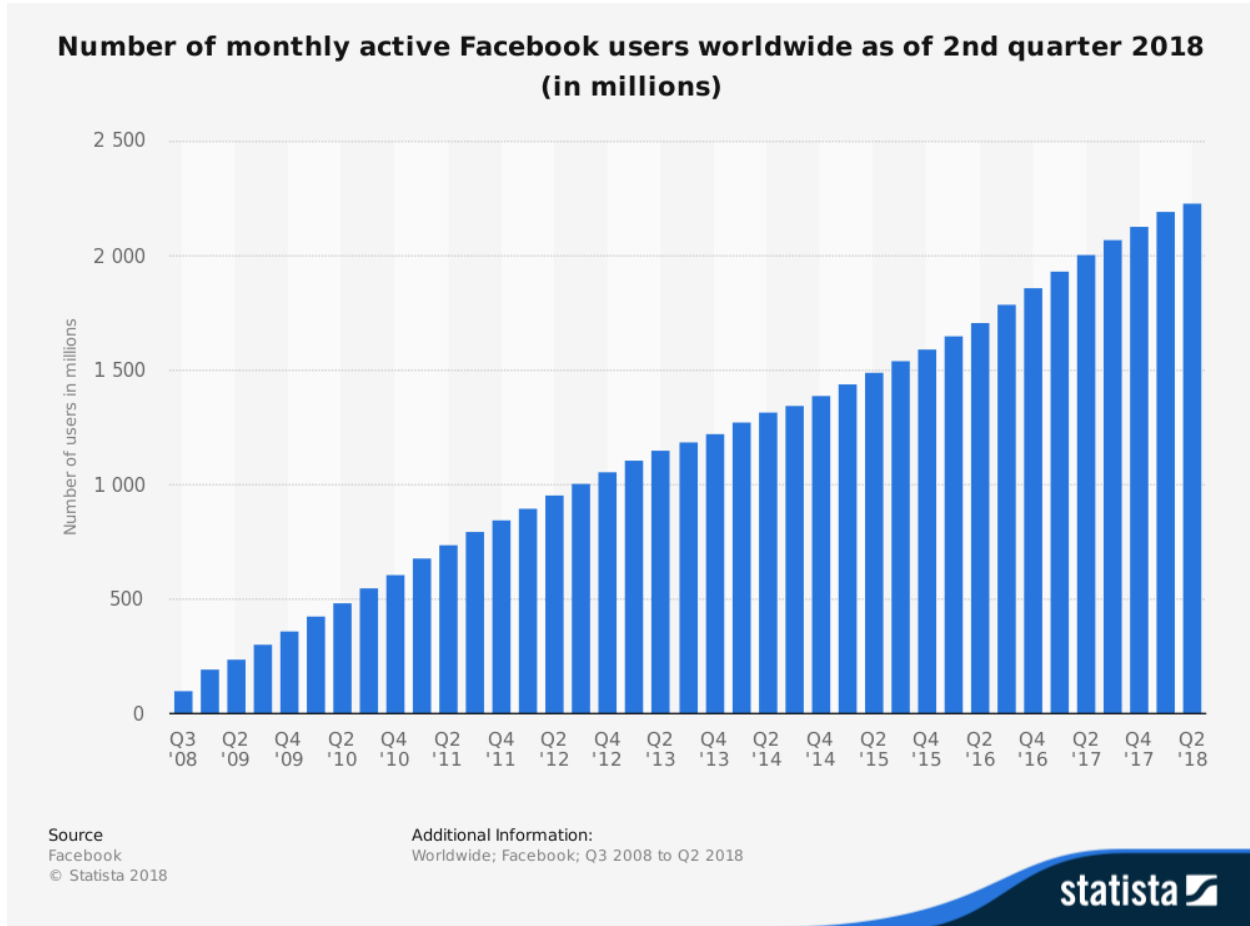
Figure 2. Number of monthly active Facebook users worldwide (Statista, 2018).

Other than its large membership, Facebook, unlike other SNSs like Twitter or YouTube,

allows more personal involvement with a large number of activities for users to engage. For

example: photo sharing, going "live," "check-in's," commenting, messaging, and even voice

calling. Additionally, Facebook is reciprocal, unlike Twitter, Instagram, or YouTube (Kwak et

al., 2010). Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube, do not require reciprocity in sharing tweets,

pictures or videos. When users request to "follow" someone and that request is accepted, they

are not, in turn, automatically followed. "Friending" someone on Facebook provides both the

user who submitted the friend request and the user who accepted the request access to each other's profiles if the "Friend Request" is accepted.

Facebook is now one of the largest SNSs in the United States. In particular, Facebook is highly popular among college students (Davis et al., 2012; Harvard Survey, 2011; Martinez-Aleman & Wartman, 2009). It is significant to note that in 2011, about 90 percent of all college students were Facebook users (Harvard, 2011) with steady growth anticipated over the following 10 years (Statista, 2015). Research on Facebook has escalated dramatically in the last ten years (Raacke & Raacke, 2015). Since Facebook use is prevalent for at least 90 percent of the student population, one must question its function during this developmental and transitional period in students' lives. The next section will discuss Facebook research that is relevant to my research questions.

Student Use of Facebook and Social Capital

College students have been found to reap multiple social benefits from Facebook use (Ellison et al., 2007; Velenzuela et al., 2009). As such, literature that has focused on social capital implications with college students' use (Ellison, Steinfield, & Lampe, 2007; Steinfield, Ellison, & Lampe, 2008) has also been increasing. According to Valenzuela and colleagues (2009), the core idea of social capital is the resources available to people through interacting with one another (Lin, 2001; Putnam, 2004). These interactions can also be used as social support or social leverage that can and may lead to socio-economic mobility.

Ellison and colleagues (2007) examined the relationship between Facebook use and the maintenance of social capital. In order to examine this relationship, Ellison et al. (2007) assessed social capital bridging by the extent in which users were integrated into the virtual community, by the support the users gave, and how much these experiences broadened their world-view

(Ellison et al., 2007). The study found that Facebook did indeed bridge social capital. Social capital bridging refers to the connection of "weak ties." Weak ties are loose connections between individuals that may provide useful information for one another (e.g., information received on a job opportunity from a friend of a friend). One must note, however, that this type of support does not normally include emotional support (Granovetter, 1982 as cited in Ellison et al., 2007).

Facebook allows users to accumulate and maintain ties easily and cheaply. It also allows the activation of latent ties. Latent ties are social network ties that are theoretically possible, but not socially activated (Ellison et al., 2007). Therefore, Facebook might make it easier to turn latent ties to weak ties and identify users that might be useful in some capacity, resulting in the bridging of social capital. According to Ellison et al. (2007), "bridging social capital provides benefits such as increased information and opportunities, [and they] suspect that participants who use Facebook in this way are able to get more out of their college experience" (p. 1163).

According to Ellison et al. (2007), the positive outcomes of bridging social capital may lead to benefits and opportunities for college students. This can create opportunities for students that they may have not been aware of before, had they not used Facebook. First-generation, low-income Latino transfer students may find the use of weak ties particularly useful. For example, transfer students may find out about a scholarship through a "friend's" post. The ability to tap into information that students might not have had access to as easily before would indicate that using Facebook can be greatly beneficial, especially for first-generation college students.

Steinfield, Ellison, and Lampe (2008) conducted a study that investigated the intensity of Facebook use, measured psychological well-being, and bridged social capital. The study used two surveys conducted a year a part at a large university. It also included 18 in-depth interviews

with Facebook users. Steinfield and colleagues (2008) found that students who used Facebook more during their first year strongly predicted social capital bridging in year two. This was found even after they controlled for measures of life satisfaction and self-esteem. Life satisfaction was also associated with social capital outcomes, as was self-esteem. Additionally, Steinfield et al. (2008) found students who had lower self-esteem gained more from Facebook use in regards to the bridging of social capital than with students with higher self-esteem. Most notably, Steinfield et al. (2008) suggest that Facebook helps to lower barriers for students with low self-esteem through its structural affordances by the ability to form large heterogeneous networks on the site.

Community college transfer students are unique in the fact that when arriving at their senior institution, they have a limited amount of time. Most four-year institutions expect transfers to graduate about two years after they arrive. This expectation may give transfers a disadvantage when it comes building networks, as they are adjusting to their senior institution in the first couple of terms. One solution to this dilemma can be to begin the online socialization process before they arrive to campus. A study conducted by DeAndrea, Ellison, LaRose, and Fiore (2012) found this to work.

Taking note of Haythornthwaite and Kazmer's work (2002), which supports the idea that social media can increase peer-to-peer and peer-to-faculty connections, DeAndrea et al. (2012) conducted a study that examined "whether a targeted social media site can affect the intellectual and social lives of students transitioning from high school to college" (p. 15). DeAndrea et al. argue that students who perceive that they have social resources on campus, tend to handle the transition to college more favorably (as cited in Brissette, Scheier, & Carver, 2002). In order to facilitate support networks for incoming students. DeAndrea et al. created a closed group on

Spartan Connect. Spartan Connect "is a social media site that was created to enhance feelings of connection between students and their on- campus residential 'neighborhoods' . . . " (p. 17). The group was created to connect new incoming students to peers, faculty, staff, and to disseminate college information and resources. Participation in the group was found to have a positive impact on how students perceived of having a diverse set of support networks in their first term in college (DeAndrea et al., 2012). Some of the support networks and features that were on Spartan Connect were forums, forums that gave access to peer mentors as well as other useful tools such as online calendars, groups, and blogs. Spartan Connect not only created connection for new incoming students, but had features that students could use to manage their busy lives.

We know that Latino transfer students often turn to peers for navigational support (Wawrzynski & Sedlacek, 2003). The ability to maintain familial ties, and create new ties might prove to be useful as Latino student transition to their senior institutions. Facebook's technological affordances allow students to keep familial ties (or other ties which may be supportive in nature) as they enter and go through post-secondary education while simultaneously making new ties (e.g., student affairs professionals at their senior institution, academic and or cultural centers at their senior institutions, new peers, and more).

Latino's familial support is important for students (Reyes, 2011). The virtual community elements Facebook provides for users may prove to be particularly useful for Latino transfer students as they transition to their senior institution. Maintaining those former connections (whether they be familial, former faculty mentors, etc.) can result in an increase in perceived support, and ultimately they are very important for most Latino students.

Since undergraduate Latinos report marginalizing experiences (Gloria & Castellanos, 2003; Nehls & Smith, 2014) and are more likely to feel alienated, especially at highly selective

institutions (Reyes, 2011), the use of Facebook might prove to be useful. Hurtado et al. (1996) posit that both selective colleges and private colleges have a distinct racial climate that may affect college adjustment. As such, Facebook use may increase social capital and perceived support therefore alleviating some of the difficulties they encounter when adjusting to their senior institution.

<div align="center">**Facebook and Student Engagement**</div>

With the increase in use of SNSs, there is a great deal of popular and academic interest in the impact that these technologies may have on student outcomes (Junco, 2011). Overall, it seems that interest in assessing the general impact of using the internet has moved toward more nuanced investigations of activities people engage in through the use of technology (Deil-Amen, 2011). For example, Junco (2011) conducted a study on the use of Facebook and its relationship to student engagement. Engagement was defined as "the amount of physical and psychological energy that the student devotes to the academic experience" (Astin, 1984, p. 297). Junco found a negative relationship between college student engagement and Facebook use. In other words, the more time students spent on Facebook, the less engaged they were on the engagement scale score. However, the study did find a positive relationship on student engagement with specific activities. These activities included commenting and creating or RSVP'ing to events (Junco, 2011). Ultimately, online activities that promoted in-person, offline activities were found to increase student engagement.

Junco's (2011) findings highlight the nuances in user activity that exists between student engagement and Facebook participation. Junco asserts that general use of Facebook is not detrimental to academic outcomes, and "can indeed be used in ways advantageous to students" (p. 170). Extrapolating from Junco's findings, it seems that there may be ways in which senior

institutions can use Facebook to promote online to offline activities as one tool in college

adjustment for Latino transfer students.

Identity Politics, and Socialization

Facebook has become an important site for student socialization, peer support, and

informal learning about what it means to be a student (Greenbow & Robelia, 2009; Martinez-

Aleman & Wartman, 2004; Sewlyn, 2009). As such, it can be thought of as a space where

students become versed in "identity politics[7]: "as they deal with their experiences within the

university; and work through encounters with academic and social conventions and expectations

(Sewlyn, 2009, p. 171). Therefore, Facebook can function as a virtual space of contestation and

resistance to asymmetrical power relations that are built into the institution of higher education

(Sewlyn, 2009).

Although the idea of identity performativity through social platforms is not new (boyd &

Heer, 2006; Westlake, 2008; Zhao, 2006), Facebook can be a venue in which transfer students

can engage, and push back on normalized notions of the college student identity (e.g., traditional

age, White affluent, middle- to upper-class). Sewlyn (2009) found that Facebook can serve as a

sounding board for students to voice discontent with rules and regulations that might not apply to

some students like non-traditional,[8] parenting, and undocumented students, and more. Facebook

also provides students with an opportunity to ask their peers course-related questions or inquire

about procedural information related to college if they did not feel comfortable seeking out

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[7] Identity Politics refers to political activity or movements based on or catering to the cultural,
ethnic, gender, racial, religious, or social interests that characterize a group identity.

[8] For the purposes of this study, non-traditional students will use Cross' (1980) definition that is
used by Ishitani and McKitrick (2010) for their study. Non-traditional: a student as an adult who
pursues and education on either a full-time basis or part-time basis while maintaining his/her
responsibilities of family, employment, and his/her other life roles.

information directly from administrators and staff. Studies have shown that Facebook use was advantageous to students who found it difficult to access information from college officials (Sewlyn, 2009) and assisted in their ability to navigate school policies.

One study by Yu, Tian, Vogel, and Kwok (2010) suggests that SNSs offer a distinctive socialization process to the college environment. Yu et al. (2010) found that the exchange of information through SNSs about the university and peers can increase a sense of belonging, therefore assisting students in the college transition process. Moreover, a sense of belonging has been positively associated with academic competence and social acceptance (Pittman & Richman, 2008). This finding is important for Latino transfer students given that they report marginalizing experiences at traditionally White institutions[9] (Gloria & Catellanos, 2003).

Social Networking Sites and Emotional Support

A study conducted by Greenbow and Robelia (2009) examined low-income high school students' identity formation and informal learning through the online social network, Myspace. Myspace allowed students to explore various dimensions of their identity (Greenbow & Robelia, 2009). Most notably, the students in this study used Myspace for emotional support to vent about school-related issues, for peer support in the form of encouragement about school dilemmas, and how to get help with school-related issues or assignments. Students found that its use strengthened their relationships with people in local and extended networks. Most notably, students from "immigrant families, especially, reported keeping in touch with distant friends and relatives through Myspace" (Greenhow & Robelia, 2009, p. 129).

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[9] Traditionally or Culturally White Institutions is in reference to institutions that may not be predominantly White (e.g., if/when the number of Asian students surpasses the number of White students at the UC), but at its inception, was created and programmed to serve the White affluent student population.

Greenbow and Robelia (2009) found that Myspace can support students emotionally, as they deal with dilemmas regarding school. Given the communal nature of the Latino culture and the importance of familial ties, this feature can be important for Latino students. Knowing how to create and use support networks composed of people, resources, and information may aid SNS users during life transitions such as relocation or the transition into college (Ellison, Steinfield, & Lampe, 2007). This is especially useful for users that may experience low self-esteem, and a lack of confidence and sense of social belonging. Given that Latino transfer students tend to encounter marginalizing experiences at four-year institutions and name family and peers as sources of support (Torres & Hernandez, 2007; Yosso, 2005), SNSs like Facebook may prove to be instrumental in their transition to the university by allowing them to maintain ties and communication with their family and other distant relatives while simultaneously making new connections when transitioning to their senior institution.

Facebook and Student Integration

Similarly, Fagioli, Rios-Aguilar, and Deil-Amen (2015) examined the use of social networking sites and its relation to academic outcomes in community colleges and concluded that there is indeed a relationship between social media use and academic outcomes. Users that were the most passive[10] and active had the highest GPAs, and were more likely to continue the next college term when compared to inactive members of the online community. The study argues that student engagement needs to be examined " . . . across multiple dimensions (e.g. [in] real time, at multiple location[s], student-driven, mobile, and highly visual), perhaps diverging from more traditional ways of conceptualizing engagement" (p. 8). This supports the idea that

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[10] Passive refers to members observing, reading information, but not actively nor visibly engaging in online conversation.

academic integration is highly dynamic and is important for student persistence (Astin, 1984; Fagioli et al., 2015; Tinto, 1993). However, socio-academic engagement is not dichotomous, but rather happens simultaneously. For that reason, we should consider both online and offline contexts of integration and college adjustment (Deil-Amen, 2011).

Although this study examined the use of social networking sites and academic outcomes at the community college level, the relationship between online engagement and GPA/persistence suggests that this may not be exclusive to students at the community college. As such, these findings can inform studies on the transfer shock, culture shock, and other negative experiences that may be related to college adjustment encountered by Latino transfer students at four-year institutions. Social platforms like Facebook can provide a space for students to acquire procedural knowledge, information, and advice. This can work to strengthen and or reinforce students' intellectual competence, college identity, a sense of belonging, and connectedness (Karp et al., 2010). Furthermore, research shows that feelings of connectedness to the university are especially important for most Latino students (Rendon, 1994; Torres, 2006).

