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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

Chicana/o Studies and its Impact on Chicana and Chicano

Undergraduate Students:

The Role of a Culturally Relevant Education

Dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy
in Education

by

Elizabeth González

2015

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Chicana/o Studies and its Impact on Chicana and Chicano

Undergraduate Students:

The Role of a Culturally Relevant Education

by

Elizabeth González

Doctor of Philosophy in Education

University of California, Los Angeles, 2015

Professor Daniel G. Solórzano, Chair

Chicanas/ Chicanos make up 9-10% of students who graduate with a baccalaureate degree in the United States (Covarrubias, 2011). A number of these students have enrolled in Ethnic Studies programs like Chicana/o Studies. As colleges and universities seek to improve college retention and graduation rates, there is an imperative to investigate alternative ways of improving educational attainment for Latina/o students. Little is known about how culturally relevant education as found in Chicana/o Studies impacts student academic success and their future aspirations. Thus, an examination on Chicana/o Studies and its impact on students who major or minor in Chicana/o Studies informs student success in their academic, career and personal achievements. The purpose of this study is to examine curriculum and pedagogical impact of Chicana/o Studies on Chicana and Chicano alumni who majored or minored in the discipline at a four-year university located in Southern California. This dissertation draws from

twenty-five oral interviews querying participants on the impact of Chicana/o Studies curriculum, pedagogy, femtoring, mentoring, and [tor]mentoring. The theoretical frameworks guiding this study are Critical Race Theory, Chicana Feminism, and Chicana Feminist Epistemology in determining how educational institutions subordinate participants while at the same time resisting inequalities with the assistance of a culturally relevant curriculum and pedagogical practices.

This dissertation of Elizabeth González is approved.

Juan Gómez-Quiñones

Kris D. Gutiérrez

Tyrone C. Howard

Daniel G. Solórzano, Committee Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2015

DEDICATION

Para mi madre, Consuelo Cárdenas Maldonado, mi padre, Engelberto González Arellano, y

Natividad Hortencia González Solana, que me han enseñado a trabajar

con ganas para seguir adelante

Para mis hermanos y hermanas,

Eduardo, Emilio, Esmeralda, Ricardo Jr., Edgar, y Valentina Trinidad,

a quienes quiero con toda mi alma

Finalmente, para mis angelitas y angelitos que están en el cielo

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PREFACE

My orientation toward education began in the late 1970s, when my parents immigrated to East Los Angeles from *México*. For many years we lived at the Estrada Courts Public Housing Projects in Boyle Heights. Many parents at Estrada Courts, including mine, did not have the opportunity to continue onto higher education. In fact many of them only had an elementary education. Nonetheless, growing up in a predominately Mexican community and household, I was very aware of my culture and history. My father, who has a third grade education and mother how has a sixth education, were the first people to teach me Mexican history. Little did I know that as a *Mexicana* born in the U.S., I would one day come to learn, study, and practice Chicana/o Studies. Years later I entered a university that had a Chicana/o Studies Department and I began to learn an entire curriculum that was not only Mexican, but Chicana and Chicano. I eventually realized that majoring in Chicana/o Studies would give me an empowering education that moved me toward the one I had began learning while growing up.

As I majored in Chicana/o Studies I began to better understand the stories I learned growing up. I found myself in a space that I had never been in; a space that was finally teaching me about who I was as human being in an academic setting. This new knowledge was important in creating a stronger sense of self especially because people who shared my ethnic background were teaching me this new information. I was also exposed to the beauty of my culture in being *Mexicana/Chicana* within novels and historical pieces. I found myself reading literature from people that looked like my family and me; people that spoke about our history, culture, language, and art. This new education was exciting because in my twenty-five years of life, educational institutions had never once taught me anything about my existence. The existence of my family was finally being historicized within a U.S. context. My entire K-12 education consisted of one

Chicano/Latino male, one Pacific Islander male, and two African American female teachers. It was not until college that I became exposed to Chicana and Chicano professors who were teaching me a curriculum that gave me the ability to analyze the past and dream of all the possible things I could one day accomplish.

Having been exposed to a culturally relevant education by Chicana and Chicano professors, not only opened the door to dreaming of new possibilities, but made it a reality too. One of those possibilities was the goal to one day acquire a Ph.D. and teach culturally relevant education like Chicana/o Studies. Majoring in Chicana/o Studies was instrumental in my personal and academic development. I never imagined myself writing about the importance of a culturally relevant education like Chicana/o Studies, let alone attempting to acquire a Ph.D. in Education. Chicana/o Studies, my femtors, and mentors gave me the affirmation that I too was capable of dreaming big and achieving personal and academic goals. During my undergraduate education, I was closely femtored by a Chicana professor who not only believed in me and my ability to conduct research and acquire a Ph.D., but taught me the importance of being connected to the community and working on resolving issues of inequality, which led me to further examine culturally relevant education and the impact of Chicana/o Studies on people that majored or minored in the discipline.

Due to this knowledge and femtorship I received as an undergraduate student, I now examine the importance of a culturally relevant education like Chicana/o Studies. All my experiences and those of my colleagues and participants of this study, who have majored or minored in Ethnic Studies, have demonstrated that Ethnic Studies had a great impact in their personal existence and professional careers. My hope is that my dissertation informs students and teachers to be more directed and effective in their common task of education. I propose to

answer how Chicana/o Studies is a valuable instrument for people in the United States, especially with its growing population of People of Color.

This dissertation is composed of several unified parts that begin by providing an introduction of historical events that specifically deal with Chicana and Chicano education during the Civil Rights Movement and Chicana/o Movement of the 1960s. Chapter One examines when and how culturally relevant education is proposed. Documents like *El Plan de Santa Bárbara* (Chicano Coordinating Council on Higher Education) written in 1969 mapped examples to provide Chicanas and Chicanos with a culturally relevant education in higher education, but much inspired by the needs of Chicanas and Chicanos in the K-12 education system. *El Plan de Santa Bárbara* was a pioneer creation to alleviate the negative experiences of Chicanas and Chicanos in education. After contextualizing chapter one, this chapter also provides the research problem, explains the significance of this study, and outlines the research questions.

Chapter Two provides a literature review of the education history of Chicanas and Chicanos, notes the creation and development of Chicana/o Studies, discusses culturally relevant education and concludes with the theoretical framework of Critical Race Theory, Chicana Feminism, and Chicana Feminist Epistemology. This chapter covers a historical background of Chicana and Chicano education in order to provide a context on the Chicana and Chicano educational experiences and obstacles. Moreover, the creation and development of the Chicana/o Studies briefly outlines and explains how the discipline was established and developed over time. The culturally relevant education section discusses how curriculum and pedagogy must be dynamically combined in order to have positive effects on Youth of Color. Finally, the theoretical frameworks discuss each theory in a more detailed manner to examine the educational

experiences of Chicanas and Chicanos in higher education regardless of gender. Although Chicana Feminism and Chicana Feminist Epistemology pertain to females, I believe that this framework can also be used when examining the experiences of males in education, especially when looking at gender and identity constructions and consciousness.

Chapter Three addresses methods and data gathering. This chapter describes the recruitment of participants and data collection via oral interviews. Chapter Four provides a brief background on participants and their family history, followed by findings on culturally relevant curriculum. Chapter Five continues with findings on culturally relevant pedagogy such as several types of pedagogical practices and finally, this dissertation ends with the discussion in Chapter Six.

VITA

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Chapter 1

Introduction

The U.S. Civil Rights Movement of the mid-twentieth century was in part motivated by activists seeking to provide Youth of Color access to equal education to Whites. Although the U.S. Supreme Court case *Brown v. Board of Education* of 1954 mandated that public schools desegregate as a way of providing equal education for Youth of Color, the battle for an equal education continues in the U.S. (Irons, 2002).¹ One way that educators have proposed to close the gap between the Chicana, Chicano,² and White baccalaureate attainment, is to establish Chicana/o Studies Programs. For instance, many Civil Rights Movement activists in the mid 1960s advocated for and established Ethnic Studies Programs in higher education (Chicano Coordinating Council on Higher Education, 1969). These activists challenged educational institutions to provide a culturally relevant education for Students of Color in the U.S. as a means of having educational institutions contribute to social equity in the United States (Delgado Bernal, 2002; Gómez-Quíñones, 1978). Many civil rights activists advocated for a culturally relevant education that consisted of a curriculum and pedagogy that was relatable to Students of Color and took the community history into consideration. For example, *El Plan de Santa Bárbara*'s goals were to close the achievement gap that existed in Chicana and Chicano communities. A way to close that gap was by creating a Chicano Studies curriculum in higher education that would acknowledge the history, culture and language of Chicanas and Chicanos in the U.S. Another goal of *El Plan de Santa Bárbara* was to provide “support and tutorial programs” for Chicanas and Chicanos along with “community cultural and social action centers” (Chicano Coordinating Council on Higher Education, 1969, p. 9).

¹ In fact, in 2000, only seven to eight percent of Chicanas and Chicanos who enter kindergarten complete a baccalaureate degree, which is significantly lower than the twenty-four percent for Whites (Solórzano and Yosso, 2000).

² Chicana and Chicano are defined as women and men of Mexican descent that are born or raised in the U.S.