Facebook and College Adjustment

Similarly, a study conducted by Gray, Vitak, Easton, and Ellison (2013) investigated the role of Facebook and student social adjustment during their first year. Gray et al. (2013) analyzed findings:

> . . . indicate positive relationships between two variables, the number of friends students have at the college and their engagement in collaborative behaviors with classmates through the site-and measures of social support and social adjustment, as well as a positive relationship between social adjustment and persistence at the university. (p. 1)

Gray et al. (2013) explained that the number of friends a students has at the university—in addition to their collaboration through the social networking site—have a positive effect on feelings of social support and academic adjustment. Consequently, this leads to a positive relationship between social adjustment and persistence. Perceived support is important for Latino students (Schneider & Ward, 2003). Again, this supports the idea that the use of social networking sites may be useful for Latino transfer students as they enter their senior institutions.

We know that transfer shock is pervasive among most transfer students during their first term at the university. There are also numerous social adjustment transfers must make. In my experience as a college counselor, transfer students feel that two years at the UC is not enough time, given all the adjustments that need to take place. Therefore, understanding the potential impact of social networks for first-generation Latino transfer students is necessary if we are to improve transfer transition experience for Latino students. The next section discusses the theoretical frameworks that are appropriate for the study.

Theoretical Framework

Despite institutional efforts, research continues to find that students of color often encounter marginalizing experiences in post-secondary education (Delgado & Stephancic, 2001; Rendon, 1994; Reyes, 2011; Solorzano et al., 2000; Torres & Hernandez, 2007). Racism has overtly shaped U.S. social institutions and continues to do so today. Research has often left out the socio-historical context for students of color (Jain, Herrera, Bernal, & Solorzano, 2011). These racialized contexts determine how these students experience education (Delgado & Stephancic, 2001).

Since research suggests that students of color have marginalizing experiences on college campuses (Hurtado, 1994, Hurtado et al., 1996; Solorzano et al., 2000; Yosso, 2005), this study

is guided by the use of Critical Race Theory (CRT). Critical race theory allows me to analyze the ways in which race and racism, among other intersecting forms of oppression, influence college adjustment for Latino transfer students. I will also be using Latino Critical Theory (LatCrit). Latino Critical Theory emerged from Critical Race Theory in order to address additional forms of oppression that are unique to the Latinos experience that CRT could not account for (Yosso, 2005).

Critical Race Theory (CRT)

Critical Race Theory (CRT) emerged out of Critical Legal Studies (CLS). CRT gave a unique lens to legal scholars who wanted to critically address ways in which race and racism affected U.S. jurisprudence. CRT crossed over to education in 1995 when Gloria Ladson-Billings and William Tate (1995) published the article, "Toward a Critical Race Theory of Education." In order to investigate how Latino transfer students use social networks during their adjustment period, I will use Critical Race Theory as a lens. CRT recognizes that racism is embedded in the social fabric of American educational institutions. Critical Race Theory in education has produced several theoretical frameworks such as: Queer Critical theory, Asian Critical Theory, Tribal Critical Theory, and Latino Critical Theory, etc. (Yosso, 2005). These theories emerged out of the necessity to account for multiple layers of subordination. Latino Critical Theory (LatCrit), for example, focuses on the unique experience of Latinos in the U.S. LatCrit addresses migration, immigration, language, and more as other forms of subordination (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002). At their core, Critical Race Theory scholars resist the black and white binary.

Solorzano and Yosso (2002) identified five tenets of Critical Race Theory. Collectively, the five tenets represent a challenge to existing modes of scholarship. The five tenets are: (a) the

centrality to race and racism, (b) the challenge to dominant ideology, (c) the commitment to social justice, (d) the centrality of experiential knowledge, and (e) the utilization of interdisciplinary approaches (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002).

Critical race theory begins with the premise that race and racism are central and fundamental in explaining and defining how U.S. society functions. It also acknowledges multiple layers of oppression (e.g., gender, class, sexuality, and more). The second tenet challenges White privilege and negates notions of meritocracy, objectivity, colorblindness, and equal opportunity in institutions of higher education. The third principle is the commitment to social justice. This principle offers a transformative response to racial, gender, and class oppression (Yosso, 2005). The fourth tenet centralizes experiential knowledge of people of color and recognizes it as appropriate, legitimate, and crucial to both understanding and analyzing racial subordination. Most notably, it draws directly from the lived experiences of people of color through storytelling and family histories (Yosso, 2005). The last principle of CRT uses interdisciplinary boundaries to examine and analyze race and racism through both socio-historical and contemporary concepts that draw upon sociology, psychology, women's studies, etc. (Solorzano, 1998; Yosso, 2005).

A prime example of CRT being applied is how Yosso (2005) used it expose Latino community cultural wealth. In her book, *Critical Race Counterstories along the Chicana/o Educational Pipeline*, Yosso presents the framework through storytelling. This method allowed her to describe what Latino students go through when entering predominantly White institutions. She describes students' initial entrance as a culture shock. She goes on to pull and compare experiences of Latino students to Tinto's theory of student departure. Yosso (2005) asserts that instead of students separating, transitioning, and incorporating institutional norms in higher

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education, students experience a culture shock, build community, and develop critical navigation.

Moreover, Yosso (2005) uses CRT as a theoretical framework to present Latino community cultural wealth. Community cultural wealth is accumulated assets and resources. Community cultural wealth has various forms of capital. These are Navigational, Aspirational, Social, Familial, Resistant, and Linguistic. Navigational capital is defined as the ability to navigate social institutions that were not built with Latinos in mind. Aspirational capital is the "ability to maintain hopes and dreams for the future even in the face of barriers" (p. 41). An example of this is when Latino students talk about how they aspire to transfer, and get their graduate or professional degrees, many times, without knowing how they will do it. Social capital is understood as a network of people and community resources. Latinos organizing Tantas[11] is one example of this. Familial capital is known as "cultural knowledges nurtured among familia (kin) that carry a sense of community history, memory, and cultural intuition" (p. 48). An example of this can be when parents turn off the TV so that their children can study. A more tangible example can be when family make their students lunch to take to school.

Resistance capital is defined as "those knowledges and skills cultivated through behavior that challenges inequity" (p. 49). An example of this is when Latino students pursue graduate education and research to uncover and address inequality. And lastly, Linguistic capital is defined as "intellectual and social skills learned through communication experiences in more

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[11] According to Yosso (2005): "Tandas function like savings accounts. For example, a group of five people each contribute $100 per week on a rotating basis one person receives the entire $500. Each week, one person receives the tanda. This would play an important role especially because formal banking practices may require photo identification such as driver's license, or may be otherwise discriminatory. Undocumented immigrants may not have access to opening a bank account" (p. 55)

than one language and/or style" (p. 43). Examples of this form of capital is when Latino students serve as interpreters for their parents who might not speak English. These experiences give Latinos a sense of family and community responsibility. Community cultural wealth is important to recognize as assets that Latino students tap into when navigating post-secondary education.

To understand Latinos' experiences during their transition to a highly selective four-year institution, we must include socio-historical racialized inequality in educational institutions. As such, we must also take into account other identities that are oppressive; many different dimensions of a person's identity influence Latinos' experiences in higher education (Howard & Navarro, 2016). This is the reason why I will be also using Latino Critical Theory (LatCrit).

Latino Critical Theory (LatCrit)

Latino Critical Theory (LatCrit) adheres to all of CRT's principles, but focuses on the experiences and realities of Latinos (Valdes, 1996). As such, LatCrit should be thought of as supplemental to CRT. It addresses identities that are multidimensional that are often ignored by CRT scholars such as language, culture, identity, phenotype, immigration, and sexuality (Solorzano & Bernal, 2001). LatCrit adds an extra theoretical lens that specifically looks at Latino identity as it intersects with immigration, migration, human rights, language, gender, and class (Delgado Bernal, 2002). Again, LatCrit allows for the examination of other forms of oppressed identities that may be unique to the Latino experience in the U.S. As such, I cannot examine the experiences of Latino transfer students in higher education without accounting for other multidimensional identities.

Even though UCs are experiencing a shift in demographic makeup of students—Latinos are increasingly entering the UC system at an unprecedented rate—it does not mean that

programming and institutional support for this demographic is increasing. UCs need to increase support mechanisms, specifically for the Latino population. As such, Universities need to be more culturally relevant as more Latinos enter higher education.

Conclusion

The low number of four-year degrees awarded to Latinos in the U.S. is concerning. If the Latino college gap is not closed, the largest minority in the U.S. will not be adequately trained for the job market. We know Latinos' unique barriers to completing a post-secondary education. Whether it is financial, cultural, social, academic, or environmental factors, research indicates that they all contribute to barriers faced by Latino students at four-year institutions. Given the affordances technology provides, we must seek ways in which these tools can be used in advantageous ways for students as they adjust to their senior institutions. Moreover, the transition process of Latino transfer students is under-researched. Given the high concentration of Latino students at the community college level, and the small amount of literature on Latino transfer student adjustment at senior institutions, inquiry into tools students can use is of great importance. As educational institutions and society as a whole seek to increase Latinos' attainment of four-year degrees, and lessen the time it takes to adjust to their senior institution is especially important for transfers due to their limited time they have at their senior institution. These resources are vital in order for students to be able to have better experiences and take advantage of all the University has to provide.

The potential of SMTs such as Facebook are well documented (Ellison et al., 2007; Junco, 2011). Research on the use of Facebook during college adjustment are: (a) very few, (b) most studies are quantitative, and (c) to my knowledge, there is no study that has been done on the Latino community college transfers and college adjustment via Facebook use during their

adjustment period. As such, my study will incorporate a qualitative virtual ethnography coupled

with semi-structured interviews to gain an in-depth understanding of Latino transfer student

experiences and the use of SMT. These methodological approaches will also help me gain

deeper insight to nuanced ways Latino community college transfer students use Facebook during

this transition period.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Today, social networking sites such as Facebook, allow users to maintain and create social ties. The explosive growth of Facebook use and membership among college students warrants inquiry into its function regarding college adjustment for Latino community college transfer students. This chapter provides an in-depth description of the research methods and design employed. The outline of this chapter is as follows: I first list the research questions. Then I discuss qualitative research methods and why they were appropriate to answer the research questions. The next section describes the research site and recruitment process as well as provides participants' demographic information. Following this, I review data collection procedures and data analysis procedures. And last, I discuss trustworthiness and limitations associated with the research study and the researcher's role.

Research Questions

The research conducted was guided by the following questions:

(1) What is the function of SMT, specifically Facebook, as Latino community college transfer students transition into a culturally White, highly selective four-year university?

(1a) What Facebook ties are most important for transfer students to create and maintain during their transition? Why?

(1b) Do patterns in Facebook activity among Latino transfer students change during their adjustment period? If so, how and why?

These research questions helped me address the purpose of my study, which was to better understand the use of social networking sites during the college adjustment period for Latino students. It also addressed the gap in higher education and social media networking literature

where the discussion of Facebook's function in college adjustment for Latino transfer students'
is virtually non-existent.

Description of Data Collection Methods

One of the five tenets of Critical Race Theory centers the lived experiences of
participants (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Solorzano, 1998). Additionally, Latinos' lived
experiences include multi-layered forms of subordination, which Critical Race Theory does not
address. Again, Latino Critical Theory is used to account for these additional layers, such as
immigration status, language, migration, and more (Valdes, 1996). As such, semi-structured
interviews were appropriate in centering participants voices and experiences that included these
other forms of subordination. Semi-structured interviews are "a scheduled activity. A
semistructured interview is opened ended, but follows a general script and covers a list of topics"
(Bernard, 2006, p. 210). While semi-structured interviews allowed me to gain an in-depth
understanding of Latino community college transfer student experiences as they transition into
their highly selective senior institutions, conducting a virtual ethnography to answer my research
questions was also necessary and is a part of ethnographic methods as well. This next section
reviews ethnographic principles, and their relation to how I conducted the virtual ethnography. I
then explain its usefulness in answering my research questions.

Ethnography Principles

In an updated review of the principles in practice of ethnographies, Hammersley and
Atkinson (2007) state:

> . . . ethnography usually involves researcher participating, overtly or covertly, in people's
> daily lives for an extended period of time, watching what happens, listening to what is
> said, and/or asking questions through informal and formal interviews, collecting

documents and artefacts—in fact, gathering whatever data are available to throw light on

issues that are the emerging focus of inquiry. Generally speaking, ethnographers draw on

a range of sources of data, though sometimes rely primarily on one. (p. 3)

As such, research is usually exploratory. This is important to note, given that interviews,

participant observations, and photos of timeline posts were the primary sources of data

collection. Moreover, using these ethnographic principles allowed me to investigate students'

experiences of their adjustment at their senior institution in a holistic way. I observed various

activities, thoughts and commentary that were in response to what was happening politically in

the U.S. These ethnographic principles allowed me to hone in on how political issues affected

their experience adjusting to their senior institution.

Virtual Ethnography

In order to collect a rich, descriptive data to answer my research questions I used virtual

(also called cyber) ethnography (Hine, 2005, 2008). Virtual ethnography is an ethnographic

study of online communities (Hine, 2008). Two of the earliest and most influential works using

this methodology are by Rheingold (1993) and Turkle (1995). Drawing on each of these works,

Hine (2005, 2008) argues that the major difference between virtual/cyber and traditional

ethnography is that the field site is virtual rather than physical. Moreover, Hine (2008) argues

that the characteristics of conducting a virtual ethnography do not change the fundamental

characteristics of ethnographic methods. The difference, however, is a change in data collection

methods.

Conducting a virtual ethnography allowed me to collect data right when participants

began their senior institutions and through their entire adjustment periods. Conducting a virtual

ethnography was necessary to answer my research questions. In turn, the unique nature of

Facebook gave me access to rich data consisting of personal information, photos, exchanges of information, and social interactions. While conducting a virtual ethnography was necessary to answer my research questions, the data that was collected was specific and was focused on participants' experiences at their senior institution. Consequently, I chose to only collect data from participants' profiles that directly related to their experiences at their senior institution, such as postings about them studying, postings of pictures related to their senior institution, "check-ins" at their senior institutions, and other related postings.

Data Collection Procedures

Data collection was done in two phases, using three methods. The first phase I engaged in was the virtual ethnography during their first term. The virtual ethnography data collection was done through participant observations, document analysis, and analytical memos. The second method I used was a semi-structured interview of each participant. Their first semi-structured interview was done after participants' first term was completed, at the end of their Fall term. Interviews began during and after finals week, which meant I interviewed many participants during their holiday break. On average, interviews lasted one hour. Given that my research questions focus on new, Latina/o community college transfer students that identified as first-generation, and low-income, I used purposeful sampling to recruit my participants.

I also used snowball sampling after the first three weeks of recruitment because I had not yet recruited enough from the events I attended during the first three weeks of the Fall quarter. Snowball sampling is defined as "a technique for gathering research subjects through identification of an initial subject who is used to provide the names of other actors" (Atkinson & Flint, 2004, p. 1. Snowball sampling added five more participants to my research study. Using snowball sampling resulted in participants knowing one another. This led to various online

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interactions between participants in my sample. Participants often commented, liked, and shared each others' posts.

The second method I used was their demographic survey. Although I used purposeful sampling, I had participants complete the demographic survey in order to gain better insight into their familial background, as well as their educational background. The demographic survey was completed right before their first interview (See Appendix D) for the survey. In the next section, I describe the institutional site, as well as the virtual site of data collection, Facebook.

Site

The University of California, West Coast (UCWC), a pseudonym, was established in 1919, and is one of the ten Universities of California (University of California, 2018). UCWC was chosen because of its increase in Latino students, its commitment to Community College Transfer students, and because it is a highly selective UC. In 2016, the year I collected my data, UCWC had an undergraduate population of 33,530 students (University of California, 2018). UCWC received a record number of applications in 2017, that hit 124,300. In 2016, the transfer admit rate for UCWC was 25 percent. All but one UC has a higher transfer admit rate than UCWC (University of California, 2018), making this UC a highly selective institution. The undergraduate demographic makeup of UCWC is 3 percent African American, 29 percent Asian, 22 percent Hispanic, and 26 percent White (Undergraduate Profile, 2016–2017). Ten years ago, the Latino population was 14 percent (Undergraduate Profile, 2006). UCWC Latino population has been steadily growing.

UCWC is unique in the fact that they house a program that supports pre-transfer efforts. This center empowers community college students by providing them with navigational

information on the transferring out to four-year institution. In defining a transfer receptive

culture, Herrera and Jain (2011) write:

1. Establish the transfer of students, especially nontraditional, first-generation, low-income,

    and underrepresented students, as a high institutional priority that ensures stable

    accessibility, retention, and graduation; and

2. Provide outreach and resources that focus on the specific needs of transfer students while

    complimenting the community college mission of transfer. (p. 258)

The center provides pre-transfer support through various programming throughout the academic

year for current community college students seeking to transfer to a four-year institution.

Moreover, the post-transfer elements that complete a transfer receptive culture are:

3. Offer financial and academic support through distinct opportunities for nontraditional-

    reentry transfer students where they are stimulated to achieve at high academic levels;

4. Acknowledge the lived experiences that students bring and the intersectionality between

    community and family; and

5. Create an appropriate and organic framework from which to assess, evaluate, and enhance

    transfer-receptive programs and initiatives that can lead to further scholarship on transfer

    students. (Jain et al., 2011, p. 258)

UCWC has most of these elements. UCWC has a transfer student center that focuses on transfer

student programming, and works to bring information, workshops and guidance when it comes

to the transfer student experience and navigating UCWC. This is an example of transfer

receptive programming that is being done on campus, which lends itself to organic frameworks

in assessment and evaluation of how UCWC is creating and fostering a transfer receptive culture.

Additionally, UCWC has a department that is built on principles of social justice and has a mission that includes: advocating, and facilitating the access to academic success and graduation of historically underrepresented students in higher education. The department also informs and prepares students for graduate and professional study. Although these services are not exclusively for transfer students, they do focus on centering and acknowledging students' lived experiences. The principle in which offers distinct opportunities for transfer students academically and financially are not institutionalized yet, however, UCWC does offer mentoring targeted specifically for transfer students, which is new. There might be scholarships that are only for transfer students, however, those are yet to be "mainstream" and/or very well-known resources. Moreover, the Transfer Center has online visibility, and has an active Facebook page that caters to transfer students' needs. This account is run by the Transfer Center Director at UCWC. Social support has been on a steady incline at UCWC for transfer students. Although there is need for improvement regarding equity for transfer students, overall, combined with departments and centers at UCWC, it would be defined as a transfer receptive culture when compared to other receiving institutions.

The virtual site of data collection was Facebook.com. Facebook as a research site provided a data-rich environment for observing participants' use and interactions. At the time of the study, Facebook had a membership of 1.59 billion users (Statista, 2016). Today, the number of Facebook's membership has grown to 2.19 billion users (Statista, 2018). It is the most popular SMT in general. More importantly, Facebook is the most prevalent SMT that college students use (Martinez-Aleman & Wartman, 2009). Choosing Facebook as my ethnographic site was done because of its prevalence to college life, and because it was one of the most comprehensive social media websites at the time. On Facebook, users are able to post various

text, videos, photographs, and audio to the website. Also, the ability to post hyperlinks, comments, and likes/emotional reactions directly to users' profiles allows for easy observation of social interaction with other users.

To be precise, I also collected virtual snapshots only from participants' personal profiles. And although students discussed how helpful their use of the official UCWC Transfer page was, I could not keep comprehensive and accurate updates on participants' activity on or with the Transfer page. As such, I chose only to document what was said about its use through participant interviews.

Recruitment Process

Recruitment was done at the beginning of the Fall term. The University of California West Coast has a center that focuses on transfer student support and creates events to assist transfer students in their transition to UCWC. During Week Zero through Week Three, I attended events targeting new incoming transfers—namely welcome receptions, transfer student mixers, game nights and other socials—in order to recruit my participants. During those events I passed out flyers and answered questions about my research study. If students (a) fit the demographic criteria, (b) had an active Facebook account, and (c) were interested in participating, I had them fill out my sign-up sheet that requested their contact information. After that, I contacted interested participants by "Friending" them on Facebook. After they accepted my Friend request, I attach my Internal Review Board (IRB) documentation (See Appendix A) through the Messenger feature of the site.

Additionally, I also messaged students through Facebook to let them know that if they had any questions about my research study, and or any reservations, to feel free to "defriend" me and/or drop out of the study. Additionally, I made a Facebook page with details about my

research study, and posted it on my timeline so that my network of Friends, and Friends of Friends could share it. Last, monetary compensation was given to participants who (a) allowed me to "friend" them, and (b) completed their interviews. After each interview, participants received a $10 gift card for Starbucks for their participation.

Participant Profiles

Although participants were recruited based on purposeful sampling, the demographic survey gave us a bit more information on who the participants were and a more information of their sending institutions. The following table illustrates the demographic characteristics of my participants. The highlighted participants indicate no second interview. Two of the highlighted participants did not complete their second interview due to scheduling conflicts. These students were very busy due to various on- and off-campus commitments. The third participant that was not included in my second interview data *was* interviewed, however, due to a technical mishap, the second interview was not recorded in all its length. As such, I had to exclude the participant's second interview from my data.

Table 1.

Demographic characteristics of interview participants.

Participant	Age	Sex	First Gen	U.S. Born	Pell Grant	Legal Status	Major	Parenting Student	Racial Identification	Sexual Orientation	Community College
Santiago	25	Male	Yes	Yes	Yes	U.S. Citizen	Sociology/Chicana/o Studies	No	Latino-Mixed	Gay	East Los Angeles Community College
Lily	22	Female	Yes	Yes	Yes	U.S. Citizen	Political Science	Yes	Latina-Salvadorian	Heterosexual	East Los Angeles Community College
Mary	24	Female	Yes	No	No	Undocumented	Geography	No	Latina	Heterosexual	Berkeley Community College
Joy	22	Female	Yes	Yes	Yes	U.S. Citizen	Linguistics and Anthropology	No	Mexican-American	Bisexual	Santa Rosa Community College
Saira	21	Female	Yes	Yes	Yes	U.S. Citizen	Art History and Theater Minor	No	Latina/Mexican-American	Bisexual/?	San Diego City College
Yadira	26	Female	Yes	No	No	Undocumented	English/Chicana/o Studies	No	Latina	Heterosexual	Chaffey Community College
Anais	20	Female	Yes	Yes	Yes	U.S. Citizen	Political Science	No	Latina	Heterosexual	Irvine Valley Community College
Nichole	20	Female	Yes	Yes	Yes	U.S. Citizen	History	No	Chicana	Heterosexual	East Los Angeles Community College
Tiffany	21	Female	Yes	Yes	Yes	U.S. Citizen	History	No	Latina	Bisexual	Cypress Community College
Kamile	25	Female	Yes	Yes	Yes	U.S. Citizen	African American Studies	No	Chicana-Mixed	Straight	East Los Angeles Community College
Elvia	26	Female	Yes	Yes	Yes	U.S. Citizen	Spanish	Yes	Latina	Gay	Cerritos Community College
Alonzo	22	Male	Yes	No	No	Undocumented	Latin American Studies	No	Latino-Mexicano	Straight	East Los Angeles Community College
Ben	23	Male	Yes	Yes	Yes	U.S. Citizen	Sociology	No	Latino	Gay	East Los Angeles Community College
Rachel	20	Female	Yes	Yes	Yes	U.S. Citizen	Sociology	No	Chicana	Queer	Santa Rosa Community College
Gael	23	Male	Yes	No	No	Undocumented	History/Chicana/o Studies	No	Chicano	Heterosexual	Pasadena Community College

I had a total of 15 participants, and 3 participants' data were not included in the second interview data. Pseudonyms were used for all participants to conceal their identity. The percentage of female participants was 73 percent. My sample had 27 percent undocumented participants. Additionally, 13 percent of my participants were parenting students, and 53 percent identified as heterosexual or straight. Last, all but 1 of the community colleges that the participants transferred from had a Latino student population of 25 percent or higher.

The second phase of data collection was a continuation of the virtual ethnography. Again, it involved participant observation, document analysis, and analytical memos. The semi-structured interviews were done at the end of participants' second terms. This was done approximately three and a half to four months after their first terms, taking place in March and April. The second round of interviews had only 12 participants instead of 15. Additionally, their second interviews had fewer questions given that participants first interviews went into great detail of how they approached their use of Facebook (See Appendix E). However, participants' second interviews were a bit more tailored to their first interview answers, and themes that had come out of the analytical memos from the first round of data collection and analysis. This allowed for emerging themes to be expanded upon and is in line with grounded theory methodology (Charmaz, 1996). Again, the virtual ethnography data was collected only during their adjustment periods. This allowed me focus on data that was relevant to my research questions and directly to their adjustment periods. The next section offers an overview of my data analysis procedures.

Data Analysis Method: Grounded Theory

Glaser and Strauss (1967) introduced grounded theory as a research methodology:

A grounded theory is one that is inductively derived from the study phenomenon it

represents. That is, it is discovered, developed and provisionally verified through

systematic data collection and analysis of data pertaining to that phenomenon. Therefore,

data collection, analysis, and theory stand in reciprocal relationship with each other. One

does not begin with a theory, then prove it. Rather, one begins in an area of study and

what is relevant to that area is allowed to emerge. (p. 23)

In defining grounded theory, Strauss and Corbin (1990) note the reciprocal relationship between

data, data collection, analysis, and theory. The rigor of constant comparison method aids in the

interrogation of findings and results in increased credibility. Every stage of data collection and

analysis was done with this amount of rigor, increasing the overall trustworthiness of findings.

However, grounded theory is not a prescriptive method. As such, I used Charmaz's (2006)

interpretation of grounded theory. Charmaz's interpretation of grounded theory emphasizes a

constructivist approach. This approach acknowledges and recognizes that the researcher is

aware of other theoretical work and research and allows that knowledge to assist them during

data collection and when analyzing the data. The constructivist approach of grounded theory

assisted my exploration, interrogation, and analysis of my data while also allowing for other

theoretical frameworks to be used.

Grounded theory informed the basis of my data analysis and focused on emerging theory

from the data. Grounded theory uses multiple forms of data collection and analysis such as

interviews, and a wide variety of documentary materials (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). As such,

grounded theory complemented the virtual ethnographic methods that I used throughout

approximately six months of data that was collected from participants' Facebook timelines. Data

that was collected from participants' timelines were screenshots of their posts, or posts that participants were tagged in, as well as screenshots of comments in those posts.

Phase One Data Analysis

For the first round of interviews, I transcribed the first three interviews to get a feel for the data. Due to limited time, I sent out the rest of the interviews for transcription. Once interviews were transcribed, I went over the transcripts myself while listening to the audio to check for accuracy, and to become more familiarized with each and every interview. I repeated this method for both rounds of interviews. Given the number of interviews, and the amount of Facebook screenshots collected during the virtual ethnography, I used software to assist me in coding participants' interviews, as well as screenshots of participants' status updates on their timelines. The software I used was Dedoose, an online tool that assists qualitative and/or mixed methods researchers that use various types of data including videos, pictures, audio, and text. While Dedoose was great for coding my interview data, upon uploading the screenshots of participants' timelines to code, I found that most of them could not stand alone or be regarded as one piece of data. This was because I not only collected screenshots of posts on timelines, I also collected the comments to each post. This made it hard to code the screenshots that were taken in Dedoose due to the fact that I could not upload the pictures in order; once uploaded, they ended up in a scrambled order. This was a problem given the fact that there could be up to five different screenshots taken per post documenting the data in the comments on students' timelines. This issue required me to hand code these as they were in sequential order in my files.

Phase Two Data Analysis

During phase one of data analysis, protocol for participants' second interview was adjusted and more focused on individual participants' experiences and allowed me to focus more

on emerging themes from the data. This gave me a shorter set of semi-structured questions that would be given to all participants during the second interview, however, it allowed each participant—particularly the cases that were deviant—to identify emerging main themes that I could then focus on. Although this may seem a bit unorthodox regarding interview protocol, it aligns well with the Grounded Theory Method in which the early analysis of data may indicate issues that need further exploration. This can be described as the iterative cycles of induction and deduction of data, which is data collection and constant comparison between results and new findings in order to guide further data collection (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness in data collection and data analysis is vitally important when conducting research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Lincoln and Guba offer four suggested criteria to increase trustworthiness, according to conventional standards: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Credibility refers to the truth value, transferability refers to the ability to duplicate the research, dependability refers to consistency of data and analysis, and last, confirmability refers to a researcher's neutrality in interpreting data and analyzing data. Lincoln and Guba outline techniques that may either increase probability that the criteria can be met or tested.

Credibility was the only suggested criteria I was able to conduct. Criteria for credibility is as follows: prolonged engagement, persistent observation, triangulation, peer debriefing, negative case analysis, and member checks. This is also known as triangulation. For transferability, thick descriptive data is suggested. For dependability and confirmability, an external audit is required to examine process results (for dependability), as well as to review the

data and reconstruct it (for confirmability). Credibility was the only criteria for trustworthiness I was able to employ. The next section explains what I used during the study in the criteria for credibility.

Triangulation

Triangulation of data refers to using different methods and sources to cross check data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I used interview data and virtual ethnography data (screenshots of posts and activity) that referenced their experience at their senior institution. The virtual ethnographic data I collected was photos, text, and hyperlinks of posts participants posted on their timelines. Because this was a longitudinal study, I was able to use prolonged engagement, which is defined as "lengthy and intensive contact with the phenomenon (or respondents) in the field" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 77). Access to participants' Facebook profiles and access to their posts for 7 months allowed prolonged engagement. My research study was a longitudinal study, which allowed for persistent observation, which is defined as " . . . in-depth pursuit of those elements being found to be especially salient through prolonged engagement" (p. 77). This was especially useful during my second round of interviews, in which I explored themes that emerged from participants' first interviews, while using constant comparison and analysis that is required of grounded theory methodology (Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

Peer debriefing was also done with colleagues. Peer debriefing is described as "exposing oneself to a disinterested peer . . . to assist in developing working hypothesis . . . " (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 77). Colleagues in my department were especially helpful in this aspect. I was able to review interviews, establish outlines of emerging themes, and maintain an extended discussion throughout the entire 7 months of data collection and analysis. Although my colleagues were not experts in the use of SMTs, they were able to give me feedback regarding

emerging themes and the methodological rigor of the study. Member checks were also done. Member checks are defined as "the process of continuous, informal testing of information by soliciting reactions of respondents to the investigators reconstruction of what [the researcher] has been told" (p. 77). Member checking was done during interviews, and at the beginning of their second interviews to recap emerging themes from participants' data.

Additionally, a summary of the main takeaways was discussed with participants after each interview. Participants were also very helpful in suggesting new questions or themes I should explore as we moved from our first interviews to our second interviews. Last, Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest " . . . an active search for negative instances relating to developing insights and adjusting the latter continuously until no further negative instances are found . . . " (p. 77). In other words, "Negative case analysis" looks at deviant cases that do not fit within the majority of themes. This suggestion allowed me revise, broaden and confirm my findings. Employing all of these triangulation strategies increased trustworthiness of my findings and was helpful throughout the data collection and constant analysis.

Positionality

No researcher is neutral or apolitical (Halse & Honey, 2005). Our experiences, values, and beliefs accompany us throughout the data collection and analysis process (Vanner, 2015). Given the importance of sharing my positionality so that readers understand how my particular values and expectations influence how I conducted the study, I will discuss my personal experiences and background.

As a former community college transfer student and single parent, transitioning to a highly selective four-year institution had its challenges. I personally experienced transfer shock. As found in various research, I was able to recover from transfer shock after the first two terms.

When I first entered my senior institution, Facebook was just beginning to become popular with college students. By the time I graduated, moreover, Facebook had become a very large part of my social life, allowing me to keep in contact with friends and former advisors from community college, while creating new contacts at my senior institution. This allowed me to better navigate my pursuit of graduate school due to the fact that I was able to reach out and find support from current graduate students, and former advisors throughout my graduate application process. Their guidance and support resulted in my successful entry to graduate school.

As the years have gone by, Facebook has become an integral part of my daily activities, both personally and professionally. Additionally, fascination with its influential power and how its use has helped my professional pursuits in gaining entry to graduate school and finding support networks of other Latino graduate students, Facebook has now turned into the main focus of my research agenda. However, the drawbacks of Facebook, such as social reproduction of beauty standards, gender norms, and potential isolation from its use, are important to note. As such, to understand its function and explore, for lack of a better word, the best practices of Facebook have been an important question for me personally, since it has been a tool that I have used for support throughout graduate school.

As a first-generation, Latina transfer student that uses Facebook in various capacities, I believe that some participants' experiences will resonate with mine. There have been many challenges in my educational journey, and although I do not feel SMT like Facebook is the end-all be-all solution to issues regarding transfer shock, and college adjustment overall, I do feel that it has shaped my experience of graduate school and has made this journey a bit more tolerable, more supportive, and a little less lonely.

Limitations

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Facebook is constantly changing—new tools are added, changed, and eliminated at rapid rates. Researchers are constantly trying to stay up to date with changes, and what and how those might affect their findings. Additionally, while Facebook was the most used social media platform when I collected my data—and remains so even today—this does not mean that Facebook will always be the most used networking site. As such, findings in this study might not be applicable in years to come. However, insight into how historically underrepresented students may leverage Facebook's virtual platform may illuminate what and how Latino students can use social media and/or other technologies to increase access and retention to institutions of higher education.

Another limitation was limited access to participants' "use." Collecting artifacts such as videos and memes that were posted on pages other than participants' timelines were hard to collect given the fact that I, the researcher, could have missed posts that were done in pages to which I had no access. For example, the page "Class of 2018" was a closed group page. Access to closed group pages was dependent on whether the author of the page—most likely the person who had initially created the page—accepted my request to access the data on the page. Nevertheless, the quality of the data collected was both rich and high in volume.

Moreover, this study is ultimately about how Latino community college transfer students use Facebook during their transition period. Caution regarding transferability of my findings with other social media sites such as Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat should be exercised. Social norms and virtual format of other social media can vary tremendously.

While the study has its fair share of limitations, what must be understood is the idea that "traditional reliability" is problematic, particularly for qualitative studies. It is problematic given that human behavior is not static (Merriam, 2009). This is particularly important to note with

qualitative research as qualitative data will not have the same exact results, however, this does not discredit any particular study because there can be many interpretations of the same data (Merriam, 2009). Lincoln and Guba (1985) argue that for qualitative research, rather than requiring other researchers (outsiders) to find the same results, what should be focused on is that other colleagues can agree that given the data collected, the findings make sense, which shows that they are consistent and dependable.

Conclusion

Using qualitative methods was central to understanding the function of SMT in Latino students' college adjustment. Not only were qualitative methods required of the research questions that were asked, but centralizing participants' lived experiences is a central tenet to critical race theory and LatCrit (Valdes, 1996). Additionally, as we look at the research site's demographic makeup and how it has increased in the past decade, we discern the need to address, uncover, and/or shed light on tools that may prove to be useful in college adjustment in our technologically driven society.