The legacy of Civil Rights era efforts to institute culturally relevant education in universities has resulted in generations of students that have majored and/or minored in an Ethnic Studies discipline. However, little is known by academics about the effects of Ethnic Studies on university students and how these programs were able to instill in students a value for cultural diversity, social equality and civil rights. Scholars like Tyrone C. Howard (2001a) and Gloria Ladson-Billings (1995) study the continuing effects of a culturally relevant education and pedagogy on African American students. For example, Howard's (2001a) study on African American teachers and students states that,

Having a connection to and awareness of the cultural context that students bring from home was important, what seemed to be equally important in the development of these teachers' teaching practices was a belief that their students were capable of being academically successful (p. 198).

Another example of connecting culturally relevant education with pedagogy is by Ladson-Billings (1995) who states that a culturally relevant education must "empower students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes" (p. 181). In further conceptualizing how pedagogy is used for this study, the works of Paulo Freire (1974) are also taken into account. Freire discusses issues of race and oppression within education and examines ways in which people are oppressed and how the oppression occurs. Freire discusses how people are humanized and dehumanized in order to justify the way in which oppressed people are treated in society. His work is important in demonstrating that if the oppressed learn the "truth," then they can critique the system and in return liberate themselves. In addition, Freire argues that a critical consciousness in politics, economics, and society is needed in order to liberate and challenge the status quo. Another contribution by Freire is the examination of the "banking concept" that forces student-teacher relationships to have certain rules and regulations which in return creates power dynamics that oppress students and

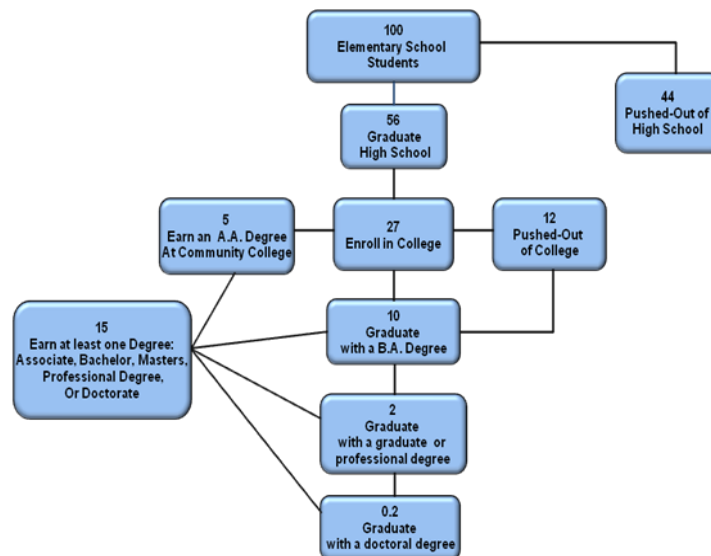
does not allow them to be active participants in their human development. Consequently the “banking concept” is one that hinders students’ educational experiences because they are not encouraged to participate and instead, only listen to the teacher deposit information. Therefore, drawing from *El Plan de Santa Bárbara*, Howard, Ladson-Billings, and Freire, I define a culturally relevant education to be (1) a curriculum that is relevant to Chicanas’ and Chicanos’ social, cultural, and educational experiences, and (2) must include professors/teachers that have pedagogical practices that challenges, transforms, and takes into account the inequalities Chicanas and Chicanos face in society and in the educational system (Yosso, 2005).³

These two components of a culturally relevant education are significant because Chicanas and Chicanos have needs that set them apart from White students. For example, the Chicana and Chicano educational pipeline demonstrates the low educational attainment for Chicanas and Chicanos when compared to their White counterpart (see Figure 1). Using 2009 supplemental U.S. Census data, Alejandro Covarrubias demonstrates that out of 100 Chicana and Chicano elementary schools students, only ten will graduate with a Baccalaureate degree (Covarrubias, 2011). The low graduation numbers demonstrate how the educational system continues to fail Chicanas and Chicanos. Perhaps, one way of improving the leak in the pipeline is by providing Chicanas and Chicanos with a culturally relevant education like Chicana/o Studies in higher education. In essence, *El Plan de Santa Bárbara* was created so that Chicanas and Chicanos can successfully attain an education that would be culturally relevant, transformational for them and their community, and to increase the Chicana and Chicano university graduation rates. Hence, the creation of Chicana/o Studies Departments and Programs can be used as a way of preventing the leaks in the educational pipeline. Although there are Chicana/o Studies Departments and

³ In using culturally relevant education in these two ways, I acknowledge that any professors regardless of ethnic background can possess the tools to transform or disengage Chicana and Chicano students their education. However, it is important to recognize the impact that a Chicana and Chicano professors can have on Chicana and Chicano Students when curriculum, pedagogy, and ethnic background co-exist.

Programs throughout the country, their institutionalization varies, as do their resources to address Chicana/o educational needs. Moreover, push-out⁴ rates for Chicanas and Chicanos remain high and continue to reflect social inequality in the United States. Many scholars argue that a culturally relevant education like Chicana/o Studies can have positive impacts on Chicanas and Chicanos (Acuña, 2009; Howard, 2001; Ladson-Billings, 1992). Therefore, institutions of higher education should formulate pedagogies that reflect cultural diversity along with equal access to education. Further institutionalizing and funding of Chicana/o Studies Departments can help universities recruit and retain Chicana and Chicano students as well as providing all students with lessons on cultural diversity and how diversity relates to social equality.

Figure 1.1: The Chicana Chicano Educational Pipeline



Source: Covarrubias, 2009

California Public Post-Secondary Education

As of 2015, California is a state with the largest public post-secondary education system in the nation. The community college system consists of 112 campuses that enroll more than 2

⁴ The word “push-out” is used as a rejection of the traditional term “drop-out” which often times blames the student for failure rather than examining systems that force students out of the educational system like lack of resources and racism (Valencia and Black 2002).

million students (<http://www.cccco.edu>), the California State University system consists of 23 campuses that enrolls 460,000 students (<http://www.calstate.edu>), and finally the University of California system consists of 10 campuses that enroll about 238,000 students (<http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/uc-system>). Due to the large amount of colleges in the state of California, it is important to examine how educational institutions serve students and their needs.

As mentioned before, institutions of higher education like the California State University system (CSU) consists of 23 campuses that are diverse and serve many People of Color. Twelve of the 23 campuses are Hispanic-Serving Institutions⁵ making the CSU system the largest with Latina and Latino enrollment (104,202 out of 437,008; The California State University, fall 2014 <http://www.calstate.edu>). The CSU system also has a large proportion of Mexican American⁶ students who seek baccalaureate degrees. In addition, the CSU system has the largest Chicana/o Studies Departments and Programs who enroll a significant number of Chicana, Chicano, Latina, and Latino students (CSU Statistical Report Fall, 2014; Acuña, 2011). While further examining enrollment data for the CSU system, California State University, MarVista⁷ has a 54% Mexican American/Latina/o⁸ student population. These percentages place California State University, MarVista the third highest percentage of Latina/o Student population. With such a large amount of Latina/o student population, this makes the Chicana/o Studies Department at CSUMV an ideal site for this study.

⁵ “Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) are defined as colleges, universities, or systems/districts where total Hispanic enrollment constitutes a minimum of 25% of the total enrollment. “Total Enrollment” includes full-time and part-time students at the undergraduate or graduate level (including professional schools) of the institution, or both (i.e., headcount of for-credit students).” (http://www.hacu.net/hacu/Default_EN.asp)

⁶ “Mexican American” and “Chicana/Chicano” are used interchangeably due to the way in which institutions classify ethnicity data.

⁷ California State University, MarVista is a pseudonym used to protect the identity of participants.

⁸ “Latina/Latino and Hispanic” are used interchangeably due to the way in which institutions classify ethnicity data.

Statement of Problem

There is little research on how Chicana/o Studies supports Chicana and Chicano students to attain their educational goals and move into further stages of the educational pipeline or service to their community. There is a large amount of research however on culturally relevant education, pedagogy and community for African American students within the K-12 system, but little to almost none focuses on Chicanas and Chicanos in higher education (Acuña 2009; Cammarota 2007; Howard 2001; Hurtado 2005; Ladson-Billings 1995 and 1992; Macías 1973; Morrison 2008). Hence, this study examines how Chicana/o Studies serves in preventing current obstacles affecting Chicana and Chicano educational attainment by examining the roles of culturally relevant education like curriculum and pedagogical practices.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine how a Chicana/o Studies impacts Chicanas' and Chicanos' educational experiences. With high push-out rates of Chicanas and Chicanos, it is importance to examine how educators can better assist students with their education and personal goals. There is some evidence that Chicana/o Studies has a unique and beneficial effect on students' higher educational outcomes (Acuña, 2011; Hurtado, 2005; Sleeter, 2011; Vásquez, González Cárdenas and García, 2014) thus, this study attempts to further elaborate on the impact a Chicana/o Studies curriculum and pedagogy can have on students. My own cultural experiences as a Chicana/o Studies major in college and professor, have demonstrate how Chicana/o Studies is a transformational education and provides an understanding of what types of inequalities Chicanas and Chicanos have experienced socially. With a transformational education, all students can benefit and work together towards common goals of respecting cultural diversity and attaining social equality. Therefore, this study answers the following research questions:

Research Questions

Question 1:

How does culturally relevant curriculum like Chicana/o Studies impact the educational experiences of Chicana and Chicano students?

Question 2:

How culturally relevant pedagogy impact the educational experiences of Chicana and Chicano students?