Although I attended various events to recruit participants, snowball sampling was used to recruit at least one-third of my participants. Among the total of 15 participants, students had transferred from 9 different community colleges in California. Conducting virtual ethnography, which included interviews and participant observation, while also using grounded theory to analyze my data, gave me the ability to collect various types of data (pictures, links, texts, and interactions in the form of comments) from participants' use during their adjustment period at their senior institution. Data analysis was done carefully, using triangulation, peer debriefing, prolonged engagement, persistent observation, negative case analysis, and member checks to increase trustworthiness of the study's findings.

Next, my findings chapter is organized in four sections. The first three sections address the main research question and its sub-questions findings through themes. Findings are illustrated through interview transcripts and/or Facebook postings. The last section ends with an analysis of those findings.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

Chapter Four discusses the findings of the study. As mentioned in Chapter Three, I conducted a virtual ethnography that included multi-media document analysis, semi-structured interviews, and a demographic survey in order to answer each research question. It is also important to note the political climate during the data collection phase. This will be done so that we may have a better understanding of the findings in context. The findings in this chapter are from a constructivist analysis, and are separated into three sections, answering the research questions through thematic findings. The virtual ethnography data was collected during transfer students' college adjustment period, which is during students' first term (Fall quarter) and second term (Winter quarter). Interviews took place after participants' Fall term (December), and after their Winter term (March and April). Last, I conclude the chapter and transition into my last concluding chapter.

The purpose of the study was to explore the function of Facebook during Latino community college transfer students' first two terms. The research questions addressed are: 1) What is the function of social media technology for Latino community college transfer students, specifically Facebook, as they transition into a traditionally White, highly selective four-year institution? 1a) Does the function of Facebook change during their adjustment period? If so, how and why? 1b) What Facebook ties (if any) are most important for transfer students to create and maintain during their transition? Why? I found three major themes that emerged from the data: (a) Facebook was used as a navigational tool, (b) Facebook was used as a coping mechanism, and (c) Facebook was used as a political platform and asset. The following section will briefly discuss the political climate during my data collection.

Political Climate

In order to understand the findings of the study, I must explain the political climate during students' transition to their senior institution. Donald Trump announced his presidential candidacy on June 28, 2015 (Lee, 2015). During that speech, in relation to his stance on immigration, he stated: "When Mexico sends its people, they're not sending their best. They're not sending you. They're not sending you. They're sending people that have lots of problems, and they're bringing those problems with us. They're bringing drugs. They're bringing crime. They're rapists. And some, I assume, are good people" (Lee, 2015). Trump began his campaign making xenophobic statements that affected the Latino community. It continued throughout the entirety of his campaign. The political rhetoric from the republican party increased fear, and worry in the Latino community (Sanchez Barba, 2017). Despite Trump's xenophobic statements, in one of the biggest political upsets in American history, Donald Trump won the electoral college, becoming the forty-fifth president of the United States of America.

While this particularly affected my Latino participants, what has been coined as the "Trump Effect"[12] affected American schools as well. In the first days after the election results, the Southern Poverty Law Center's Teaching Tolerance project administered an online survey to K–12 administrators (Costello, 2016). The survey collected responses from over 10,000 teachers, counselors, and administrators. Some of the highlights that stood out from the "Trump Effect" report were that: (a) 80 percent reported heighted anxiety for students in marginalized groups including Muslim, LGBT, immigrants, and African American students, (b) 40 percent have heard derogatory language directed at marginalized groups and people based on their gender and sexual orientation, (c) 50 percent of the educators surveyed said that students targeted

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[12] The "Trump Effect" is defined as an "increase in bullying in schools caused by the rhetoric Donald Trump used during his presidential campaign" (Sword & Zimbardo, 2018).

each other based on which candidate they (the student) supported, and (d) over 25 percent of educators described specific incidents of bigotry and harassment that could be directly traced to the election rhetoric (Costello, 2016). Although the report surveyed K–12 educators, it illustrates the effect the political rhetoric had on students and communities in America. The next section will discuss the findings from the study.

<h2 align="center">Facebook as a Navigational Tool</h2>

I primarily relied on interview data and posts to answer my research questions. This section will illustrate the data for the first theme, Facebook as a navigational tool. After presenting the evidence, I will unpack and analyze the findings. However, it must be noted that the major themes are complex, and all three themes will intersect and overlap at various points in my analysis as I work to answer each research question, thematically.

Given that I overwhelmingly found that Facebook was a part of the college culture, reinforcing Martinez-Aleman and Wartman's (2009) work, Facebook was found to be used as a navigational tool. Using Facebook allowed students to navigate their senior institution with more ease than it would have been without a SMT like it. When Anais was asked about the function of Facebook during her transition, she said:

> [Facebook is] where I find out a lot of information in terms of like spaces where I could [get] free printing, what advising places or counseling, everything that I need to know was through Facebook. [Posts would] be a link to . . . a job opportunity. It'd be a link to a link. I [got] my job through Lyle [Pseudonym], because I had applied for that job first . . . because [it was] on the [Facebook] transfer page. So, I applied, and I didn't get hired [for that job]. But they directed me to work where I am working now.

Anais gives an example of how she found a job opportunity through information posted in the

UCWC Transfer Facebook "Page." Although she did not get the job she first interviewed for,

Lyle, whom she met through her first interview, directed her to where she ended up working.

Finding jobs that will allow students to sustain themselves as they work part-time and go to

school full-time is very important to students that are from low-income backgrounds. Especially,

since we know that Latino students have higher levels of stress than their White counterparts,

including the stress they feel to financially contribute to their family (Munoz, 1986).

When Lily was asked about Facebook and its function in her adjustment, she said, "I got

into all the UCWC[13] [Facebook] groups. I'm not gonna lie, it's very helpful. Very, very, very

helpful. [If] you need [an] instant answer at that time, you just search it up, so that's very helpful

. . . " This participant highlights the immediate answers she received on Facebook, and how that

has also been an aspect of Facebook that has supported her transition. This particular student

had familial commitments. She had a partner and a dependent, her young son. She also

commuted, which took her about 1–2 to 2–4 hours, depending on the time of day her commute

started. She commuted so that she could save money. As such, being able to acquire answers

for her many school-related questions immediately allowed her to use her time more efficiently,

which was very important to her.

Another way that participants used Facebook to navigate their senior institution was to

create and maintain connections with their new peers. This was done by "Friending" peers that

they met as they entered UCWC. Gael explains how he used Facebook to not only create, but to

maintain his connections to other students at his senior institution. He goes on to explain what

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[13] In order to increase protection for participants' identity, UCWC is a pseudonym acronym
which stands for the University of California West Coast.

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happened when he first started UCWC. He said, "Yeah, we [referring to him and his peers] started hanging out, and then school got crazy, but I'm constantly talking to them. So, that was a really great tool for meeting people . . . especially if all the people that don't know what's going on [are] trying to navigate the space." Gael discusses how Facebook was useful in maintaining his new friendships, particularly when he got very busy with his coursework. Using Facebook not only to create, but to maintain new connections at their senior institution was helpful for students' transition and adjustment. He also highlights how others who might have a harder time navigating their new environment, may benefit from using Facebook to navigate. Here, Gael is referring to first-generation students. This finding illustrates how using Facebook not only to create, but maintain social ties was supportive in navigating their senior institution, as a *collective*. This also illustrates peer to peer support that transfers have been found to rely on (Townsend, 1995).

During Anais' second interview, when asked whether or not she felt the use of Facebook was beneficial or not to her transition and adjustment at UCWC. Anais responded:

> I think it [has] benefited my transition because there's a lot of communities on Facebook that cater to my needs as a transfer student, like the transfer student page. Haley (pseudonym), she runs it and there's always information that is really important. For example, in Summer. I didn't know about financial [aid] for Summer. I saw a deadline post from the transfer page where [the post read] "Don't forget to apply for summer [financial aid] by this day." And it was in a really pretty info graph. That made me look into it and then apply.

Anais had no idea that she would have to submit a separate application to financial aid for Summer school. She found out about it from the Transfer Student Facebook page. Information

directly affecting transfer's ability, or inability to complete courses, in a timely manner is of utmost importance. Again, given that community college transfer students have a limited amount of time to complete their degree requirements, Facebook was used as a navigational tool regarding information on institutional policies and procedures. This finding is especially important for first-generation college students. First-generation students would not have prior knowledge on information like this.

When another participant, Joy was asked what the function of Facebook was during her transition, her answer focused more on making sure she tapped into her local community when she transitioned into her senior institution. In giving an example of how she utilized Facebook to connect with the surrounding community, she recalls a time when she posted on her timeline about finding a job and describes the outcome of the post. She said:

> So, I was like, "You know, I'm looking for a good paying job that I can do part time. I'm creative, and I love taking care of kids, and I love doing events. Who knows of something?" and I just tag[ged] all of my Ocean Side [City Pseudonym] friends, which is like half UCWC, half of my Hallmark [Leadership Program Pseudonym] friends because I'm in a leadership program, and yeah I'll tag them. One of them [(referring to her leadership program colleague)] I interviewed for a job because of it [(referring to her post)]. He was like, "Text me later."

Joy not only turned to her UCWC community that she was building at the time through Facebook, but also turned to the outside surrounding community, which was particularly important for her because she was not from the local surrounding area and chose not to live on campus. Navigating the community around her, and extending her network to people and entities outside of the UCWC was how she was able to navigate her transition and adjustment to

her senior institution. This finding reinforces Ellison et al.'s (2007) study that found Facebook use as a bridge for social capital. Connecting these "loose ties" by "activating" them provided beneficial information for Joy—it even connected her to prospective employers. Moreover, first-generation college students do not have the social capital to find jobs as fast as students that had entered UCWC during their freshman year. Although most freshman left their network when they entered college, they theoretically would have had more time to rebuild their network at UCWC given that they would have started two years before transfer students. This would give them the upper hand when looking for job opportunities on campus.

As illustrated, students that were not from the surrounding area of UCWC, found Facebook to be very important in navigating their senior institution. When I asked Saira, who was raised in Tijuana, Mexico, "Were they any connections (ties) on Facebook that were important for you as you transitioned to UCWC?," she replied:

Well, actually through the [Facebook] UCWC Transfer group [page]. I met three people, and they have been my closest friends here at UCWC so far. I met my roommate through there . . . Yeah, that was really, really helpful because the first week, week one, in the Fall quarter, I came here and I didn't know anyone. My family just dropped me [off] here. We went to a theme park. We made a whole weekend out of it, but eventually they had to leave me, and my roommate hadn't come yet. So, I was completely alone for four days or something like that, and [I was] trying to navigate the spaces, [like] how do you work the dining halls and stuff like that. So, it was weird, but then through the UCWC [Transfer] Facebook page someone was like, "Oh, I miss home" and I'm like, "Oh, my God, me too." So, we met, and then this really big group of 20 people. We just went and ate outside in West World.

Saira describes her experience when she first arrived to UCWC. She not only met three of her closest friends through Facebook, but she also met her roommate through it. Junco (2011) conducted a study on Facebook and its relation to student engagement. While Junco (2011) found a negative relationship with Facebook use and engagement, certain activities, like commenting and RSVP'ing to events, were positive. In Saira's experience, these comments led to students who were new to the surrounding UCWC area to meet up, asserting Junco's (2011) findings for Latino transfer students. Online to offline activities facilitated social adjustment for Saira. The next section discusses the findings for research questions 1a and 1b.

Facebook as a Navigational Tool: Change in Use

To remind the readers, the sub research question was: Does the function of Facebook change during their adjustment period? If so, why and how? In other words, were there any changes in participants use during their first term (Fall quarter) in comparison to their second term (Winter quarter). The answer to this question was a resounding yes. Figure 3 illustrates the change in function between terms for its navigational use.

Figure 3. Facebook as a navigational tool.
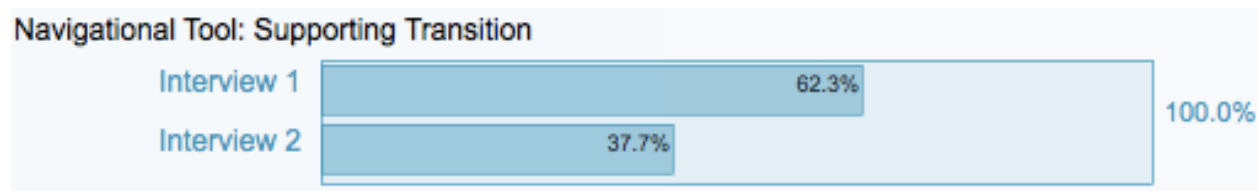
Sixty-two percent of the participants used Facebook during their first term as a navigational tool supporting their transition. While only 38 percent of participants used Facebook as a navigational tool during their second term. This was due to the fact that they had done much of the exploring during their first term. Participants talked about using Facebook to research

different clubs, and organizations to join. This was especially important to them during their first term as they were looking to join and participate in groups, clubs and other extracurriculars. Tiffany discusses her use of Facebook pages during her first term. She said: "The group pages I especially [use]. For like clubs and stuff. I use those because I really need to look at the information and updates as to what they are doing." Facebook facilitated social navigation and adjustment to UCWC. Moreover, Tiffany was politically active, especially now because of the political climate. As such, being able to navigate politically orientated clubs and groups through Facebook was important to her, especially in the beginning of her adjustment period, when political rhetoric against Latino's was high.

Facebook also changed in function in that participants created content to consume rather than being the consumers. When I interviewed Nichole, I asked if there were any differences between how she used Facebook during her first term [Fall] versus her second term [Winter]. She said: "Yes. I feel like I use it a lot more now and I think I will probably start using it even more just to promote fundraisers or events that my sorority's having." Nichole illustrates here that Facebook can also be used for more than navigating the institution. Leveraging Facebook is now something that she sought to do. Similarly, Mary also talks about leveraging Facebook. She talks about creating "pages" for events that she is now in charge of and how it helps her recruit volunteers and manage her life at the university. During our interview, she reflects on how she used Facebook during her first term and what she is using it for now. She said: "Now, I use it to outreach [to] a network, meet with other people. Before I would use it to find information that people were offering now, I'm the one offering information." The function of Facebook changed for Mary. It went from being a tool to navigate the university, and consuming information about the university to her using Facebook as a tool to manage the events she is now

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putting on for prospective students. It looks as though Mary has come full circle, and is now the person that is offering information, and getting other students involved in events on campus, rather than looking for information she needs to navigate the institution.

Facebook as a Navigational Tool: Facebook Ties

The third question I sought to answer was: What Facebook ties (if any) are most important for transfer students to create and maintain during their transition? Latino students found Facebook pages, UCWC peers, and ties to community members outside of UCWC to be important during their transition. However, some ties were more important during participants first term. In navigating their senior institution, students found Facebook pages, specifically, the Facebook Transfer Page to be *extremely* important and helpful during their transition. It must be noted that I did not collect data from the Transfer Page, for two reasons: I would not be able to keep up with participants posts in the page because I would not know when they posted, and second, they mostly discussed consuming information, so there would not be any documentation other than their interview data. Nonetheless, participants spoke about how helpful it was through interviews. The way Anais navigated employment from the information on the Transfer Page is one example of how "Pages" were important ties. This is also illustrated through the way Nichole found out about financial aid through the Transfer page, how Lily found "immediate" answers and the way Saira found her roommates and her closest friend through the Transfer Page.

Regarding peer ties, Gael's example of how keeping in contact with his peers was helpful, especially when learning how to navigate UCWC, together. We know that connection and feelings of belonging are important for Latino students (Schneider & Ward, 2003). Therefore, facilitation of these supportive ties are especially important for Latino transfer

students. Other ties that were important to Latino students were ties to members from the surrounding community at UCWC. Those ties were specifically important for participants who were not from the surrounding area. Students like Joy, who was from northern California found Facebook helpful when she was looking for a job, and received a text from her peer from outside UCWC confirming an interview. Saira, who was from Tijuana, Mexico also found ties to the surrounding UCWC community to be helpful. She said:

> I hear about going to events, going to premieres, or like—I don't know, live jazz . . . stuff like that. I like that it [Facebook] connects me not only to my community [referring to peers at UCWC and other Latinos], but also to the greater [city name] area so I can know what going on all over the place. That's what I like about it.

Exploring the surrounding area for students who were new to UCWC's city felt that Facebook was great in exposing them to new people, places, and events outside of the institution. That was important to them in navigating the city that surrounded UCWC. This question will continue to be interrogated through each theme.

Facebook as a Navigational Tool: Recap

Using Facebook as a navigational tool, new Latino community college transfer students increased their navigational capital, therefore increasing their social capital. The ability to create, and maintain social capital is embedded within its virtual structure (Ellison et al., 2007). The dissemination of information related to students' navigation of their senior institution was found to be particularly useful. Learning their senior institution's policies and procedures is useful in that it allows students to prepare and organize around deadlines and various important dates pertaining to their course planning as well as planning around other programs on campus.

The ability to find these resources online allowed students to navigate their senior institution with more ease. Nichole's ability to locate campus resources was important for any new student, but this ability was especially urgent for community college transfer students since they have only two academic years until they graduate. Additionally, the Facebook Transfer page proved to be very important not only for Nichole, but for Lily (a parenting student), and Saira (a student who is not from the surrounding area). While Nichole found out about Summer financial aid through the Transfer Page on Facebook, Lily found it to be useful if and when she had any questions, and Saira met her good friends through the page. Pages that target the transfer community played a positive role in the adjustment process for Latino community college transfer students. Facebook allowed students to navigate their senior institution easier.

New incoming Latino transfer students found Facebook to be very useful in navigating their senior institution during their first term at their senior institution. Facebook allowed them to gain information on deadlines, institutional policies, and was a source of information for job seekers. Since I focused on first-generation, low-income transfer students, this finding is particularly important given that first-generation college students may struggle with navigational capital (Mehta, Newbold, John, O'Rourke, & Matthew, 2011). Additionally, using Facebook has been found to be a large part of the college-going culture, not only through various research studies (DeAndrea et al., 2012; Junco, 2011; Ellison et al., 2007), but also through this particular inquiry. This finding is particularly important for first-generation *and* low-income college students as low-income students may look to secure jobs when entering their senior institutions. As institutions of higher education look for ways support Latino transfer students and creating a transfer receptive culture, one must note the specific tools that the college going culture have found to be useful during their transition.

While tools are important to note, what is also equally important is *when* this is most important to transfer students. My findings illustrate that students who used Facebook as a navigational tool found it most useful during students' first term. While all participants found this to be useful throughout their first *and* second term, orientating themselves to their senior institution was more needed and effective during their first term. Facebook was found to be better for managing their social lives at the institution during their second term. The navigational capital that comes with the socialization process of using Facebook during participants' first terms illustrates how useful the use of social media technology can be when entering unfamiliar places and spaces for new, incoming Latino community college transfer students. Students using Facebook as a tool to manage, promote, and inform their peers of events and other useful information was found during their second term.

We know that over half of Latinos who were enrolled in college were first-generation students (Reyes & Nora, 2012). Therefore, Facebook as a navigational tool would be useful to over half of the Latino student population. Using Facebook for first-generation college students can have a large impact on the Latino's students, given this statistic. Further increasing their marginality was the negative rhetoric on immigration that centered Latinos. As such, participants like Tiffany used Facebook to navigate and explore political clubs that might support her political views and stance. Using Facebook to combat the negative, racist assumptions of the Latino population upon which Donald Trump ran his campaign proved to be beneficial to Latino students during their adjustment to UCWC.

Facebook as a Coping Mechanism

The second major theme was that participants found Facebook to be useful when coping with the academic transition. This was illustrated through posts, comments, and interview data.

In an interview, Tiffany discusses her experience with the Transfer Shock phenomenon and Facebook's function during that time. She said:

> [The Transfer Facebook Page helped] in adjusting. See[ing] how people are posting, and how they try to overcome their own struggles as a transfer student, how they say, "Oh, come to UCWC, I thought I was a really good student back in community college, and then come to UCWC, and seen how my grades have, or GPA has gone down . . ." and I look at all this stuff, and it's like, it helps me feel a [little better]. As much as I feel bad for them, it also makes me feel like I am not alone in this because the struggle is really hard, especially for me as a Latina. I am the only one in my family [to go to college].

Tiffany experienced transfer shock. While she empathizes with other students that are having a hard time adjusting academically, knowing other transfer students are going through similar struggles help her feel like she is not alone. She also brings up the fact that she is a first-generation college student. And how that makes the adjustment harder, specifically because she has never been through something like the transfer shock. She does not know anyone else that has gone through a similar experience, she does not know that the Transfer Shock is normal, and that most college students go through something similar and are able to recover (Diaz, 1992). Tiffany goes on to talk about other factors that affected her transition and Facebook use, like the political rhetoric about Latinos that was circulating at the time. She elaborated:

> I think for me [Facebook] actually helps me a little bit more, because I'm able to have a space to actually—actually to vent which I think is—at least for me I realize now that I cannot be quiet, and for me it just helps to kind of just say everything, and say what I think is necessary [referring to her political views]. Otherwise, I feel really stifled, and I don't feel particularly happy about doing, you know, by not saying anything and [it]

seems everyone else puts what I think is ignorance of my feed. So, I was kinda of just

like, "Okay, now I'm done. I can't be silent anymore." . . . I think for me it provides me

an outlet—an emotional as well as a mental outlet, to just kind of say what I'm feeling.

So, I think that's particularly good for me because I just can't hold it in apparently.

Tiffany discusses her frustration with the political rhetoric that has been circulating social media.

She felt the need to voice her thoughts, and speak on things that she feels she needed to address.

For her, Facebook was a platform to put those ideas and thoughts out there. It helped her voice

those concerns, which was a positive thing for her emotionally and psychologically.

Similarly, Kamile discussed her use of Facebook during her first term, she said:

Usually it's news or like sometimes I use it for emotional outreach and support. So it was

very helpful like last quarter when I wasn't vibing as well with people, you know, it

reminded me like okay, there's this whole group, a whole community that are still behind

you even though you don't see them every day.

Kamile talks about her experience during her first term. She felt like she did not fit in with the

community at her senior institution. Kamile is experiencing cultural incongruity. However,

knowing and being reminded that she had a "whole community" supporting her, and although

she was having a rough time, she knew she would be able to get through it. We know that Latino

students gain strength and resilience from knowing that their community, and family are there to

support them through their navigation of higher education (Solberg et al., 1994, Yosso, 2005).

What is important is their perceived support. Facebook can be seen as a tool that has extended

their community, especially in virtual ways. As such, Facebook was a support and coping tool.

Kamile gives another example of how she used Facebook to cope with the transition.

After making a post about her rough transition, she said: "A professor from New York reached

out to me that I had met at a conference and she gave me some words of support and then encouraged me to search for like certain professors on campus." Kamile's Facebook network proved to be useful in that she was able to bridge her "weak ties," and receive mentoring from academics that were all the way on the east coast. In Ellison et al.'s study (2007), they find that Facebook was used to maintain social capital. We know it is important for Latino students to keep their networks from home (Solberg et al., 1994; Yosso, 2005). As such, Facebook is particularly useful for Latino students as they enter their traditionally White senior institutions.

Alonzo talks about the way he saw Facebook, and his observations of how his network used Facebook. He said: "I think for many of us, and I see this in many of my friends on Facebook. Facebook for us is a relief, a space where we can just say whatever we feel and stuff like that. Sometimes that space is not nearby, even here at UCWC." Here, Alonzo talks about Facebook as being a place of relief. This resonates with Yosso's (2005) idea that Latino students create counter spaces in dealing with the culture shock they encounter when first entering post-secondary education. However, this counter space is a virtual one. Here, it is evident that Facebook can be used in advantages ways for Latino community college transfer students.

In dealing and coping with the culture shock that many Latino students experience, Facebook was also a place where students critiqued the institution. For example, Alonzo posted this meme[14] on his Facebook timeline at the beginning of his first term at his senior institution.

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[14] A meme is "an element of culture os system of behavior that may be considered to be passed from one individual to another by nongenetic means, especially imitation. [It is also described as] a humorous image, video, piece of text, etc., that is copied (often with slight variations) and spread rapidly by the internet" (Meme, 2018).

Figure 4. Alonzo's Facebook post #1.

Here, Alonzo uses humor to address colonial history, and the anxiety that comes with entering a culturally White institution. Alonzo goes on to say:

> Yes, and something that I see on the meme page, at least here in UCWC, is how we as students use it to make fun of our emotions or the things that we're going through which are really serious, but how we just make parody of it. If you're not UCWC student, if you don't have depression, and we laugh about it, but it's so true, and we relate to it. We just go at it, like, "Oh, depression here, anxiety this etc." It's so real that it's funny.

Facebook helps students relieve the very real stress and tension that Latino student feel when they enter post-secondary education. Although, according to Alonzo, not always in the healthiest way. Kamile also posted a meme commenting on her experience transitioning to her senior institution and what she thinks of when her family asks her how school is going.

Figure 5. Kamile's Facebook post #1.

It is important to note that *all* my participants in the study mentioned memes as a positive and funny way to decompress as they went through their adjustment period. Visual content on social media "can highlight affect, political views, reactions, key information, and scenes of importance" (Highfield & Leaver, 2016, p. 48). Participants created memes, reposted memes,

and used a meme page that was connected to UCWC students. Highfield and Leaver (2016) argue "that the ubiquity of visual within everyday social media content and practices has led to (and encouraged by) new technological capabilities and platform affordances, and that this is a critical part of online communication" (p. 49). Given that all of the participants in the study mentioned memes as a way to decompress, this study asserts Highfield and Leaver's (2016) argument. Memes illustrating commonly found issues that Latino students have been found to go through in academic literature is seen in these two memes. Cultural incongruity and mistrust is seen through Alonzo's meme. Kamile's meme of her experience in college humorously illustrates the experience of transitioning her senior institution. Like the Facebook Transfer Page, I did not collect or pull data from the meme page. The data that was collected and illustrated here was from participants' personal timeline. I did not do so for two reasons: I did not have access to the page, and I would not be able to keep up with posts that were from my participants. I will now discuss the findings for this theme for research question 1a.

Facebook as a Coping Mechanism: Changes in Use

In regards to students using Facebook to cope with their transition, it was found to be more useful during students first, Fall term. During their second term two things happened. They slowed down the number of posts, and decreased their consumption of negative news and comments. This was because of the hostile, anti-immigration rhetoric that was in full effect the months after Donald Trump's inauguration. When I interviewed Santiago, he explained that he had to decrease the number of news outlets he followed. When asking him why he decreased his interaction and consumption of news from Facebook, he said:

> Yeah because the comments were a fucking shit storm as well. I thought people used to
> exaggerate when they said that reading something or seeing something would make them

sick. Just reading some of these things I literally physically felt really—I felt sick for the

first time in my life just reading something. I don't know, for me it was just regulating

how much time I would spend there, and for me, I didn't watch any news stuff. I

personally have [to] tune off to a lot of the news stuff for the most part, and I have just

been watching things like Netflix or whatever as a means to—if I really want to be

distracted or whatever.

As discussed earlier, the political climate was hostile and negative towards the Latino population

in the U.S. Consequently, social media could be a source of stress or cohesiveness. Participants

used Facebook slightly less (regarding actual posts on their timelines), and as Santiago

illustrated, participants were much more guarded in the media that they consumed and were

exposed to. Santiago discusses the negative aspects of Facebook and how they affected him. He

did not want to expose himself to the negative comments that he saw on Facebook about Latinos.

He unfollowed certain news media outlets on Facebook, and used other SMT's to distract him.

Self-preservation was of utmost importance to participants. The next section will discuss

findings for research question 1b.

Facebook as a Coping Mechanism: Important ties

What Facebook ties (if any) are most important for transfer students to create and

maintain during their transition? Why? The coping theme found "Pages" to be important during

participants first term. During participants the second term, despite their decrease in posts,

participants felt that their connection with their peers, family and people back in their

communities was the most important. Anais talks about how Facebook pages helped her stay

motivated during mid-terms and finals. She said:

I think like the transfer page was a good group as well as like the Sorority page that we

have our own separate page, more during midterms, they'll post quotes or inspirational

quotes or they ['ll post] for study hours, [to] come out to study hours'. And then, the

transfer page too. Everyone is just really welcoming and everyone wants to meet new

people and make friends, I have one girl asked me for the same class together. It's just

class quarter, and she's like, "Oh, we're in the same class." 'Let's sit together.'

Randomly but my Facebook normalizes that I guess.

Facebook Pages students followed were important in coping with their new senior institution.

From encouraging words during midterms and finals, to facilitating social adjustment, as Anais

describes in her online to offline interaction with other UCWC students. Although participants

posted less during their second term, they still posted. Kamile posted during midterms of her

second term about her anxiety regarding her research and academic capabilities. These included:
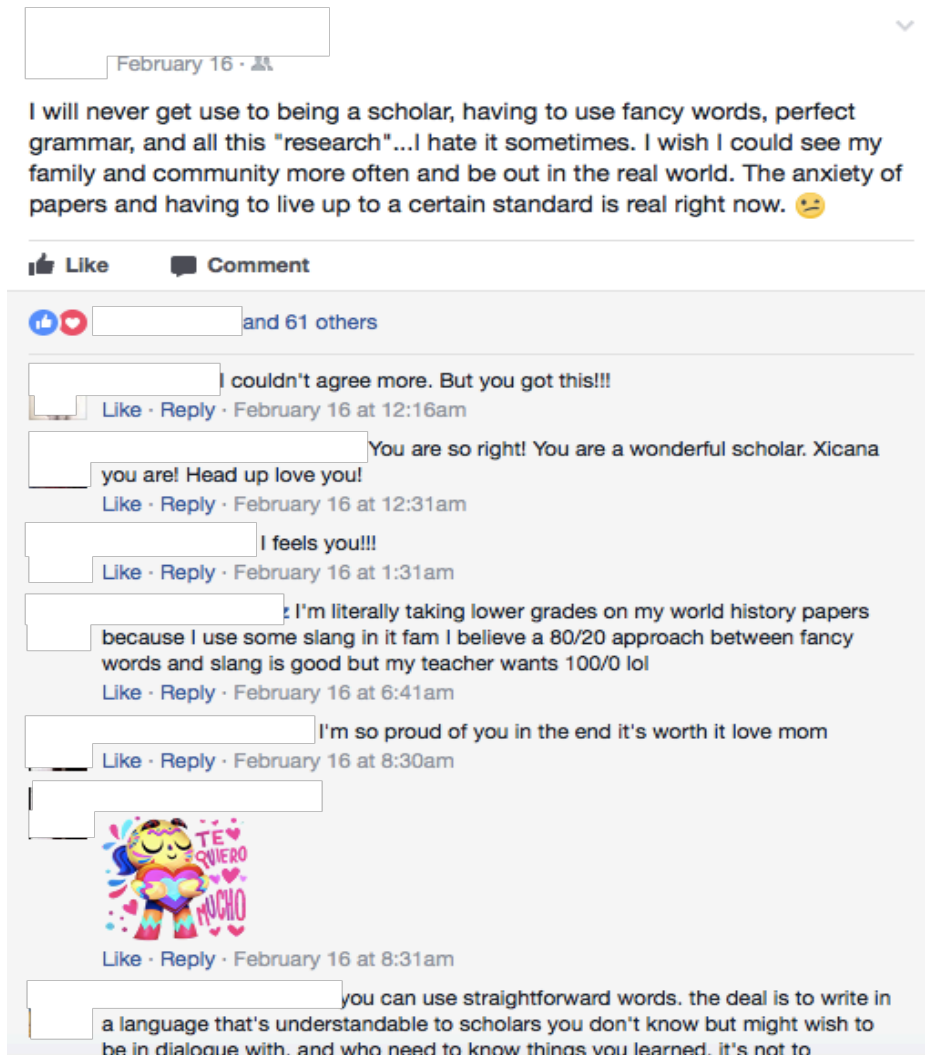
Figure 6. Kamile's Facebook post #2.

Kamile posted about the academic culture at UCWC and its effects on her well-being.

She was not able to see her family and community as much since beginning UCWC. Illustrated

in the comments are her peers supporting her and telling her encouraging words. What is

important about this piece of data is that her mother is also seen commenting on her post. Her

mother posted: "I'm so proud of you [.] In the end it's worth it [.] Love Mom." When it came

to participants seeking support and encouragement during their transition, participants found it to

be only a post away. This support allowed them to cope not only with the transition, but the

political climate as well. Various participants posted about difficulty in adjusting to UCWC.

And they received similar support on Facebook.

Participants also posted information that their communities find helpful. Participants felt

a responsibility to their communities back home and felt that access to information they might

find helpful was important to post. Especially during this time, as the Latino community was

under attack by the Trump administration. An example of this, is Lily's post on an event that

was coming up in February about what Trump's executive orders mean for their community.

Figure 7. Lily's Facebook post.

These types of posts helped students cope with the political climate while they were adjusting to their senior institution. Although it did not decrease their stress about what was going on politically, they found solace in knowing that they were getting information to their communities.

When participants posted about how stressed they felt, their peers commented on them and wrote words of encouragement and support whether that was through Facebook Pages or comments on posts participants put on their timelines. As such, participants found Facebook to function as emotional support, in particular, helping them cope with their adjustment. The next section discusses Facebook as a coping mechanism.

Facebook and Coping Discussion

Facebook Pages were important source of emotional support as students transitioned to their senior institution. Finding information on these pages to help them navigation UCWC allowed them to better cope with their transition. Since my participants were all first-generation college students, facilitating the navigation of their senior institution was very important. Facebook Pages also encouraged students by posting positive quotes, and or encouraging words from their peers during midterms and finals. Pages were a source of emotional support as well as a navigational tool, which ultimately allowed participants to better cope with their transition.

Discussed earlier, in her chapter "Stages of Passage," Yosso (2005) describes the culture shock and how Latinos deal with it by creating and building community. In building community, students create counter spaces. These counter spaces work to mitigate negative racial campus climate (Yosso, 2005). One thing that Yosso (2005) pointed out was even though Latino students find a way to develop "critical resistant navigational" skills to survive higher education, for many Latinos, they need to feel like there is a "point" to their struggle. She says, "We want to know that the experiences, skills and knowledge we may gain from the university can ultimately benefit our communities" (p. 124). You can see this play out in Kamile's post about how it helped her knowing that she had the support of her whole community, even if she was not able to talk to them every day, she knew they were behind her, supporting her.

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Additionally, self-preservation was very important to Latino students during this highly unexpected political outcome of the presidential election. Students discussed how they had to take inventory of their network and cut ties with some "Friends" on Facebook due to their political views. As such, they consumed less Facebook to self-preserve. This is illustrated in Santiago's statement about feeling ill when he read certain comments on Facebook.