Chapter 2

Review of Literature

Introduction

In order to better understand the impact that Chicana/o Studies has on Chicanas and Chicanos in higher education, it is important to understand the historical context of Chicana and Chicano education in the United States therefore, this literature review begins with a historical context of (1) *Chicana and Chicano history of education*, (2) *the creation and development of Chicana/o Studies*, and followed with more contemporary sections on (3) *culturally relevant education*, and ending with (4) *theoretical framework of Critical Race Theory, Chicana Feminism, and Chicana Feminist Epistemology*. Therefore, this literature will serve as a tool to answer the following research questions: (1) *how does culturally relevant curriculum like Chicana/o Studies impact the educational experiences of Chicana and Chicano students?* and (2) *how does culturally relevant pedagogy impact the educational experiences of Chicana and Chicano students?*

Chicana and Chicano History of Education

Chicana and Chicano educational historians have heavily concentrated on the period of segregation as an attempt to depict the formation of Chicana and Chicano unequal access to educational resources. For example, historians document how Chicana and Chicano educational failure is due to cultural deficiencies, Americanization programs, intelligence testing, vocational education/tracking, and segregation (González 1990; San Miguel 1987).

In *Chicano Education in the Era of Segregation* (1990), Gilbert G. González discusses how Americanization programs and theories of assimilation have been utilized to understand

how Mexicans⁹ living in the United States contribute towards a U.S. capitalist society. These Americanization programs often implemented through social services programs sought to assimilate Mexicans by teaching them “proper” home etiquettes and encouraging them to embrace English and U.S. dominant cultural values.

In addition, González discusses how some researchers categorized Mexicans as genetically inferior and lacking critical thinking skills based on IQ tests results that were culturally biased and geared toward American western values. Therefore, González argues that IQ test results were irrelevant, served to uphold notions of White superiority, and denigrated Mexican culture. When Mexican children scored low on IQ tests, they were categorized as mentally retarded by educational institutions. Based on IQ testing results, Mexicans were tracked into vocational training instead of college preparatory classes.

Another important piece of work in Chicana and Chicano educational history is, *Let All of Them Take Heed: Mexican Americans and the Campaign for Educational Equality in Texas, 1910-1980* (1987) by Guadalupe San Miguel, Jr. This book focuses on the educational experiences of Chicanas and Chicanos by examining Spanish, Mexican, and Anglo politics in Texas. San Miguel provides a comprehensive history of Texas to better understand the influence of annexation in the development of economic, political, and educational inequalities experienced by Mexican Americans.¹⁰ Examining the history of a state’s formation like Texas is important because it allows readers to contextualize how structural power undermines the cultural capital of Mexican American peoples and reinforces their subordination.

San Miguel discusses issues of segregation and political movements (such as the Chicana and Chicano Movement) and goes beyond victimizing the Mexican community for the injustices

⁹ Author uses “Mexican” instead of Mexican American/Chicana and Chicano due the time period of which the author writes on.

¹⁰ Author uses “Mexican Americans” instead of Mexicans/Chicana/Chicano.

made to them by the United States government. San Miguel's work is important because it demonstrates the ways in which the Mexican community took agency, organized, and resisted discriminatory practices that affected the education of their children. San Miguel also demonstrates how Mexican Americans lacked access to political and educational systems and therefore could not change educational policy pertaining to culturally relevant curriculum like bilingual education. San Miguel states that this lack of access gave the Anglos power to develop an educational system that did not take into consideration the lived experiences of Mexican Americans and created an unequal education for them. Providing a historical foundation of the educational experiences of Chicanas and Chicanos in this literature is significant because it provides a context to the creation and development of Chicana/o Studies. Proving this context helps understand some of the struggles of how Chicana/o Studies was born.

Creation and Development of Chicana/o Studies

According to Juan Gómez-Quíñones (1978) and Dolores Delgado Bernal (1998a) the unequal and racist education Chicanas and Chicanos were experiencing during the 1960s had long historical roots. The lack of equal education for People of Color in the 1960s was a negative experience due to social problems such as racism (Delgado Bernal 1998a; Valencia and Black 2002). Not only were Youth of Color receiving a poor education but were also receiving one that was not culturally relevant and viewed them as "culturally deficient" (Delgado Bernal, 1998a; San Miguel, 1986).

The political climate of the 1960s and development of Chicanas and Chicanos led organizing activities to bring more public attention to Chicana and Chicano educational equity. By 1968 Chicana and Chicano high school students began to protest the inequalities they experienced in schools for many years. The high school student protest known as the *1968 East Los Angeles Blowouts*, was a student led movement that demanded that K-12 education go

beyond the non-academic labor market and towards an education that prepared them for college. Students were also holding administrators accountable and asking that racist teachers and administrators be removed from their schools and that bilingual education be implemented (Gómez-Quíñones and Vásquez, 2014; Delgado Bernal 1998a). These demands resulted from a reaction to the negative and discriminatory environment Chicanas and Chicanos experienced in the K-12 educational system. The demands made by students would be broadened to include culturally relevant education. The *1968 East Los Angeles Blowouts* were not only demands for social change, but also a message to the nation that the educational system had failed many Chicanas and Chicanos and that change for educational equality was needed (Chávez, 2002; Delgado Bernal, 1998a).

The Chicana and Chicano Movement expanded throughout the Southwest and included public calls for desegregation, immigration rights, education rights, and healthier working conditions. After the *1968 East Los Angeles Blowouts* over 100 students, faculty, administrators, and community delegates met in *Santa Bárbara* in 1969 to discuss and formulate *El Plan de Santa Bárbara*, a Chicano plan for higher education (Chicano Coordinating Council on Higher Education, 1969; Gómez-Quíñones and Vásquez, 2014). This *Plan* further addressed the educational needs for Chicanas and Chicanos at the university level and stated that,

The state of California must act in 1) admissions and recruitment of Chicano students, faculty, administration and staff; 2) a curriculum program and add an academic major relevant to the Chicano cultural and historical experience; 3) support and tutorial programs; 4) research programs; 5) publication programs and 6) community cultural and social action centers (p. 10).

El Plan de Santa Bárbara offered another example of public educational reform initiated by Chicanas and Chicanos. Some of the major components of this *Plan* included the creation of a culturally relevant education such as Chicana/o Studies and bilingual education. In addition, *El*

Plan de Santa Bárbara emphasized that Chicana/o Studies Programs be administered, staffed, and taught by Chicanas and Chicanos (Chicano Coordinating Council on Higher Education, 1969). The *Plan* states

Chicanos need to take control of the program and not the university. It is to be administered and taught by Chicanos [and] universities must be a major instrument in the liberation of the Chicano community: education, research, and public service (p. 14).

According to Juan Gómez-Quiñones and Irene Vásquez (2014), during the implementation of Chicana/o Studies Programs in higher education, programs suffered from lack of resources like university funding and internal factors like Mexican American administrators who were “lacking integrity or perception necessary to strengthen Chicana and Chicano Studies programs. They collaborated with senior administrators to subvert programs” (p. 176).

Although Chicano Studies Programs and bilingual education were being implemented, Chicanas and Chicanos also began to create alternatives schooling in K -12 during the late 1960s and early 1970s. Gómez-Quiñones and Vásquez (2014) state that,

Owing to a sense of responsibility to the younger generation, Chicanas and Chicanos established alternative schools that offered a critical point of departure in K-12 education. These schools made possible for children entering public schools to be free of damages inflicted by discriminatory attitudes and approaches. The failure to mainstream institutions to educationally elevate many Chicana and Chicano youth has potent social, economic, and political consequences. The high “push-out” rates and limited college attendance rates of Chicano youth underscored the negative outcomes of existing K-12 public education (179).

These alternative schools varied in approach, organization and level of schooling. For example, many community organizers were also attempting to start pre-schools and elementary schools that would provide a culturally relevant education for younger children. One elementary school was *Tlatelolco: Plaza de Tres Culturas* located in Denver, Colorado. This elementary school was one of the most successful with curriculum and numbers of alumni. However, the pre-schools

and elementary schools were not successful and were shut down due to cancellation of funding and for “non compliance” to government standards. Another short-lived Chicana and Chicano established school was Antonio José Martínez, established in the early 1970 in Las Vegas, New Mexico.

The movement toward Chicana and Chicano operated schools also influenced the development of institutions of higher education that served specifically Chicana and Chicano students, as well as other Students of Color. Here again, a major impetus in the creation of alternative educational models, was the implementation of culturally relevant education. Other alternative schools were created in higher education like; *Colegio Jacinto Treviño* in Mercedes, Texas; *La Universidad de Aztlán* in Fresno, California; *Juarez-Lincoln* in Mercedes, Texas; *Colegio César Chávez* in Mount Angel, Oregon; and *Deganawidah-Quetzalcoatl University* (D-QU) in Davis, California. Although Chicana/o Studies has come a long way by offering post-baccalaureate degrees, departments and programs continue to struggle with similar issues of funding an administrative support that their earlier precursor alternative schools faced in the 1960s and 1970s (Gómez-Quiñones and Vásquez, 2014).

Similar to Gómez-Quiñones and Vásquez, *The Making of Chicana/o Studies: In the Trenches of Academe* by Rodolfo F. Acuña (2011) focuses on the creation and development of Chicana/o Studies and Programs. This book provides detailed information on how Chicana/o Studies Departments and Programs have struggled to remain open and serve their students. However, an important theme of this book is the activism by students, community, faculty, and staff that takes place to keep Chicana/o Studies open. Acuña demonstrates specific attacks on Chicana/o Studies, but also shows how activists have always been significant in maintaining Chicana/o Studies open and active.

Acuña states “Chicana/o Studies has survived because of Chicana/o and Latina/o students, not because of the vision of the academy” (p. 191). This statement demonstrates that Chicana/o Studies has been build upon student and community struggle and has never been fully supported by academe. This book also demonstrates that Chicana/o Studies is a field that must remain connected to students and community, for its survival depends on it. Acuña’s work is important to this study because it provides a complete historical context of the creation and development of Chicana/o Studies, but most importantly, it demonstrates how Chicanas and Chicanos have always been involved in creating and maintaining their educational rights.

Culturally Relevant Education

Some studies on culturally relevant education by Chicana, Chicano and African American scholars focus on literacy, caring of teachers, the impact on students, and language (Acuña, 2009; Fránquiz, and de la Luz Reyes, 1998; Gay, 2010; Howard, 2001a and b; Vásquez, 2005). Although much of the literature on culturally relevant education focuses on the K-12 educational system, these works can still be applied towards higher education.

Reynaldo F. Macías’ (1974) article focuses on the education of younger children and is one of the early scholars to label Chicana/o Studies as a “culturally relevant education” for Chicanos.¹¹ Although scholars of the 1960s and 1970s viewed Chicana/o Studies as culturally relevant education (as demonstrated in *El Plan de Santa Bárbara*), the term “culturally relevant education” is not used to describe Chicana/o education. Macías also states that educational systems should include bilingual education as a way of having culturally relevant education for Chicanos. However, educational institutions often times used bilingual education as a way of Americanizing student into Anglo culture. Macías argues that in order to provide a culturally relevant education for Chicanos and liberate them from oppression, educational institutions

¹¹ Author uses the word “Chicano” in reference to the Chicana and Chicano community.

should have a different philosophy of education, methodology, curriculum, and organizational goals. For example, the overall approach to developing a culturally relevant curriculum for Chicanos should consist of the following four categories:

1) student/learner; 2) family; 3) community/neighborhood and 4) state/nation/world (or inter-community/neighborhood) [and the] thrust of a program would be determined by levels 1 and 2 in order to be *culturally relevant*. In other words, if a classroom was composed of Chicanos, Blacks and Asian, then they (and their families) would be primary sources for the curriculum. A secondary source for the curriculum would be the community/neighborhood (p. 124).

Macías emphasizes that a culturally relevant education should include family and community as contributors of education due to the social and cultural capital they hold. This serves in contrast to the American western educational system that typically does not view family and community as transformational agents in student's education (Yosso, 2005).

Although there is presently a small body of literature that examines Chicana/o Studies using the terms "culturally relevant education," scholars continue to view Chicana/o Studies as a field that provides Chicanas and Chicanos with a transformational education. For example, Aída Hurtado (2005) highlights how Chicana/o Studies is transformative for both students and scholars and leads to change in Chicana/o communities. Hurtado states that,

One of the greatest contributions made by Chicana/o Studies is the focus, from the very beginning, on the lives of poor, working-class, Chicana/os. Scholars in Chicana/o Studies have consistently focused on poor Chicana/o families with the lens of survival and empowerment rather than deficiency. By providing an 'insider's' view of the *barrio*, poor Chicana/os became acting subjects capable of agency in the midst of racist and classist oppression (p. 188).

Hurtado demonstrates that Chicana/o Studies continue to have a transformative purpose that seeks change for Chicana and Chicano students.

Julio Cammarota and Augustine Romero (2009) also emphasize how a culturally relevant education is transformative in the lives of Chicanas and Chicanos. For example, the Social Justice in Education Program (SJEP) for "at risk" youth provides young people with an

education they can culturally relate. Cammarota and Romero highlight the social justice approaches towards education and provide narratives of students and the change they experienced due to a culturally relevant education. For example, the youth were able to see the disparities that existed in their communities, collect data, and present it to various groups such as school administrators. This culturally relevant education served as a motivational tool for students to continue their education and take pride in themselves as human beings.

As mentioned earlier, another example of culturally relevant education for Chicanas and Chicanos is bilingual education. Bilingual education brought many changes to Chicana and Chicano students at all educational levels. Bilingual education gave students access to an education that took their culture and language into consideration and therefore they experienced positive educational outcomes in their education (Acuña, 2011; Gutiérrez 1994 and 2010). For instance, María E. Fránquiz and María de la Luz Reyes (1998) argue that Spanish-speaking students are most likely to participate in classroom activities when their native language is viewed as valuable. In order for students to participate fully in classroom activities, the teacher must also demonstrate that he/she values the student's language and culture. In their study, Fránquiz and de la Luz Reyes state that

Teacher's explicit invitation for Margarita to use her own linguistic resources not only legitimized Spanish as an appropriate vehicle for learning, but provided an opportunity for a linguistically diverse learner to be a competent member and more "expert other" within an English lesson. By being accepted as the more knowledgeable other, Margarita is also more likely to participate in subsequent lessons. Such acts of inclusion can have a very powerful and cumulative effect on learning, if they become part of an on-going pattern of classroom life (p. 213-214).

The positive effects of bilingual education are very much a part of a culturally relevant education. Like Chicana/o Studies, bilingual education must incorporate positive pedagogical practices by teachers in order to have students fully engaged in their schooling.

Thus far the literature on Chicana/o Studies as a culturally relevant education is limited; there is a greater amount of literature that focuses on African Americans and culturally relevant education. I draw from African American literature since Chicana, Chicano, and African American education have similar social and historical experiences. For example, Howard (2001a) focuses on four teachers and their culturally relevant pedagogy towards African American students. A main component of this article shows how culturally relevant curriculum reverses the process of school failure. The classroom observations and teacher interviews reveals that teachers must be able to understand the culture and background of African American students in order to have them academically succeed. All teachers in this study believed their students can succeed, therefore demonstrating that both curriculum and pedagogy must co-exist to produce positive effects on Students of Color. Howard (2001b) states that students improve their academics when “1) teachers display caring bonds and attitudes toward students; 2) teachers established community and family-type classroom environments, and 3) teachers who made learning an entertaining and fun process” (p. 131). This study demonstrates that students succeed in a school climate where teachers care about their students, honor their students’ family and cultural background, and proactively engage students in the learning process.

Ladson-Billings (1992) focuses on teachers’ practices of literacy in student academic success. In this study, Ladson- Billings demonstrates that students were encouraged to take on leadership roles in the classroom with activities and discussion. One important section is “what can be learned by a culturally relevant teacher” (p. 386) and is as follows:

- 1) students who are at a disadvantage become leaders in the classroom;
- 2) students learn as a community;
- 3) students lived experiences are part of the curriculum;
- 4) teachers and students dictate what counts as literacy and
- 5) teachers and students go against the grain when it comes to “status quo” within education (p. 387).

This article reinforces the notion that a supportive environment combined with literary materials that affirm student lived experiences create an environment where students are more likely to succeed. Again, for Students of Color, quality teacher and student relations built upon the foundations of a culturally relevant curriculum, produce meaningful learning experiences that can result in positive educational attainment.

In “The Academic and Social Values of Ethnic Studies” (2011), Christine E. Sleeter also discusses the important role Ethnic Studies plays on students and their education. Sleeter states, “Ethnic Studies can be understood as a counter to the traditional mainstream curriculum” (p. 1) therefore, this review is important because it provides the reader with an understanding of culturally relevant curriculum and its impact on Students of Color in K- in middle schools, high schools and universities. Since most studies on culturally relevant education concentrate on elementary students, Sleeter is able to provide the reader with studies conducted at the university level and with Chicanas and Chicanos. A study within Sleeter’s review by Jessica M. Vasquez (2005), examines how eighteen Chicano college students become engaged in a classroom environment where topics underscore their lived experience, such as immigration, labor, poverty, and Catholicism. The students reported to have “developed a sense of community based on recognition of similar experiences and hardships... Chicano literature prompted feelings of ethnic and personal affirmation, confidence, empowerment, and finally occupying the place of ‘insider’ in an academic institution” (p. 13). Vasquez’s study demonstrates how having a curriculum that students can relate to allows students to feel as if they are part of the university and therefore, their lived experiences matter in society.

Sleeter’s research review is a significant because it provides examples of the role a culturally relevant education plays on the academic success of Students of Color and concludes that,

Research shows that well-designed and well-taught ethnic studies curricula have positive academic and social outcomes for students of color and the curricula are designed and taught somewhat differently depending on the ethnic composition of the students and the subsequent experience they bring... [and] that ethnic studies teachers must be able to relate well with their students, believe in student's academic abilities, and know ethnic studies content and perspectives well (p. 20).

Another significant study that ties positive outcomes to curriculum and pedagogy is by Yolanda Sealey-Ruiz (2007). Sealey-Ruiz focuses on African American adult women and their responses towards a culturally relevant education and pedagogy in a classroom setting. Like Romero and Cammarota, one of the main arguments is that a curriculum must connect students with their life and humanity in order to be transformational. The purpose of this article is to examine the significance of education on African American adult women in a freshman composition class and to inform educators about how and why students learn the way they do. The theoretical framework and methodology guiding this article are culturally relevant curriculum and Black Feminist Thought. Black Feminist Thought provides women with a voice and ability to see that they do in fact matter in society, which allows them to deconstruct negative stereotypes that affect their daily lives. Using Black Feminist Thought allows for women to bring in their community experiences into an educational setting. Hence, Sealey-Ruiz concludes by stating that "African American adult women used writing and class discussion to assess knowledge about themselves" (p. 58). Sealey-Ruiz also states that culture makes "our" experiences as people and that those experiences are part of decisions and actions individuals take to improve the quality of their life. This quality of life is one that includes education, family, and society.