Memes were used as a decompressing tool. Memes also illustrated common stress and anxiety Latino students feel when they enter a culturally White institution. Highfield and Leaver (2016) assert that memes and other visual content on social media highlights political views and reaction. Latinos' cultural incongruity with higher education has been found to be negatively associated with college adjustment (Cerezo & Chang, 2013). As such, memes were found to be critical commentary on participants' senior institution.

In conclusion, participants used Facebook to cope with the transition to their senior institution. They used Facebook in various ways to cope, whether that was posting about their experiences, reaching out to their Facebook network for support to reading and creating memes that reflected their experiences at their senior institution. Under the coping theme, participants specifically used Facebook for emotional support from peers and connection to communities back home. Emotional support was found through comments, and likes on participants' timelines. Connections to communities outside of their senior institution was found to be equally as important to their transition. Connection and communication with communities not affiliated with their senior institution gave students perspective, and reminded them of their purpose and impact of their presence at the university, and what that means for the Latino community at large. While this finding is telling, it is important to note that most participants decreased the number of posts during their second term because of the political climate. This finding will be

discussed and expanded upon in the next section that discusses Facebook as a political platform and asset.

Political Climate

As discussed earlier in this chapter, the political climate has invoked duress amongst people of color in America since the presidential campaign and election of the forty-fifth president, Donald Trump (Sword & Zimabardo, 2018). The Latino population, in particular, has been caught in the negative, racist, political rhetoric that uses the term "illegal immigrant" as being synonymous with Latinos (Gambino, 2015). This is being done to further increase the policing and criminalization of brown bodies (Gambino, 2015). Given this, participants were fearful, stressed, and discussed its effect on their experience transitioning to their senior institution. The next section describes students' experiences in adjusting to their senior institution, all set amidst the backdrop of the 2016 presidential campaign and election results.

Political Climate and Student Transition Experience

The negative effects varied from affecting participant's grades, to their mental health. Participants described visits to the hospital due to panic attacks, they also described symptoms of depression, and heightened anxieties for themselves and their communities. This was felt during their first term, but even more after the election results, which was announced during participants' finals. When Mary was asked in her second interview about the political climate and its affects (if any) on her transition to her senior institution or if it affected any part of her experience. She said:

Well definitely, in the Fall, well that was [the] biggest hit. Because of what happened [referring to the election results], even till this day, you see people on Facebook sharing articles that have been happening in the government, it just makes you mad and you put

your comments and stuff like that so, I mean, I've seen it the most on the Fall and Winter

quarter . . . But definitely, it does affect people and I know that in the Fall, that was like,

the biggest hit because it was around finals.

Mary described the activity that was happening on Facebook during her first Fall term in

response to the negative rhetoric about the immigrant Latino population. She also discusses its

effect on her academics in her reference to "the biggest hit." It is important to note that Mary is

an undocumented student. Similarly, Yadira describes her reaction to the presidential election

results. She said, "When Trump was elected, I remember crying on my bed that day, I was like,

'What am I going to do.'" Yadira was also undocumented. The election results took a toll on her

emotional state.

Managing the transition itself, which we know takes various adjustments and can be

difficult for *any* new student. The increase in stress regarding their safety, their family's safety,

as well as their own academic and social responsibilities at their senior institution was trying, to

say the least. This is also illustrated through Santiago's discussion of how his second term went.

He said: "Chaotic, but it worked out fine."

Liliana: "Okay, chaotic in what sense?"

Santiago: Just really busy. I think that, for example my parents' status, legal status

definitely became an actual—issue. It became an issue because I was legitimately

worried because of the whole changing of presidents. That was definitely one of those

things that was on the back of my mind for most of the time in the winter quarter, but

overall it was just very demanding academic-wise, but it went by really fast . . . I actually

had a panic attack towards the end of the quarter. I was really overwhelmed by a lot of

things that were going on. I had a lot of work to do in terms of my academics. I had to

take care of a lot of home issues. Like the mandados [errands] that need to be taken care of at home, and me and my family have [to] navigate certain things a little bit more carefully now. It creates more work for all of us. In addition, it's just dealing with extracurricular I was involved in. I guess it all just piled up. It was the first time I ever had a panic attack. When I was going through [the panic attack], I had no idea what was going on. I literally thought, "What's going on? I feel like I'm dying." So I went and I got help to just assess, and for someone to tell me it's a panic attack. After that, I had to take a little bit of a breather. I didn't disclose the panic attack to my family. I haven't disclosed it to them, but I've done what I can to just work on it and go seek [help]. I never thought I would end up going to therapy, but I ended up going to therapy, but it's been really good, it's been really helpful, thankfully.

Santiago's newfound worry about his parents because of the negative political climate, made the transition all the more difficult. As a result, students found Facebook to be a political platform and asset even though participants decreased their overall activity on Facebook, as discussed earlier.

Facebook: A Political Platform and Asset

When interacting with Facebook during participants' adjustment period, participants posted and reposted political information and or posts that pushed back on negative stereotypes of the Latino community that Trump began his campaign with. Alonzo posted the following image, addressing Trump's comments on what Mexico "sends" to America.
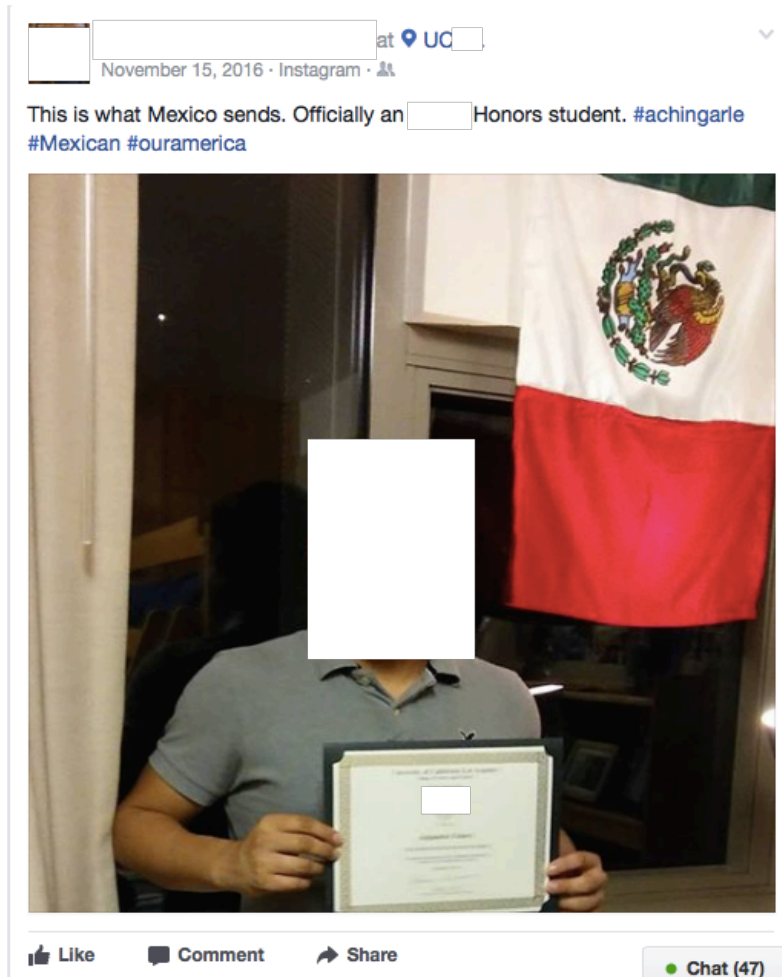
Figure 8. Alonzo's Facebook post #2.

This picture shows Alonzo holding his honor student certificate. This was posted after the

presidential election results were determined. When interviewing Alonzo and asking about the

function of Facebook during his adjustment period, he said:

> It's a political and a psychological asset. I'll get to the psychological later. Political in
>
> the sense that you can publish your opinions. You can express yourself at least on the
>
> political aspects and also you get news, [and] stuff like that. And before, it was for me
>
> just to keep in touch with my family.

Here, Alonzo clearly states that Facebook has been used as a political platform. A few days earlier, he posted the following:

I must be here, now more than ever before. This is my protest, but know I am not the only one. #chingandole

Figure 9. Alonzo's Facebook post #3.

While not all participants posted as much, or as directly as he did regarding his thoughts and his stance on the political climate, and his role at the university, they all engaged in some form of consumption or production of political news, and or responses to the xenophobic political rhetoric. Other students like Joy used Facebook to create events for political clubs, and to organize protests. For example, Joy discusses what Facebook has been used for during her transition. She said:

We have set up events for the young progressive club. We've set up meetings, like

"We're having our first meeting in the quarter" and I've invited people to that, and then

we set up the Page for the Love Trump Hate event. You know, [the one] on [the]

election, that people were marching 11pm to 3 am or something? We set that up at 2 am,

and by the next day at 2 am there was 3,000 people who said they were going or

interested.

Joy used Facebook to organize a protest by creating an "event." The event she created had more

than 3,000 students interested in attending. Other students like Rachel used Facebook to show

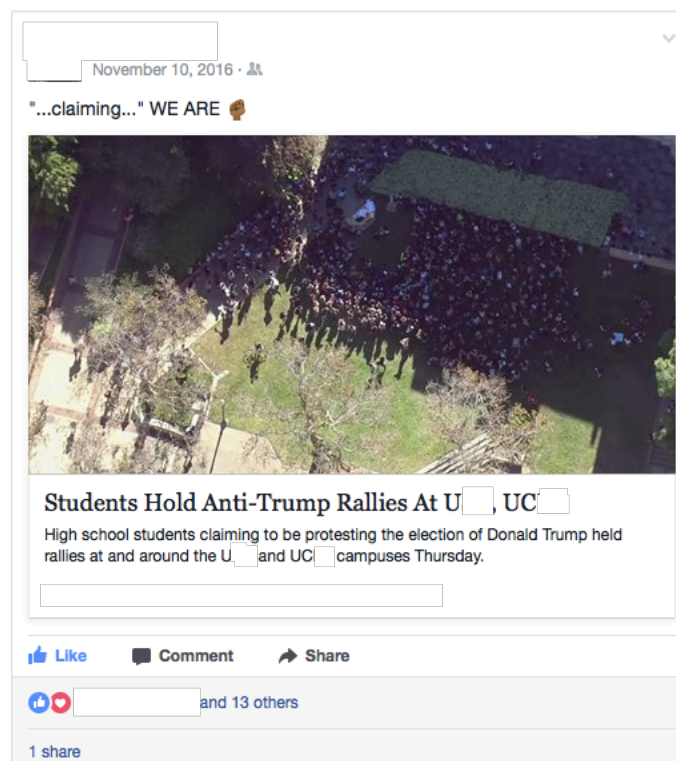solidarity and support for political events and causes. In relation to Joy's event, Rachel posted:

Figure 10. Rachel's Facebook post.

Rachel illustrates her support for the protest by adding to her post:

. . . claiming . . . "we are [united]" along with the repost from a local news outlet that

reported on the protest. Facebook was being used as a place to express political affiliation,

stance, thoughts and opinions.

In Mary's discussion of what Facebook was being used for during her transition during this time, she said: "So I know there was a lot of talking on Facebook whether [or not the election result] was bad, good . . . people supporting each other, people hating on each other . . . Especially on campus, you saw it visually with people and what they were standing for and you would take it on to Facebook and stuff . . . ." Mary speaks of the activity that was happening on Facebook, and how students took what they were doing on campus to their Facebook accounts. She also mentions the negative aspects of it, saying that people were "hating" on each other. In the context of social media, this can be thought of as people commenting negative things to or about each other and or putting people down. This can be based on anything from someone's actions, statements, down to what someone is wearing. This is seen as a negative aspect of social media. The effects of the political climate were felt. Especially on the use and consumption of social media. It is evident that it took its toll on students' transition and adjustment process.

As new issues came about regarding the immigrant community and their safety, students also used Facebook as a way to inform and assist their communities back home. For example, Alonzo posted the following on his timeline:
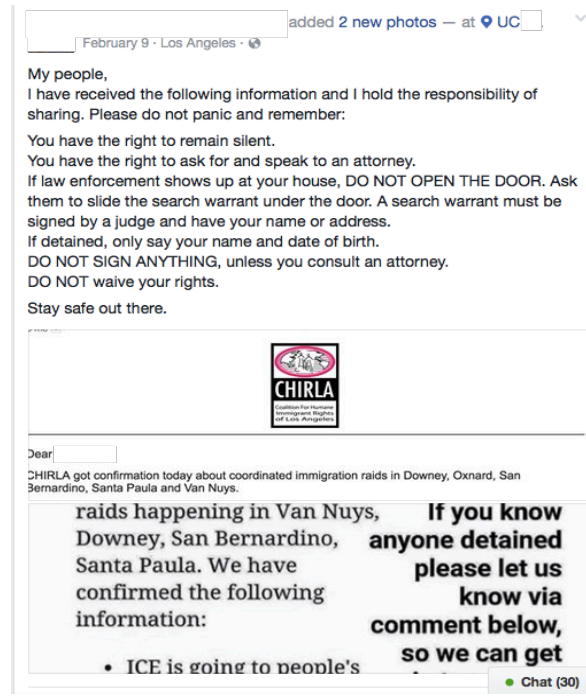
Figure 11. Alonzo's Facebook post #4.

This was posted during the Winter quarter (participants second term). While this is only one way participants used Facebook as a political platform, it is one that illustrates resilience and resistance to the political rhetoric about the Latino population. It shows how students were using Facebook to support their communities back home.

Similarly, Joy discusses the function of Facebook and its use for her, as a student that was not from the surrounding area. She said: "Connecting with [and] staying in touch with friends from back home, when they have events like Anti Trump rally in my hometown, I will post and be like, 'All my friends go to this' or like, 'Community college friends, go to this' . . ." Caring about whether their communities back home had the information needed regarding how to protect themselves from what was currently happening politically, and/or are aware of events that are happening locally was important to the participants during their adjustment period. Other participants reposted articles with political information on their timelines with information that was similar to Alonzo's post and information. Using Facebook as a political platform and

asset allowed these students to stay connected, and protect and support their communities back home. This was done by disseminating information that would be useful to their community and family at home. It also allowed them to stay politically active even though they were not physically in their communities. The next section will discuss the findings for research question 1a.

Facebook as a Political Tool and Asset: Change in Use

To remind readers, the sub research question was: Does the function of Facebook change during their adjustment period? If so, why and how? Given the political climate, it is no surprise that participants would use Facebook as a political platform and or asset. However, what was an unanticipated finding, is that participants retreated from Facebook during their second terms. The reason they did this was for self-preservation. When I asked Tiffany what she thought was most helpful and least helpful regarding her transition and the use of Facebook. She answered:

> Okay, least is having is having to see through people's post, especially people who go here and they seeing what their [political] opinions [are]. I guess because I'm a very political person. And so there are a lot of views that make me uncomfortable, or the mindsets that are here [at UCWC] make me very uncomfortable, [especially] coming from a lower class background. I guess the good part would be maintaining relationships, or creating new ones that have previously kind of dissolved because I started to post a bit more on Facebook and people started to see I was more active. [However], people [verbally] attack me in their posts and stuff. And I['m] like, "Okay" I know that it shows up on the feed.

Tiffany discusses having difficulty seeing peers' political opinions on campus, and how that made her feel uncomfortable. More importantly, she did not want to be attacked on social media

because of her political views. This was a common issue that participants brought up during their interviews. This caused further stress for students, which is why participants created homogenous networks by "de-friending" people in their network that had negative views of the Latino population. While there was a decrease in activity regarding consumption and postings in the Winter term, it was still important for participants to connect with peers, and their communities back home. The next section will discuss what ties were important regarding this theme.

Facebook as a Political Tool and Asset: Important Ties

What Facebook ties (if any) are most important for transfer students to create and maintain during their transition? Why? Community ties and peer ties were important for participants in this theme. This is illustrated by Alonzo's post about what to do if people were detained by ICE. This also illustrates how peer support networks were important more so during students' second term, versus their first term. As seen in Tiffany's quote, she started to post about political issues, and her network saw that, and it allowed her to re-kindle ties that stopped being "active." Creating a homogenous network has proven to be useful for students. Moreover, Tiffany created a politically homogenous network because of the negative way she was addressed on social media. This also shows how intersectional the themes were, and how a majority of the themes overlapped.

Facebook was used as a political platform and asset during Latino's adjustment period. Political platform in allowing participants to express themselves. Political asset in that it allowed participants to create protests with their peers, and to disseminate vital information back to their communities for their safety and support. Sewlyn's (2009) found social networks to be a sounding board for students to voice their discontent. This was found to be true. This theme was

prominent as students' very identity was being attacked, as was their right to an education, particularly for the participants who were undocumented. Additionally, participants found Facebook to be useful in organizing protests, and disseminating very important information back to their family and communities.

Pew (2012) conducted a study that investigated the use of social media and political engagement. The researchers found that 66 percent of social media users have used social media platforms "to post their thoughts about civic and political issues" (Rainie, Smith, Schlozman, Brady, & Verba, 2012, p. 1). They also found that users who talked about politics on a regular basis were more likely to post links, political material and or encouraged others to take political action on social networking sites (Rainie et al., 2012). The report also found that users under 50 were more likely to use social networking site to engage politically (Rainie et al., 2012). Facebook as a political platform and asset illustrates how the political rhetoric on Latino immigration affected Latino transfer students' adjustment to their senior institution. Latino students who may have not discussed politics daily, interacted with politics daily during and after Trump's campaign and election. Latino students, especially undocumented students, felt the negative political climate more, given that they worried about their safety and the safety of their loved ones on a daily basis. The participants of the study fit Pew's profile. They were young and politically engaged, resulting in their use of Facebook to engage politically. Given the political climate, and its effects on Latino transfer students, Facebook was found to be a great tool and asset during their adjustment period.