Sealey-Ruiz demonstrates that a culturally relevant curriculum finds value in students' lives, culture, and history and has positive effects on African American woman. This study demonstrates that teachers who practice "caring and sharing" as part of their pedagogy,

contribute to the importance of positive transformation and trustworthy outcomes with students. One of the strengths of this article is that the author uses her personal experiences with students to create a safe and nurturing space in the classroom, where students freely discuss issues of sexism, racism, and classism.

Overall, this literature review demonstrates that a culturally relevant curriculum must include positive pedagogical practices and include community. Teachers who care about the learning environment of students and who affirm community and cultural lived experiences through culturally relevant curriculum or materials experience success with their students and in the classroom. Whether Chicana, Chicano, or African American, having teachers that care and a strong curriculum that Students of Color can relate to, is one that leads students towards educational and life transformation because it reaffirms their cultural value and knowledge. An academic environment that encourages students to feel that their individual and collective experiences matter in the classroom are more likely to feel empowered by and are more likely to engage positively in the learning process.

Theoretical Framework

This section discusses the theoretical frameworks that are used to answer the overall research questions of this study. Theoretical lenses of race, class, and gender are integral in informing this study. Therefore, the theories utilized will be a combination of Critical Theory (CRT), Chicana Feminism, Chicana Feminist Epistemology, and Pedagogies of the Home. These theories cover numerous ideas but I focus on the parts that are relevant towards curriculum, pedagogy, and learning amongst Chicana/o Studies and its students. This section begins with a brief description of race, racism in the U.S., Critical Race Theory and its origins, and the five tenets and Critical Race Theory. The next section consists of Chicana Feminism, Chicana Epistemology, and Pedagogies of the Home followed by an explanation on the application of

each theory and finally ending with an overall conclusion on the theoretical frameworks for this study.

Race

Race has played an important part in the formation of the United States and continues to hinder social equality, which requires scholars to analyze its function in the past and present. As a socially constructed idea, race has rationalized white superiority and People of Color's inferiority. As a result, power was held and distributed by White Anglo Saxon heterosexual males and denied People of Color access to civil rights and citizenship (Omni and Winant, 1994). Omni and Winant (1994) demonstrate that race has been classified since the formation of this country in order to maintain power over the oppressed. Like Omi and Winant, Yosso (2001) also demonstrates that "race is a socially constructed category, created to differentiate groups based primarily on skin color, phenotype, ethnicity, and culture for the purpose of showing the superiority or dominance of one's group over another" (p. 5). CRT scholar Haney López (1994) explains that race is a fabrication used as a method of keeping a societal structural of hierarchies that often times includes class and gender relations. By using a race and racism lens in examining education, one can see how race and racism has been an instrumental tool in negating educational rights to People of Color in order to maintain a racial hierarchy that is in effect in society and institutions.

Racism

The implications of a racial hierarchy in the United States rooted in racial constructs of white superiority are multifaceted and permeate government institutions. Educational institutions reflect these trends in racial classification, which result in institutional racism. For example, Solórzano & Solórzano (1995) demonstrate how Chicano students lack educational resources and often times have negatives stereotypes in textbooks. Solórzano & Solórzano also

demonstrate that Chicano students are at a disadvantage during their education simply because the community they live in (predominantly minority) lack necessary resources for Chicana and Chicano academic achievement. The educational obstacles Chicana and Chicano students face demonstrate how segregation and lack of resources function to uphold socially constructed racial hierarchies. The resultant racism, thus, forms part of educational institutions' practice and the subsequent lack of educational attainment by Students of Color.

Solórzano and Solórzano (1995) findings correlate with Yosso's (2001) definition of racism that states, "racism, - the systematic oppression of People of Color- privileges whites... white privilege is a system of advantage resulting from the legacy of racism and benefiting individuals and groups based on the notion of whiteness" (p. 5). Racism is the functioning outcome of white supremacy in order to maintain power structures. One must again look into the history of the United States and the law to trace the roots of racism. CRT offers ways in which race and racism can be challenged by acknowledging that racism exists and remains a large part of today's society. Although People of Color have gained some civil rights, racism continues to be a function of politics and government. For example, Proposition 227 voted into law in California specifically targets Latinos and prohibits them from attaining a bilingual education (Gutiérrez, Asato, Santos and Gotanda, 2010). The association of the Spanish language to immigrant Mexicans in the U.S. demonstrates the racist underlining and white supremacy is imbedded in California Proposition 227. Other current issues of racism people face are issues of immigration that restrict people from continuing their education and gain social capital. By using a critical race theory lens, one is able to apply the role of race and racism both historically and presently.

Critical Race Theory and its Origins

Critical Race Theory (CRT) originated from the fields of Ethnic Studies and the Law during the late 1980s by Scholars of Colors who were examining and challenging racist practices in the legal system and the United States. After feeling like issues of race and racism were not discussed in Critical Legal studies, law scholars formed a space where their stories/ narratives as People of Color were acknowledged which resulted in Critical Race Theory. Critical Race Theory now has branched out to many disciplines such as, Ethnic Studies, Women Studies, Latina/o Critical Theory (LatCrit), FemCrit, TribalCrit, AsianCrit, and many more. Yosso (2006) explains that LatCrit “brought a Chicana/o, Latina/o consciousness to CRT in examining racialized layers of subordination based in immigrant status, culture, language, phenotype, sexuality, accent, and surname” (p. 6-7). LatCrit is an important part of CRT because it allows scholars to examine the intersectionalities that Chicana/o Latina/o population faces due to historical oppression such as conquest by both Spanish European and Anglo Saxon Peoples. With the many areas in CRT, education scholars have been able to use CRT as a framework to analyze racism in educational institutions.

The Five Tenets of Critical Race Theory

In *Critical Race Counterstories Along the Chicana/Chicano Educational Pipeline*, Tara Yosso identifies five tenets of CRT as follow:

The first tenet is the *Intercentricity of Race and Racism*, which states that “race and racism is endemic and permanent in the United States [and] a discussion on race within CRT begins with an examination of how race has been socially constructed in U. S. history and how the system of racism functions to oppress People of Color while privileging whites. A CRT analyses in education centralizes race and racism, while also focusing on racisms’ intersections with other forms of subordination, based on gender, class, sexuality, language, culture,

immigration status, phenotype, accent, and surname” (p. 7-8). Chicanas and Chicanos like many People of Color have been directly impacted by race and racism. Using this tenet in this study helps examine how the curriculum in Chicana/o Studies assists students understand race and racism.

The second tenet is the *Challenge to Dominant Ideology*, which Yosso argues “traditional claims of race neutrality and objectivity act as a camouflage for self-interest power and privileged of dominant groups in U.S. society. A CRT framework in education challenges claims that educational system offers objectivity, meritocracy, color blindness, race neutrality, and equal opportunity. A critical race praxis (practice informed by CRT) questions approaches to schooling that pretend to be neutral or standardized while implicitly privileging whites, U.S.-born, monolingual, English speaking- students” (p. 7-8). Using this tenet in this study examines how curriculum in Chicana/o Studies challenges the dominant views of Chicanas and Chicanos in society and educational institutions.

The third tenet of CRT is a *Commitment to Social Justice* that “is dedicated to advancing social justice agenda in schools and society. Acknowledging schools as political places and teaching as a political act. Critical Race Theory views education as a tool of eliminating all forms of subordination and empower oppressed groups-to transform society” (p. 7-8). This tenet is used to examine how students in Chicana/o Studies have a commitment to social justice and to demonstrate how it is applied in their educational and career goals.

The fourth tenet is the *Centrality of Experiential Knowledge*, where CRT “finds the experiential knowledge of People of Color is legitimate, appropriate, and critical to understanding, analyzing, and teaching about racial subordination. Critical race research in education views thus knowledge as a strength and draws explicitly on the lived experiences of

Students of Color by analyzing “data,” including oral traditions, *corridos*¹², poetry, film, *actos*¹³, and humor. Critical Race Theory scholars may also teach or present research findings in unconventional and creative ways, through storytelling, chronicles, scenarios, narratives, and parables.” This tenet is used to examine how Chicana/o Studies curriculum and pedagogy coexist in creating a transformational education that takes students knowledge into account inside and outside of a classroom setting.

The fifth tenet is an *Interdisciplinary Perspective*, where CRT “analyses racism, classism, sexism, and homophobia from a historical and interdisciplinary perspective...CRT goes beyond disciplinary boundaries drawing on multiple methods to listen to and learn from those acknowledges otherwise silenced by popular discourse and academic research” (p. 7-8). This tenet is used in analyzing how curriculum on history, language, culture, sexuality, homophobia, and gender impacts students. This tenet also serves to examine how students use the interdisciplinary knowledge gathered in Chicana/o Studies for their educational and career goals.

Chicana Feminism

Chicana feminisms developed as a result of the Civil Rights Movements and inequality facing People of Color, specifically Chicana gendered experiences. Chicanas developed their own type of feminisms that set them apart from the Chicano Movement and the White Women’s Movement and focused strictly on societal-gendered inequalities affecting them as Chicanas. Chicanas were not only fighting for the equality amongst the sexes, but against racial oppression by Whites. Chicanas then formed their own support system and coalitions that would assist them in the fight against racism, sexism, classism, and issues of inequality (Nieto Gómez, 1976; Ruiz, 1998).

¹² Mexican songs that have been used over the years to tell a story as a form of oral history/tradition.

¹³ Acting pieces that were used to tell stories during the 1960s by the United Farm Workers.

According to Bañuelos (2006) Chicana feminisms can assist Chicanas during their education due to past experiences of sexism, racism, and classism within academia and their culture. These experiences allow Chicanas to create research that is often times a benefit to themselves, community, and family. Often times Chicanas' research, questions the daily oppression, resulting in a personal connection to their research. Bañuelos (2006) also states that Chicana feminisms have taught Chicana students how to fight present oppression by looking at history and the struggle for equality. The consciousness acquired by Chicana students allows them to resist current academic oppression and continue to build support systems with other students in educational settings. Using a Chicana feminist framework, examines the gendered experiences of both female and male participants at CSUMV. This framework is also used to examine how students relate to the Chicana/o Studies curriculum and pedagogical practices.

Chicana Feminist Epistemology

Delgado Bernal (1998) explains that Chicana feminist epistemology is rooted in the social, cultural, and historical experiences of Chicanas. Like Chicana feminisms, Chicana feminist epistemology uses the knowledge of culture, language, race, class, sex, and immigration to describe the ways in which knowledge is gathered and maintained. The knowledge gathered through culture is what teaches Chicanas survival skills when dealing with issues of patriarchy, classism, and racism. Chicana feminist epistemology does not follow norms of western institutions and acknowledges the various life aspects of Chicanas. This epistemology is then a tool that is used in navigating the education system. Chicana feminist epistemology teaches students skills that are vital to their survival. Historian Viki Ruiz (1998) explains that Chicanas use methods of *Comadrazgo* (sisterhood) to “rely on one another for mutual support” (p. 6) as ways of sharing knowledge and caring for one another. The epistemology used by Chicanas in-route towards their college degree is often times not validated as a form of knowledge, but it is a

major part of culture and can create a unique bond between Chicanas in academia. *Comadrazgo* offers Chicanas an opportunity to work parallel with each other as a survival tactic in environments like educational institutions. Chicana feminist epistemology is then used to center the knowledge students bring to academia and how it is used in assisting participants in navigating their educational institution.

Overall, the theoretical framework of CRT, Chicana feminism and Chicana feminist epistemology are used to examine the educational and personal experiences of Chicanas and Chicanos in Chicana/o Studies. My research on Chicanas and Chicanos in higher education aims to apply and understand the effects that Chicana/o Studies has on the educational attainment and success of students in higher education.

Chapter 3

Methodology

Introduction

In this chapter I discuss the methodology that I undertook to complete this study. I begin with an explanation of the research questions guiding this study, followed by a discussion on my positionality as a researcher. Next, I discuss the participant selection and the data collection process. Finally, this chapter ends with a discussion of the data analyses using interview memos, a thesaurus, and index of codes.

Research Questions

This study will add to the limited research that exists on the impact of culturally relevant education on Chicanas and Chicanos in higher education. The research questions guiding the methodology of this study are (1) *How does culturally relevant curriculum like Chicana/o Studies impact the educational experiences of Chicana and Chicano students?* and (2) *How does a culturally relevant pedagogy impact the educational experiences of Chicana and Chicano students?*

Positionality as Researcher

As a college student, I majored in Chicana/o Studies hence my scholarly inquiry on culturally relevant education development. The connection I have with Chicana/o Studies is what Maxine Baca Zinn (1979) and Christina Chavez (2008) refer to as the “insider positionality.” An insider positionality is one that gives the researcher special access to the field or people she/he is working with. This special access usually refers to Researches of Color that are working within Communities of Color. According to Baca Zinn (1979) the researchers’ ethnicity, gender, and or class can be considered to have “insider positionality” because the researcher has a better understanding of what Communities of Color experience.

Although some researchers believe that being an insider creates problems of subjectivity for the researcher, Baca Zinn (1979) and Chavez (2008) argue the contrary. Chavez (2008) states that “insiders have unique methodological advantages in the research process [and that] their closeness and familiarity to the group provided a nuanced and unique insight about underrepresented and colonized groups to which they belonged” (p. 476). Therefore, my positionality as a researcher who is familiar with Chicana/o Studies has allowed for richer and detailed data from participants due age, gender, and racial characteristics we share with one another (Baca Zinn, M., 1979; Irvine, F., Roberts, G., Bradbury-Jones, C. 2008).

Participant Recruitment

The recruitment process took place via a verbal communications, emails, department list-serve, and recommendations from participants. I also used a snowball sampling methodology as an attempt to gather an equal representation of female and male students, but due to the higher proportion of females enrolled in higher education, the female participants are represented at higher rates than male participants. The participant selection is based on three principal criteria:

- Must have attained a baccalaureate degree (major or minor) in Chicana/o Studies from California State University, MarVista
- Must have attended California State University, MarVista from 2005-2012
- Must identify as Chicana/Chicano, Latina/Latino, or Mexican American

Table 3.1 demonstrates the total participant selection based on gender, major, and minor.

Table 3.1: Selection of Participants

Gender	Majors	Minors	Total Amount
Females	14	2	16
Males	8	1	9
	<i>Total Majors</i> 22	<i>Total Minors</i> 3	<i>Total Amount of Participants</i> 25

Data Collection

Oral Interviews

The data collection consists of twenty-five recorded individual interviews of 1.5 - 2.0 hours long. I interviewed sixteen females and nine males that majored or minored in Chicana/o Studies. Chicana/o Studies at CSUMV has more majors than minors, therefore the amount of majors interviewed will be greater than the amount of minors. I have chosen to interview both majors and minors because both groups have committed to a certain amount of classes in declaring as a major or minor. Although participants who majored in Chicana/o Studies took more classes, those who minored are still required to take core courses within the field, therefore, both groups of participants have common knowledge. During the interviews, I probed for detailed information regarding their background, curriculum impact, pedagogical practices inside and outside of a classroom setting along with student support.

*Data Analysis*¹⁴

The data analyses for this study took place in various stages of the research. Table 3.2 for interview memos was created immediately after each the interview was conducted to capture specific themes prior to transcribing the interview along with questions and ideas. These memos also served as a general summary and guidance prior to the transcription. A major benefit in writing interview memos was that it allowed me to immediately reflect on the interviews and to assist me in the data analyses along with developing codes, categories and themes that may be used to further analyze the data (Bodgan and Biklen, 2003).

Table 3.2: Example of Interview Memo

Summary	Statements	Questions
Participant discussed cultural pride when reading Chicana and Mexican literature for the first time.	This demonstrates that participant had never read Chicana and Mexican literature before college and is experiencing a curriculum that is culturally relevant.	Can this information be used as a curriculum code and/or transformation?

Once the interview memos were completed, the interviews were transcribed, coded, and analyzed. However, prior to the transcription, I listened to the entire interview and created strategies for organizing codes based on themes that emerged during the listening process. Coding data allowed me to structure information into sections that correlate to themes derived from the research questions (Maxwell, 2005). For example, some of codes I created pertained to curriculum and pedagogy as seen on Table 3.3. For the interview transcriptions, I used codes and applied them to the particular sections and themes of the interview.

¹⁴ The following data analysis section and the use of tables were taken from a class taught by Professor Kris. D. Gutiérrez on fieldwork methodology.

Table 3.3: Example of Thesaurus

ID#	Code	Definition	Exemplar
1.	Curriculum (CURR)	Material read in class, lecture, and/or group work	“The Chicana literature book I read was an important part of my identity”
2.	Pedagogy (PED)	Ways in which the professor delivered material or interacted with students inside and outside of the classroom	“The professor was really good at breaking down the story for us” “The professor really mentored us outside of the classroom”
3.	Support Systems (SS)	This can be family, colleagues, friends, and can be on or off campus support systems	“My classmates were very helpful and we support each other by motivating one another”

The next table (Table 3.4) demonstrates specific codes that were used in coding the interview transcriptions. For example, some codes such as curriculums, pedagogy, were used as a way of connecting data to the overall research questions of this study and to the interview transcriptions.

Table 3.4: Example of Index of Codes by Themes

IN. (Interview)
 PG. (Page)
 LI. (Line)
 OC. (Observer Comments)

Example: IN1.2.3 = IN 1, PG 2, LI 3

Example: OC. 1.2.3 = OC1, PG2, LI

ID#	CODE	LOCATION
1.	Curriculum (CURR)	IN2.8.175-176 IN3.3.3.66 IN3.5.127 IN3.6.142
1a.	Pedagogy (PED)	IN4.2.25 IN6.1.23 IN.2.32 IN6.6.129 IN6.11.248

Overall, the above data collection process, analyses, and use of tables for the twenty-five oral interviews, facilitated the writing of the findings. Creating codes that helped put data into themes was an essential part in finding and creating sections pertaining to curriculum as discussed in Chapter Four and pedagogy as discussed in Chapter Five.

Chapter 4 “I wanted to learn more!”: Learning and Living Chicana/o Studies Curriculum

I fell in love with Chicana/o Studies. I was really inspired by the authors I was introduced to and it made me a more passionate student about school and my life. This lead me to get more involved in school politics and demand reform.
-Celia Mares

Introduction

Chicana/o Studies at California State University, MarVista (CSUMV) is a relatively small department in comparison to other Chicana/o Studies Departments throughout the nation. Nonetheless, this chapter answers research question number one- how does culturally relevant curriculum like Chicana/o Studies impact the educational experiences of Chicana and Chicano students? I answer this question by using primary sources of twenty-five interviews with Chicana/o Studies alumni. Therefore, in this chapter I begin with a brief description on the (1) *participants' background*, (2) *sus historias* followed by some thematic findings from participant interview findings on (3) *Coming Across Chicana/o Studies for the First Time*, (4) *Chicana/o Studies Curriculum Impact and Learning about Inequalities*, (5) *Chicana/o Studies and Personal Learning*, (6) *Chicana/o Studies and Baccalaureate Attainment*, (7) *Chicana/o Studies and the Present*, (8) *Chicana/o Studies and Future Aspirations*, and finally end with a brief conclusion.