Conclusion

In Summary, participants found Facebook to be a navigational tool, a coping tool and a political asset. These themes intersected at various times and through various themes.

Participants found Facebook to mitigate some of the culture shock they felt when entering. Facebook also proved to be very useful for first-generation college students in that it allowed them to navigate their senior institution with more ease than it would be not having a Facebook account. This was due to the fact that Facebook is a large part of the college culture. As such, information, connections, and events related to their senior institution were on Facebook. However, Facebook use and consumption had to be altered given the negative effect it had on participants emotionally. Many participants took "breaks" from Facebook in order to avoid the negative rhetoric. This was done out of self-preservation.

Facebook as a navigational tool is especially important for first-generation students. Students used Facebook pages, particularly the Transfer Page to find out about information regarding academic policies and procedures including important deadlines like financial aid deadlines. It also informed them of jobs on campus, which mitigated some of the effects of having less social capital than students entering as freshmen. Freshmen had two more years to create networks and connections than Latino transfer students.

Facebook as a coping mechanism overlapped with other themes, especially Facebook as a political asset and tool. The Latino population was the target of political rhetoric regarding immigration. Participants used Facebook as a coping mechanism through posting about their experience transitioning, and pushing back on negative stereotypes that label Latinos rapists and drug dealers. This helped participants to cope with what was happening politically, while also allowing participants to engage politically. Moreover, finding comfort and emotional support from their Facebook network was very important for Latino's as they dealt with the stresses of transitioning into a highly selective, culturally White institution. Facebook comments on posts increased their perceived support, which lessened their transfer shock and culture shock.

Using Facebook as a political asset and tool positioned students to be an advocate for their communities' back home. They posted important information on workshops and other events that informed them of their rights. This allowed the participants to not only be informed themselves for their own safety, but was an informational tool and asset for participants' communities. Santiago discussed how the political climate affected him and his family. And although he was not undocumented himself, his parents were, affecting his adjustment to UCWC. Information on what to do if ICE detains you, and knowing what your rights worked to lessen the stress and anxiety, even though it was still very high.

While there were numerous positive aspects of using Facebook during Latino college adjustment, there were also negative interactions that caused stress for Latino transfer students. The fact that Tiffany would get verbally attacked when she would comment on people's posts, and how Santiago discussed how he felt physically sick reading racist, negative comments on Facebook about Latinos, illustrates that not all Facebook and consumption is good during Latino's adjustment periods. Participants "defriended" some people and unfollowed some news outlets in their network that they felt were toxic in order to protect their emotional and psychological well-being.

Critical Race Theory and LatCrit allowed me to understand how race and racism amongst other forms of oppression, influence college adjustment for Latino transfer students. The racism that Latino students felt, particularly in this political climate highlights the enormous amount of stress Latino transfer students go through. It also illustrates that Latino students continue to face multiple and various barriers in post-secondary education. When students like Alonzo, state:

I feel like every single one of my identities, I'm [at] a disadvantage. Or at least I am seen

as disadvantaged. I am a Latino, Mexicano, first-generation, undocumented, low-income.

There are so many identities that keep reminding me this is not [my] place.

Institutional support needs to be increased for Latino transfer students, especially given the

political climate that Latino students have been forced, even more so today, to navigate. Also

illustrated through findings is that although Latino students continue to face obstacles that are

directly related to their immigration status, race, and class, they continue to be resilient and

persistent. And although UCWC had a campus that would be defined as a transfer receptive

culture, they continue to fall short regarding Latino transfer students' perceived support.

The function of Facebook during Latino transfer student adjustment period is what the

study aimed to uncover. The next chapter discusses the research questions, summary of the

findings, and contributions to research, practice and theory. I will end with concluding thoughts

and future research directions.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

It is important to review the research questions associated with the study, so that we may review the findings comprehensively. I will also discuss implications and contributions to practice, theory, and research. My research questions were: 1) What is the function of SMT, specifically Facebook, as Latino community college transfer students transition into a culturally white, highly selective four-year university? 1a) What Facebook ties are most important for transfer students to create and maintain during their transition? 1b) Do patterns in Facebook activity among Latino transfer students change during their adjustment period? If so, why?

The main research question had two follow-up/sub research questions. This was done so that we could differentiate not only what the function of Facebook was for Latino community college transfer students, but *when* in students' adjustment periods would Facebook to be more useful (if at all). The sub-research questions allowed me to investigate the nuances of its use for Latino community college transfer students. Studying the function of Facebook during participants adjustment period is important since we know that community college transfer students only have on average of two academic years to complete their degrees. The themes that emerged from the data were complex, overlapping, and intersecting, which is why I chose to answer the research questions thematically.

This study was conducted to investigate whether or not Facebook had the potential to mitigate students' culture shock, and assist in acclimating students to their senior institution. Overall, I found that Facebook was indeed an important tool for college adjustment for the Latino transfer population. The use of Facebook increased students' navigational capital, allowed students to cope with their transition better by allowing them to keep their familial and community network. Lastly, Facebook was seen as a political platform and asset. However,

participants did have negative experiences on Facebook due to the political climate and the

political rhetoric that was circulating on Facebook and other online news media outlets. This

caused participants to slightly decrease their posts, and consumption of various news outlets

through Facebook.

Review of Navigation Theme

Chapter Four was divided into three main sections, discussing each theme that was found.

Each theme addressed all research questions. I began with giving the reader an understanding of

the political climate during students' transition. This was important to understand and gave the

reader context for the findings. The first section illustrated Facebook as a navigational tool.

Participants found that the Facebook Transfer Page played a very important role in navigating

their senior institution. Students found vital information about financial aid, and other practical

and procedural information that was important for them to know, such as drop deadlines, study

abroad deadlines, research program application deadlines, etc. They also found on-campus jobs

from the Transfer Page. This allowed participants to navigate the institution with more ease, and

gave them the ability to participate in activities that would enrich their education and experience

at UCWC (e.g., attending Summer school, internships, and more).

Participants also found the real-time, instant communication and interactions on

Facebook to be helpful. This virtual affordance was particularly helpful for non-traditional

students like Lily, who found the ability to find instant answers to her questions very helpful for

her transition. Given Lily's familial commitments (being a parenting student and having a

partner), as well as her time restrictions due to her 2- to 4-hour daily commute to and from

school, Lily relied on the Facebook Transfer Page to answer questions she had regarding the

navigation of UCWC. Accessing information quickly and efficiently allowed her to make good use of her time.

Acclimating themselves to the new rules of their senior institutions was more important during students first term. Participants found that Facebook was useful in exploring different organizations and clubs on Facebook like the UCWC Socialist club, and the UCWC Democrats club. Participants were trying to find their "niche" at their senior institution, and Facebook facilitated that exploration.

Participants also met friends and roommates through the Facebook Transfer Page. Saira described her experience when she first moved into the UCWC dorms. She was homesick, and knew no one. However, in commenting on someone else's post about being homesick, she was able to connect and create a support network almost instantly. Interacting with other new students online by commenting on the post about missing their family and friends back home, led to a dinner with 20 other people that were feeling the same way she was, homesick. Saira also met three of her closest friends through the transfer page.

The second term, students leveraged Facebook for their own activities and social events and commitments. This was illustrated through Mary's comment on how she used Facebook more for outreach, and to disseminate information in her second term, versus how she used it more for consuming information about UCWC in her first term. Facebook was found to be useful in managing participants' social life at their senior institution. Students posted about events their organizations were having more in their second term. This makes sense, given that most of the exploration of organizations and communities they joined was done during their first term.

Regarding what ties (if any) were important for students during their adjustment periods, I found that participants' ties to Facebook pages (whether that was the Transfer Page or other UCWC Club/Organization Pages) were important in navigating their senior institution. Familial, peer and community connections were important to students as well. Facebook allowed students to maintain their ties with their family and communities back home, therefore allowing them to bridge social capital, which was very important for their perceived support, as they entered UCWC.

Navigating UCWC as a first-generation, low-income, Latino transfer student was difficult for participants in the study. Fifty-four percent of the participants in the study found difficulty in adjusting their first term. The two major reasons students found the transition to be difficult was because of cultural incongruity and because of the political climate. Given that UCWC is a highly selective institution and is culturally white, difficulty adjusting because of cultural incongruity could be expected. However, participants in the study dealt with more issues transitioning because of the political rhetoric that painted Latino's in a negative light. Despite these added obstacles for Latino transfer students, they persisted through their first academic year. Participants used Facebook for navigational capital. In doing so, they increased their social capital.

Overall, Facebook was useful in navigating UCWC. Leveraging Facebook during their second term gave them the tools to manage events they coordinated, and sought to use its virtual platform to their advantage in students' second term. Using Facebook as a tool to manage students' social life and activities tied to UCWC is an example of how Facebook can turn students feeling like they are barely surviving the transition to thriving in their environment. Moreover, learning about resources at UCWC can be overwhelming for any new student. The

ability to tap into resources that focused on supporting a subset of the student population like Transfer students, allowed students to better cope with the especially difficult transition they endured during this unique time in political history.

Review of Coping Theme

Facebook was found to be a coping mechanism for participants' transition to UCWC. This theme addressed all research questions as well. The goal of that section was to illustrate how participants used Facebook to cope during their transition. I begin with illustrating how Tiffany found the Transfer Page posts and comments to be useful when she was going through the transfer shock. She found comfort in knowing that others were going through the same, and that she was not the only one going through it. Tiffany also talks about Facebook as being a tool she used to express her opinion on the political rhetoric being said about the Latino population. She describes Facebook as being an emotional outlet. Tiffany's quote about being able to express her views and thoughts was a response to the political climate during her transition. It was important for her to express her thoughts on the racist rhetoric about the Latino population, otherwise she felt stifled. However, not all of her interactions with Facebook was positive. She had been cussed at through comments on Facebook regarding her political views. This was the negative aspect of using Facebook during participants' transition to UCWC. This is important to note, especially since the political climate negatively affected their emotional and psychological well-being.

Kamile also found Facebook to be a coping mechanism. She talks about how Facebook was a useful tool regarding emotional outreach and support. Given that Kamile experienced a culture shock when beginning her senior institution, the support from her family and community back home was vital to her ability to cope with the shock and overall transition. Her Facebook

network reminded her that she had a "whole community' behind her, even though she did not see them every day. Kamile also gives an example of how she was able to turn "weak ties" into "strong ties" regarding mentoring and advice from academics she had met prior. Student–faculty relationships are important for students in college (Laanan, 1996, 1998). Negative perceptions of faculty can lead to students feeling less supported (Townsend, 1995). This can have a negative effect on transfer students' perceived support. Especially if students feel as if faculty do not care about their academic growth. Kamile's ability to connect with faculty via Facebook, shows how she "activated" social capital, while simultaneously receiving support (e.g., supportive comments, and encouraging words when she expressed struggles at UCWC) from family and community back home. This illustrates how she bridged social capital via Facebook. Using Facebook gave Latino transfer students the ability to bridge social capital, and allowed students to better cope with their transition overall.

Alonzo describes Facebook as a place of relief, especially when he felt that UCWC failed to provide refuge from the negative, racist rhetoric. He posted a meme on his timeline illustrating how he felt entering his senior institution. In our interview, he discussed how memes are a way to make fun of the very real and serious ways students are feeling. Although, admittedly, he knows that memes are not always the healthiest outlet, because we should take our emotions more seriously. While Alonzo has a very important and serious point, all participants found memes to be a stress reliever. Laughing helped students cope with culture shock, transfer shock and the rhetoric about the Latino population.

Although participants found Facebook to be useful in coping with their transition, Santiago talks about the negative aspects of Facebook. Negative comments about Latinos on Facebook literally made him feel sick. He talked about how he had to distract himself by

watching movies on Netflix. Santiago felt the need to do this more during his second term.

Participants were found to use Facebook more cautiously during their second term given the

outcome of the presidential election, and the racist comments that were circulating in the media.

Critical Race Theory allowed me to analyze this finding in that it centralizes race. This

theme was particularly important for my participants as Latinos were being racially targeted and

scapegoated during their transition by the forty-fifth American president. My participants had a

harder time adjusting to their senior institution because of their worries and anxiety regarding

their safety in the U.S. As stated earlier, 27 percent of my participants were undocumented.

Additionally, other students like Santiago, had parents that were undocumented as well. LatCrit

accounted for other layers of subordination, like that of being undocumented while attending a

highly selective, culturally white institution. The Trump administration heighted undocumented

students' fear of deportation. The stress that they felt was high. Among the normal challenges

faced by transfer students as they transition, they also had to deal with overt racism being

spewed out by conservative news media outlets, and negative comments on Facebook. This took

a heavy emotional toll on my participants. While the over exposure to racist remarks and

comments on Facebook was not good for my participants, they adjusted their activity and

managed their networks, creating a homogenous network of support. Creating a homogenous

network was done for self-preservation. To be clear, participants created a politically

homogenous network, not a racial or ethnic homogenous network. In other words, students

made their Facebook network to be made of ties that had similar political views. Students

"unfriended" people on Facebook if they felt they were toxic, and had racist views of Latinos.

They also unfollowed toxic news media outlets on Facebook.

Overall, the coping theme found that ties with the Transfer Page, peers, family, and community back home was important in coping with their transition. Students found the transfer page to be helpful in coping with the new social scene, in that it facilitated online to offline interactions. Students made new friends from interactions on posts with peers on the Transfer page. Social media has normalized these online to offline interactions and socialization.

The coping theme overlaps with the next theme, which is Facebook being used as a political platform and asset. Here, we can see the effect of how Latino students experienced race and racism as they entered their senior institution, and the next theme illustrates what the participants did to combat it. As such, the ability to cope with this intense racism, and threats of deportation proved to be very important as they transitioned into their culturally White, highly selective senior institution.

Facebook as a Political Platform and Asset

The last theme that was found was Facebook being used as a political platform and asset. I begin the section illustrating the negative effects the political climate had on the participants of the study. Participants discussed struggling with their grades because of the presidential election results. They also talked about bouts of emotional and psychological distress. It is important to highlight the gravity of this stress. Santiago illustrates this with his discussion of how his Winter term went. He discussed having a severe panic attack and not knowing what it was until he got to the hospital. Additionally, Santiago regularly helped his parents run errands, and supported his parents through managing various household responsibilities, like paying bills, or helping them navigate their small business. He noted that he had to proceed much more cautiously and carefully now that Trump was in the white house. The amount of racist rhetoric—coupled with

the fear of deportation of his undocumented parents—took a great emotional and psychological toll on his experience transitioning to his senior institution.

Although participants had a hard time dealing with the racist rhetoric, they found Facebook to be useful as a political platform and asset. Alonzo illustrates Facebook as a political platform by posting a picture of himself holding his honors certificate, standing next to a large Mexican flag. That post was a response to Trump's statement about Mexico sending "rapists" and "drug dealers" to America. He also posted a picture on his timeline of a UCWC classroom with a Mexican flag writing: "I must be here, now more than ever. This is my protest, but I know I am not the only one." Illustrating the presence of the Latino community in higher education is a push back on the negative, racist narrative and negative stereotypes of Latinos portrayed by the Trump administration.

Facebook was also seen as a political asset. Joy illustrates this when she discusses how her "Trump Hate" protest went viral and had more than 3,000 students RSVP to the event. She used Facebook to create the event. Finding a supportive community on campus was important for Latino students. We know that creating communities that mirror Latino's communities back home, are crucial in mitigating the culture shock (Yosso, 2005). Facebook was also a political asset in that students, like Alonzo, posted information on what to do if you are detained by ICE. Alonzo is undocumented, and understands the importance of legal information for vulnerable communities. Alonzo shows how he leveraged Facebook to be useful for his political views, as well as his commitment to social justice.

Tiffany talks about how she felt uncomfortable about people's views and mindset on social media. She also talks about other forms of subordination like being from a lower socio-economic class. This was a negative aspect of Facebook. However, she recognizes that the

ability to create new ties or rekindling old ties allowed her to create a supportive homogenous network. This is what I call self-preservation. The ability to manage and filter your personal network on Facebook, can create online communities that are supportive in nature. This was very important for the participants. This can also be seen as creating a virtual counter space, where participants' views and experiences are validated and supported.

Using Facebook as a political asset and platform illustrates how students leveraged Facebook and made it into something that could not only support them through their transition, but how they found a way to use it to protect their communities and family back home. Students were able to bridge social capital, and maintain ties they had before they entered their senior institution. This finding reinforces the fact that SMT can, indeed, be used in advantageous ways. Additionally, witnessing the negative effect the political climate had on the Latino population calls to question what institutional measures are being taken in response to and support of Latino transfer students during this unprecedented and volatile political time.

Theoretical Contributions

Latino community college transfer students' transition was difficult. Among the well-known obstacles like that of culture shock (Yosso, 2005) and transfer shock, Latino transfer students dealt with racists comments from news media outlets, and other SMT that questioned not only their right to an education, but their right to be in the country. Given that we know that Latino students rely on peer and family to navigate their senior institution (Kasler & Pistole, 2003), it is no surprise that participants sought to connect with their peers, and family through Facebook.