Participants' Background

The twenty-five participants in this study are diverse in many ways such as gender (sixteen females and nine males), age (early-twenties to mid-thirties), educational background (attended community college and double majors), graduation years (2005 to 2012), and whether they were attending or attended professional or graduate school during the time of the interviews. Tables 4.1 and 4.2 provide more specific information for each participant:

Table 4.1: Female Participant Background

Participants	Age	Attended Community College	CCS Major or Minor	Other Major	Year Graduated	Post-Bac. Education	Occupation During Interview
Rebecca Avelar	24	No	Minor	Political Science	2011	No	Working at Law Firm
Conchita Blanca	31	Yes	Major	Spanish	2007	Yes Teaching Credentials	High School Spanish Teacher
Yolicia Esqueda	34	Yes	Major	None	2006	No	Non-Profit Latina/o Community Center
Maya Flores	23	No	Major	None	2012	Yes M.A.	Working on M.A. in Chicana/o Studies
Estrella García	35	Yes	Major	Liberal Arts	2007	Yes M.A.	Special Education Teacher
Paloma López	30	Yes	Minor	History	2006	Yes Ph.D.	Working on Ph.D. in History
Yumey López	23	No	Major	Studio Art	2012	No	Looking for Employment
Connie Madrigal	30	No	Major	None	2009	No	Waiting to begin MSW Program
Adelita Magón	32	Yes	Major	None	2007	Yes M.S.W.	Social Worker in Hospital
Celia Mares	30	No	Major	Political Science	2008	Yes J.D.	Studying for the Bar Exam
Rosmeri Martínez	32	Yes	Minor	Social Science	2005	No	Early Education Non-Profit Organization
Elisa Miranda	25	Yes	Major	None	2010	Yes M.S.W.	Non-Profit Community Center
Rose Ríos	24	No	Major	Kinesiology	2012	No	Looking for Employment
Guadalupe Valencia	29	No	Major	Psychology	2007	Yes M.A.	Assistant Director of a University Latina/o Center
Rosita Villa	28	No	Major	Spanish	2010	No	Elementary School Aid and Tutor
Lluvia Zapata	29	No	Major	Spanish	2005	Yes Ph.D.	Working on Ph.D. in Spanish

Table 4.2: Male Participant Background

Participants	Age	Attended Comm-unity College	CCS Major Minor	Other Major	Year Gradu-Ated	Post-Bac. Education	Occupation During Interview
Alex Calvario	23	No	Major	None	2012	No	Service Industry while applying for Graduate School in Counseling
Pablo Cruz	24	No	Major	Digital Media Arts	2012	No	Private Tutor
Juan Diego	27	Yes	Major	None	2011	No	Private Tutor
Hipólito Gómez	21	No	Major	English	2012	Yes	Taking Pre-Requisites for M.A. in Linguistics
Tito López	23	No	Minor	Music	2012	No	Musician and Music Teacher
Joaquín Murrieta	26	No	Major	History	2012	Yes M.A.	Working on M.A. in American Studies
David Ortega	30	No	Major	None	2006	Yes	Working on Pre-Requisites for a Doctor's Assistance Program
Eztli Rojas	23	No	Major	None	2012	Yes M.A.	Working on M.A. in Latin American Studies
Tlaotani Sandoval	42	Yes	Major	None	2010	No	Health Care Administrator at a Hospital

Table 4.1 and 4.2 demonstrate the differences and similarities between participants. For example, out of the sixteen female participants, seven attended community college, three were minors and thirteen were majors, nine attended or were attending a post-baccalaureate program, and two were unemployed while the rest worked in various fields such as education, social work, and the law. The male participants also demonstrate similarities with female participants. For example, out of nine male participants, two attended community college, one was a minor and eight were majors, three attended or were attending a post-baccalaureate program, and all were employed in similar fields as female participants. The tables above demonstrate however a

disparity among those attending a post-baccalaureate program, hence the amount of females attending post-baccalaureate programs is 56% while male participants is 33%. This disparity amongst Chicanas and Chicanos continues to be a problem within higher education. Therefore it is important to examine how Chicana/o Studies curriculum assists participants during their college education and post-baccalaureate.

Sus Historias

Like many people in the United States, the participants have migration stories. All of the participants' parents migrated to the U.S. in hopes of attaining a better quality of life and future for their families. Most participants were first in their families to be born in the United States, first to attend college, and first to obtain a baccalaureate degree (with a few of the participants having older siblings with a baccalaureate degree-see Table 4.3). Twenty-three families migrated from various parts of México with the exception of two families migrating from Centro América (Guatemala and El Salvador). Although two of the participants are from Centroamérica, they have grown up in predominantly Mexican communities where they too experience social inequalities and therefore, like all other participants, identify with being Chicana and Chicano. Regardless of country of origin, all participants share similar migration stories in that none of their parents had the opportunity to pursue an education beyond elementary or high school in their home countries, yet all of the parents instilled the significance of attaining baccalaureate and post-baccalaureate education to all participants.

Table 4.3: Female Ethnicity, Birthplace, and Education Background

Female Participants	Ethnicity & Birth Place	First to Obtain a B.A.
Rebecca Avelar	Mexican U.S. Born	Yes
Conchita Blanca	Mexican México Born	Yes
Yolicia Esqueda	Mexican U.S. Born	Yes
Maya Flores	Mexican U.S. Born	Yes
Estrella Garcia	Mexican U.S. Born	Yes
Paloma Lopez	Mexican U.S. Born	Yes
Yumey Lopez	Mexican U.S. Born	No
Connie Madrigal	Mexican U.S. Born	Yes
Adelita Magón	Mexican U.S. Born	Yes
Celia Mares	Mexican U.S. Born	Yes
Rosmeri Martínez	Guatemalan Guatemala Born	No
Elisa Miranda	Mexican U.S. Born	Yes
Rose Ríos	Mexican U.S. Born	Yes
Guadalupe Valencia	Mexican U.S. Born	Yes
Rosita Villa	Mexican U.S. Born	Yes
Lluvia Zapata	Mexican U.S. Born	No

Table 4.4: Male Ethnicity, Birthplace, and Education Background

Male Participants	Ethnicity & Birth Place	First to Obtain a B.A.
Alex Calvario	Mexican U.S. Born	Yes
Pablo Cruz	Mexican U.S. Born	Yes
Juan Diego	Mexican U.S. Born	Yes
Hipólito Gómez	Mexican U.S. Born	Yes
Tito López	Mexican U.S. Born	No
Joaquín Murrieta	Mexican U.S. Born	Yes
David Ortega	Salvadorian U.S. Born	Yes
Eztli Rojas	Mexican U.S. Born	Yes
Tlaotani Sandoval	Mexican U.S. Born	Yes

As demonstrated on Tables 4.3 and 4.4, out of the sixteen female participants, two were born outside of the U.S. and three were second in their family to receive a baccalaureate degree. Also, all nine male participants were born in the U.S., while one is the second in his family to receive a baccalaureate degree. Due to parental lack of educational opportunities, those participants with older siblings with a baccalaureate education received academic guidance from older siblings. Experiencing a lack of educational and employment opportunities, forced the participants' parents to leave their native countries. Migrating to the United States and leaving loved ones behind was not an easy decision and often times a difficult journey to make. However, for some participants, migrating to the United States was a matter of life or death. The following *historias* of migration are some exemplars of the types of hardships participants' families underwent while migrating to the United States. For example, Rosmeri and David's

family were fleeing warfare in the early 1980s that took over El Salvador and consequently affecting the ability to live in a secure place. David explains,

The Guerra Civil of El Salvador was a horrifying experience for so many people and literally forced my mother to leave our home and country so that we can be in a safer environment. My mother did not want to leave, but what choice did she have while living in the middle of a war, in poverty, and lack of jobs and education?

David's family migration story is unfortunately common for many people. Similar to David's experience, Paloma's mother was fleeing México and poverty while undergoing tremendous pain, yet with bravery and determination. Paloma's states the following regarding her mother's journey into the U.S.,

My mother migrated with a group of people and was later separated and found herself alone with the coyote¹⁵. She was sixteen and was attacked by him who was also drunk and attempted to rape her. Although she was able to fight off her attacker at such a young age, the coyote abandoned her and she was left alone and forced to find her own way into the United States.

Like Paloma, Yumey's family migration is also one of bravery and determination. Yumey remembers the migration stories her parents and older siblings shared with her and states,

They swam through the dangerous currents of the Rio Grande, which unfortunately takes the lives of so many human beings so that we can have a better life in the U.S. I am very grateful that my parents and older siblings did this because I was able to have an education. Actually, all my siblings went to college and I doubt this would have been the case had my parents decided to stay in México.

While Yumey's family migrated through extreme measures, other participants like Conchita's family migrated with the use of passports that made it somewhat easier, but were unable to visit family in their native country once their passports expired. For example, Conchita states,

We used to go back to Tijuana and visit a lot as a child, but suddenly we stopped going. I didn't know I had become an undocumented person until I was in high school and my parents were fixing our paperwork by then.

¹⁵ Coyote is the name given to (mostly) men that "assist" undocumented people in migrating towards the United States. A coyote is paid to perform this service, but often times takes advantage of the vulnerable and undocumented immigrants in various forms such as assault, abandonment, and theft.