Yosso's (2005) book on Community Cultural Wealth critique's Tinto's model of student departure. Instead of Tinto's stages—Separation, Transition, and Incorporation—Yosso (2005)

argues that Latinos experience a Culture Shock, then Build Community, and Critically Navigate between multiple worlds. In other words, Separation for Latino students was felt as a culture shock. Latinos felt isolated, and discriminated against. The way to cope with that initial culture shock was to build community. Yosso (2005) argues that building community served as a counter space to Latino students. This was found to be true in this study. Students use their Facebook pages to build a virtual counter space. It helped them cope with the racist rhetoric. The critical navigation between multiple worlds aided students' college adjustment. Yosso (2005) asserted: "critical navigation between multiple worlds ironically helps 'incorporate' Chicana/o students into various university communities and greatly contributes to our academic and social success" (p. 123). A prime example of Critical navigation between multiple worlds in this study is the use of Facebook as a navigational tool, its use as a coping mechanism, and its use as a political platform and asset.

The political climate had a negative effect on students emotional and psychological well-being. Using CRT and LatCrit to analyze the data, I was able to center my participants' racialized experiences, that included various and multiple layers of subordination. This was very important, especially given the political climate during students' transition. In order to combat this, as well as the culture shock, students relied on their community's cultural wealth. As discussed earlier, Community Cultural Wealth is the accumulation of assets that Latinos students rely on to navigate their lives. Participants used navigational capital, social capital, aspirational capital, familial capital, resistance capital and linguistic capital in a virtual platform. This was illustrated through the various themes that intersected and overlapped.

Navigational capital was illustrated through the way participants used the Facebook Transfer page. They searched and found out about information on how to navigate their senior

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institution. Resistance capital was illustrated through posts like Alonzo's, where he pushed back

on negative stereotypes that were circulating about "what Mexico sends" to the U.S. Familial

capital was illustrated through the support and encouraging words that participants' family and

peers wrote in comments on participants' timelines. This allowed students to cope with their

transition better, by reminding the participants that they had a whole community behind them, as

Kamile discussed in her interview. Aspirational capital was found through posts that validated

their dreams. For example, Alonzo posted pictures of him in a classroom posing as a professor.

Reinforcing the fact that yes, there will be hurdles to overcome, but it would not stop him.

Moreover, social capital was illustrated through Joy's posts asking for a job, and through other

students posts and reposts about job, internships and volunteer opportunities on their timelines.

Lastly, linguistic capital was illustrated by bilingual posts on their timelines. There were various

examples of how participants drew on community cultural wealth to deal and cope with the

transition on Facebook.

Contributions to Practice

It was found that Latino students used the Facebook Transfer Page to gather important

information. This information allowed Latino students to navigate their senior institution with

more ease than it would have been without Facebook. Information on jobs, financial aid

deadline reminders, course drop deadlines, etc. proved to be critical for the participants. This

aided their transition to their senior institution. It is important to note that the Facebook Transfer

Page was managed by the Transfer Center Director, Haley. As such, there was trust in that the

information was accurate and correct. When thinking about the culture and transfer shock Latino

community college transfers go through, Facebook pages are not among those that practitioners

traditionally think will serve to mitigate those negative experiences. However, through this

study, we know that it can serve to lessen some of the anxieties that Latino students experience because of the transfer shock and culture shock.

Moreover, this finding has implications for first-generation college students. We know that first-generation students, by definition do not have the navigational capital for higher education when they enter (Mehta et al., 2011). Practitioners may think of pages that are geared not only to transfer students, but to first-generation students as well. This can be applied to other identities that are marginalized. Latino students often create counter spaces to deal with the negative racial campus climate (Yosso, 2005). Trust not only within that virtual space is needed for this to work, but trust overall. This is a delicate balance that institutional agents must find. However, if institutional agents are to promote the use of Facebook or other SMTs, they must disclose the risks that come with its use such as privacy of personal information.

In introducing these types of online resources, what is crucially important for transfer students, is that they get the information they need in a timely manner. If practitioners choose to use Facebook Pages as a tool to acclimate their students, it should be done before entering the institution. Additionally, feedback on what the Latino transfer student population find useful in these Pages should be investigated thoroughly.

Contributions to Research

In conducting a virtual ethnography, I was able to illustrate visual content that allowed for rich, descriptive data. Moreover, virtual ethnography added to the literature on SMT and its use in college adjustment, particularly for Latino transfer students. I have yet to come across a study that centers the experience of the Latino transfer population, and the use of SMT in college adjustment. This study will add to the literature on the use of SMT and college adjustment for historically underrepresented student populations. Ways to support Latino community colleges

transfer students through the educational pipeline matters. Especially since we know that 60 percent are enrolled in community colleges (Chronicle of Higher Education, 2002) as cited in Martinez and Fernandez (2004). As such, the research sheds light to how SMT can contribute to a transfer receptive culture (TRC).

As discussed earlier, UCWC has the elements that would consider it a Transfer Receptive Culture. The UCWC Facebook Transfer Page is an example of having a transfer receptive culture in that it focuses on supporting transfer students by publishing information and opportunities pertinent to transfer students and the transfer experience. More importantly, its creation and use by university officials sends a clear message that UCWC is committed to supporting transfer students. Meeting students where they are at, in this case, on Facebook, illustrates institutional commitment to transfer students. Here, we see how the Transfer Facebook Page can increase perceived support. Perceived support is important in mitigating the culture shock Latino students experience (Solberg, Valdez, & Villareal, 1994). Moreover, this study adds to the research on first generation college students. It has been found that first generation college may have a harder time navigating higher education (Mehta et al., 2011). This study shows how SMT technology can be used as a tool to decrease obstacles for first generation college students. Access to information pertaining to students' senior institution increased navigational capital for students.

We know that the Latino population is growing in the University of California system. Research investigating tools that support Latino students is of upmost importance, especially given the psychological and emotional distress Latino students are going through, today. Overall, Facebook was found to mitigate the culture shock, to some degree, for Latino students. It did this by increasing students' navigational capital and social capital during their transition to

their senior institution. Moreover, Latino students were also found to use their community cultural wealth to activate various forms of social capital online.

Implications for Future Research

Facebook use proved to be a useful navigational tool for Latino community college transfer students. As such, future research should look into what profile characteristics of pages that made them trustworthy. This information can inform practitioners of best practices when it comes to its use in aiding their adjustment process. However, given that students created homogenous networks, so that they could protect themselves from the racist comments that affected their mental and emotional health, investigations into the benefits and drawbacks of said networks should be investigated.

Critical virtual counter spaces should be explored as well. We know that students made their network homogenous in order to preserve their emotional and psychological well-being. Therefore, we know that it these spaces be virtually created. However, investigation to uncover what virtual counter space would look like, might not only prove to be a useful tool for marginalized student populations during their college adjustment period, but for higher education institutions as they seek tools to support this growing demographic of students.

Visual content, such as memes, have been found to highlight political views, reactions, and scenes of importance (Highfield & Leaver, 2016). Since students named memes as a stress reliever, and used them as a critique on the institution (as Alonzo illustrated), inquiry that centers meme pages may provide useful information into how students are experiencing their educational institutions. Exploration of these pages can provide rich data, and give institutional agents insight into obstacles students face so that they can be proactive in supporting students.

Critical Reservations

While Facebook proved to be useful for students in navigating their senior institution, it must not be thought of as a replacement for live, physical interaction. There has been a tendency to equate information access with equity. The danger here is shifting the responsibility onto marginalized populations to acquire educational information. We know research has found that Latino students have negative experiences in post-secondary education. We must not conflate the idea that access to information will transcend the lack of equity and navigational capital the affluent population has, will remedy educational inequalities of the Latino population.

Given that the political climate is hostile to the Latino community, practitioners must also understand that this may not be the time to institutionalize SMTs use. This is due to the fact that the participants in the study worked towards self-preservation, and slightly lessened their consumption of Facebook news and information. They also self-preserved by creating more homogenous networks. Moreover, the amount of psychology distress students felt when they saw racist comments was high. As such, students opted to protect themselves from these overt, racist remarks. Creating new ties at their senior institution might not be done so as freely as may have been done in the past given that students are much more cautious in who they allow in their network. Requiring Latino students to gather information from social media might not be appropriate at this time given the negative effects it had on them.

Concluding Thoughts

The ubiquitous presence of SMT requires investigation of what some might see as unorthodox tools of support. One might put social networking sites, such as Facebook in that category. However, given the powerful tool SMT has been shown to be, research understanding student use, and nuances in that use can help mitigate obstacles for historically underrepresented students. Today, the Latino student population is experiencing more emotional and

psychological distress due to the political climate. Institutions of higher education must seek

ways to support this growing demographic of students. Institutionalizing programs, and other

staff support can take years to gather and acquire. Given that SMT has community elements

build in, are ready to use, and are free, SMTs like Facebook can have an immediate impact on

students' experiences. While educational institutions wait on finding funding, and gathering the

resources needed to implement student support programs, SMT like Facebook can be used in the

meantime as one tool in supporting students through higher education.

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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA LOS ANGELES
STUDY INFORMATION SHEET

Facebooking: The Role of Facebook in Latino Transfer College Adjustment

Liliana Islas, MA and Douglass Kellner, PhD, from the Graduate School of Education and Information Studies at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) are conducting a research study.

You were selected as a possible participant in this study because you are over the age of 18 and currently enrolled full-time as an undergraduate college student. Your participation in this research study is voluntary.

Why is this study being done?

This study is being conducted to learn more about Latino transfer students, their use of social networks and its function in college adjustment.

What will happen if I take part in this research study?

If you volunteer to participate in this study, the researcher will ask you to do the following:

- Accept a "Friend" request from the researcher. (Note: The researcher has restricted the visibility of "Friends" on her profile so other people will not see your profile.)
- Allow the researcher to view and record parts of your Facebook page (including text photographs, and videos) over a period 6 months (Fall and Winter quarter).
- Participate in a set of two 60 minute audio recorded interviews.

How long will I be in the research study?

Participation in the interviews will take approximately 2 hours, broken into two sessions. Total participation in all parts of this project will take about 2 hours. The first interview will be conducted at the end of Fall quarter, the second interview will be conducted after the Winter quarter.

Are there any potential risks or discomforts that I can expect from this study?

There are no anticipated risks or discomforts associated with this study.

Are there any potential benefits if I participate?

You will not directly benefit from your participation in this study. However, the results of the research may offer new insight into to the use of social networks and how they are used during transfer students' college adjustment period.

Will I be paid for participating?

Participants who accept the "Friend" request from the researcher and participates in both interviews will **receive a $10 gift card for each interview; 20$ total.**

Will information about me and my participation be kept confidential?

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can identify you will remain confidential. It will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law. Confidentiality will be maintained by means of removing your name from all Facebook profile content collected and replace with a code number. A code key will be created to link participants' data with code numbers. All data will be kept on an encrypted hard drive, accessible only to the primary researcher, Liliana Islas. Code keys and identifying information will be kept on a separate encrypted hard drive, also accessible by only the primary researcher. Published results of this study will make use of a pseudonym for all identifiable names (students, universities, and Facebook Friends).

What are my rights if I take part in this study?

- You can choose whether or not you want to be in this study, and you may withdraw your consent and discontinue participation at any time.
- Whatever decision you make, there will be no penalty to you, and no loss of benefits to which you were otherwise entitled.
- You may refuse to answer any questions that you do not want to answer and still remain in the study.
- You have the right to withdraw your data from this study at any time.
- You have the right to review, edit and erase your audio tape recordings.

Who can I contact if I have questions about this study?

If you have any questions, comments or concerns about the research, you can talk to one of the researchers. Please contact:

Liliana Islas at 323-806-6806 or Lislas@college.ucla.edu

Douglas Kellner at 310-825-0977 or kellner@ucla.edu

UCLA Office of the Human Research Protection Program (OHRPP):

If you have questions about your rights while taking part in this study, or you have concerns or suggestions and you want to talk to someone other than the researchers about the study, please call the OHRPP at (310) 825-7122 or write to:

UCLA Office of the Human Research Protection Program
11000 Kinross Avenue, Suite 211, Box 951694
Los Angeles, CA 90095-1694

Do you use facebook?

Come be part of a **new and exciting social media research study** happening at **UCLA!**

***Participants will receive TWO 10$ gift cards for your participation**

Requirements:

* ❋ **NEW INCOMING Community College Transfer**
* ❋ **Must identify as Latina/o**
* ❋ **Must have a Facebook account**
* ❋ **Identify as low-income**
* ❋ **First generation college student**

Email: islas_l@yahoo.com or ADD me @ https://www.facebook.com/Liliana.Tapia83

APPENDIX D: PROTOCOL FOR INTERVIEW 1

<u>Welcome</u>

- Thank you for taking time to talk with me.

- Before we get started I wanted to confirm that you had a chance to look through the informed consent.

    o [If yes] Do you have any questions or concerns about it?

    o [If no] Please take a minute to look at it now.

- Is it okay if I record the audio of our conversation?

- Today's interview should last about an hour and is meant to be informal and conversation in tone.

- I have some prepared questions, but I also want to let the conversation go where it takes us.

- Do you have any questions before we get started?

<u>General College Adjustment</u>

- How has your transition to UCWC been?

    o Academically?

    o Socially?

- Are you involved in any clubs, organizations, or work on campus?

    o Have any organizations, clubs, or physical spaces played a role in your adjustment to UCWC this first term?

<u>Identity</u>

- Has your identity played a role in your college adjustment experience so far?

    o Transfer Identity?

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- o Latino Identity?

- o Other identities?

  - ▪ If so, how?

Facebook General

- When did you first start using Facebook?

- How do you usually access Facebook?

- Walk me through a typical day of using Facebook.

- Has the way you use Facebook changed over time?

  - ▪ If so, how and why?

Facebook Features

- What features do you use from Facebook?

- Has that changed during your first quarter? (i.e. frequency, messaging, group chats, joining FB groups? Essentially, any changes in FB features use?

  - o If so, how and why?

- Does your identity (Latino, transfer, etc) played a role in what you post?

  - o Given an example from their postings

Status Update

- How do you approach the status update feature on Facebook?

- Have you ever wanted to post something and did not?

  - o If so, what and why?

- Have there been any changes in your status updates this past term regarding Frequency? Content? If so, why?

Post Activity

- Do you post on "friends" Facebook pages?

  o If you do, whose pages (school friends, groups, family, etc.) do you tend to make wall posts on, if any?

Connections with others

- Do you feel Facebook is important with keeping connections with peers? Family members?

  o If so, how important? If not, why not?

- Tell me about the different people/groups you connect to through Facebook.

  o Have they been helpful during your first term?

    ▪ If yes, how?

- Has Facebook played an important role during this past term regarding connections with others?

    ▪ New "friends" from your senior institution?

    ▪ Family?

    ▪ "Friends" that are not at your senior institution?

- Have certain/specific connections through Facebook been really important for you this past term? As you adjust to UCWC?

Content

- Tell me about how you have use Facebook during your first term.

  o Has that changed prior to beginning UCWC? If so, how?

- Walk me through how you decide what to post and not post on Facebook.

  o Has that changed during this past term? If so, why?

- Is there any specific content you have not posted on Facebook this fall quarter? If so, why?

Privacy

- What are your privacy settings?

- Has that changed during your first term?

- Do you use any of the selective restrictions for what certain people can see?

Audience

- Have you "added" any new "Friends" to Facebook from UCWC? If so, how many?

- Does your "audience"/Friends on Facebook play a role in how you think about what you put on Facebook?

    o Has that changed this past term? If so, how and why?

    o How does that influence what you do and do not post?

Wrap-up

- Has your use of Facebook been important during your transition to UCWC? If so, how and why? If not important, why?

- Do you feel Facebook is an accurate portrayal of your identity overall?

    o Interests? Things you value?

    o How about your experience this Fall quarter? Does it illustrate that?

- If you had to delete your Facebook account today, would that impact you in any way?

- Is there anything I didn't ask you about that you think I should have?

Conclusion

- Thank you for taking time to discuss your experiences with Facebook during your first term.

- We'll be touch to set up your 2nd interview after your second term.

APPENDIX E: PROTOCOL FOR INTERVIEW 2

RQ's:

1) How do Latino Transfer students interact with social media, specifically Facebook as they transition into a highly selective four-year university?

2) What Facebook ties are most important for transfer students to create and maintain during their transition? What do they represent for them? Why?

3) Do patterns in Facebook activity among Latino Transfer students change during their adjustment period?

How was your Winter Quarter?

- Academically?

- Socially?

  o Why do you think that was?

- Can you tell me more about that?

- What does that mean?

- How was it helpful?

- How would you describe your experience during your first two terms at UCWC?

- Are there any differences between your experiences between your 1st quarter and 2nd quarter?

- Can you tell me how your first quarter differed from your second quarter?

- What was the easiest part of transitioning?

- What was the hardest part of transitioning?

- Tell me about one of your more difficult experiences transitioning.

- How do you use Facebook when you're experiencing this?

- Has Facebook made these difficulties worse? Better?

- How do you feel about that?

- Were/are there any relationships that were important to create/maintain during your transition?

    o In general?

    o On Facebook?

Facebook:

- How would you describe the function of Facebook during your first two terms?

- Has Facebook negatively affected your transition? Are there any negatives of Facebook? Any positives?

- What about Facebook would you say has been most/least helpful regarding your transition and adjustment to UCWC? If any?

- How would you describe your interaction with Facebook these past 2 terms?

Political Climate:

- Has the political climate affected your Facebook activity?

- Has the political climate affected your transition to UCWC?

Participant Follow up:

*ALL DIFFERENT