Similar to Conchita, Eztli also traveled back and forth from the U.S. to México and recalls “living in the U.S. and in México until finally settling in Long Beach”. Although the families of the participants settled in the U.S., they settled into communities that have historically experienced educational problems, poverty, violence, police brutality, and segregation (Escobar, 1999). Yet, in migrating into the U.S., there is hope for a better life.

The majority of the participants’ parents migrated into predominantly Mexican and African American communities in Southern California like East Los Angeles, South Central Los Angeles, South East Los Angeles, Lakewood, Long Beach and Wilmington. For some participants, growing up in communities where they were constantly policed and lacked real educational and community services, was a difficult place to grow up. Due to systematic factors such as racism and classism within their education and community, some of the participants were extremely affected. For example, some of the participants’ parents moved constantly in search of safer communities, better schools and jobs, while others had fathers or siblings who were incarcerated and consequently raised by single mothers (Alexander, 2010).

Although some participants experienced hardships in their education and community, not all participants experienced similar adversity and in fact, lived in well-off communities with better educational and community services like Lakewood. The occupations of parents varied from pastors, small business owners, cannery and factory workers, social workers, and head chefs. Regardless of the type of occupation the participants’ families had, parents encouraged them to attain a baccalaureate and a post-baccalaureate education because there was an understating in succeeding academically to avoid future hardships. In sharing a bit of the participants’ family history, my hopes are that this provides insight as to who the participants are and where they come from. Telling the family histories is significant because it demonstrates the connection that participants have with their family, country of origin, community, and also

demonstrates how participants connect their lived experiences to the curriculum within Chicana/o Studies at CSUMV.

Participants' Interviews on Curriculum

Coming Across Chicana/o Studies for the First Time

For the majority of the participants, Chicana/o Studies did not come into their lives until they were in college and Chicana/o Studies was not their original major. After taking a Chicana/o Studies class as a general education requirement and receiving positive accessible mentoring and pedagogical practices, participants became majors or minors in Chicana/o Studies. The decision of becoming a major or minor in Chicana/o Studies often times came out of the need to change something that was not satisfying their educational and human needs. Many participants felt that their previous majors such as, English, history or political science were not providing them with the essential tools to succeed academically or personally. For example, the participants felt that the curriculum outside of Chicana/o Studies was not one that was pushing them to be critical thinkers nor did the curriculum have relevancy towards their life and community. Below are some examples of the first experiences with Chicana/o Studies when asked why they decided to major or minor in Chicana/o Studies:

Adelita states,

I was originally an English major but felt no connection to it. I felt lost in the class and was sitting there not knowing anything. I started taking a GE class with Dr. Martínez and I started getting connected to my history. And I said 'wow, there's a connection here' and that is how I first became interest and started Chicana/o Studies. It was with the GE class that I started exploring my political awareness. I wanted to see where I came from and the history of my background. I was feeling no connection to my English major and then I get into this GE class and say, 'yeah, these are my people' and later on the professor starts talking about women and my connection became deeper. Right then and there, I figured out the English was the wrong thing for me and decided to major in Chicana/o Studies

Adelita demonstrates how she encounters a disconnection as an English major due to the irrelevance it provides her and how her English major negates her personal, gendered, and cultural experiences. On the other hand, Chicana/o Studies gave Adelita the opportunity to bridge curriculum and her personal lived experiences such as history, politics, gender, and ethnic background. This response also demonstrates that the personal connection to the class motivated her towards a further exploration of gender and the significance of being a Chicana within the political and historical awareness. Like Adelita, Alex shares a similar experience and states,

I was undeclared and taking my required lower division GEs and one of them was a Chicana/o Studies class while the rest were either introductions to the university or remedial math and English classes. I remember being extremely bored in my classes except for Chicana/o Studies. In this class I learned a lot about who I was and what communities like mine had to overcome just to migrate to the U.S. or to have an education...it made complete sense why I was stuck in a remedial math and English classes. I learned about inequalities and the Chicana/o Educational Pipeline and I promised myself I would not become a statistic and make it through, even though the majority of my friends had already dropped out of college by the end of our freshmen year. If it wasn't for Chicana/o Studies, I too would have dropped out. This GE class gave me hope and also something I was enjoying, not like math or English, so I declared Chicana/o Studies as my major. If it wasn't for Chicana/o Studies, I'm not sure where I would be right now.

Alex demonstrates how Chicana/o Studies provided him information he was not exposed to before and consequently was able to understand why he and his community experienced educational inequalities that push them away from college or push them into remedial courses. A culturally relevant curriculum encouraged Alex to continue his education and even though he was struggling with his math and English classes, he understood the problem from a more holistic approach such as learning about the Chicana and Chicano Education Pipeline. Others like Rosmeri took their first Chicana/o Studies class as a form of acquiring more information on the subject and states the following,

I was curious to see what Chicana/o Studies was about. Even though I'm not from México, but my husband is and my daughters are half Mexican. So I took a general education course and was able to really understand how my husband's

migration was so different and difficult for him...he was twelve years old and crossed the desert by himself and now I can relate because of this one class I took and that is how I decided to make it my minor. To be honest, I learned so much about being Mexican and living in South Central, and now I can pass that on to my daughters and best of all, make them feel proud of who they are and what their dad and I had to go through in coming to the U.S.

Rosmeri statement once again demonstrates an understanding and connection to being Mexican and the significance of passing that knowledge to her daughters. Rosmeri wants to instill pride in her daughters for being half Mexican which also reveal the inner struggles that some people have with being Mexican due to historical and current societal ills like colonialism and racism (Acuña, 1996). However, Chicana/o Studies curriculums assisted Rosmeri in resisting hegemonic views of Mexicans and instill a different type of education to her daughters. Like Rosmeri, Tito was able to acquire a new field of education that would change his life dramatically and state the following when coming across Chicana/o Studies for the first time,

I was a History major and I was working in student government office when I met Dr. Martínez from my Chicana/o Studies 100 class. The history major was o.k. but it didn't feel like anything new, it just felt like I was having to relearn all of my k-12 education, especially for U.S. History. Also, my job was such a hostile and racist space that was not a pleasant atmosphere at all! So Dr. Martínez offered me a job in the Chicana/o Studies Department and although I didn't really know if the new job would work out, I was enjoying my Chicana/o Studies 100 class so I figured I'd give it a try. I became so involved in the department and the one class I was taking that I decided to drop my history major and major in Chicana/o Studies, even though I would later change it to a minor to pursue music. I learned a lot about Chicana/o music in Chicana/o Studies that eventually lead me to make music my ultimate life commitment.

Tito also exemplifies how Chicana/o Studies curriculum was fulfilling him with a type of knowledge he can relate to, hence his change in major to Chicana/o Studies. Tito's response also shows how a curriculum along with positive pedagogical/mentoring practices lead him to have a special connection and become more involved in the department that values Chicana and Chicano music. Like Tito, Lluvia was originally an Art major and reports the following,

I wanted to major in Art first but the supplies were very expensive and I didn't think I could afford it. So I went to speak to the chair at the time [of Chicana/o Studies] and he recommended that I take Chicana/o Studies and declare it as my minor. I was very interested in the Chicana/o Studies Department and so he said 'you know what? Chicano Studies will really work for you' and so on. I really did not know what it was, but I knew it had something to do with Mexican Americans and so I decided to major in it. My first class in Chicana/o Studies was horrible and the professor was just bad! But, I passed and decided to take a break from it and focus on my general education requirements. When I finally came back, the department had more faculty and it was a completely different experience. I felt this natural and instant connection with the field and it really helped shape my identity, work ethic, and future goals.

Lluvia's response demonstrates that there was a vague understanding of what Chicana/o Studies was about, yet she knew it dealt with Mexican Americans. Although Lluvia did not have the best experiences at the beginning of her academic education within Chicana/o Studies, she decided to major in the field and give it a try. This decision demonstrates the need for a culturally relevant education as well as perseverance and knowing that the one class Lluvia took was not indicative of all classes in Chicana/o Studies. Other people like Celia kept a double major because she knew what specific field she wanted to go into after college. For example, Celia states,

I was majoring in Political Science and Chicana/o Studies because I knew I wanted to go to Law School but I enjoyed my Chicana/o Studies classes a lot more. In Chicana/o Studies, I was learning things that Poli. Sci. wasn't giving me like specific topics of immigration and Mexican communities. In Poli. Sci. I was getting your basic law and U.S. politics courses while in Chicana/o Studies I was getting a whole history as to why U.S. politics and law are set up the way they are and how it affects Mexican communities. Chicana/o Studies really became the balance I needed in Poli. Sci. and I was able apply it in those courses that lacked my interests.

Although Celia kept her Political Science major along with Chicana/o Studies, she applied what she learned in Chicana/o Studies to the missing gaps within Political Science. This also demonstrates that Celia, like previous participants is finding fulfillment in Chicana/o Studies and recognizing that other majors are not meeting their academic and personal needs.

Coming across Chicana/o Studies for the first time was a curriculum participants automatically connect to their lived experiences. The topics discussed in their classes were something that many were lacking in their previous majors and therefore became interested in Chicana/o Studies. The curriculum in Chicana/o Studies was relevant to participants' cultural and gendered backgrounds, hence the change in major to Chicana/o Studies. One common factor shared by participants was how in taking these classes, they become aware of social inequalities and are able to apply this in various aspects of their life like education, family, and community.

Chicana/o Studies Curriculum Impact and Learning about Inequalities

Participants stated that the curriculum in Chicana/o Studies helped examine ways in which they, as Chicanas and Chicanos continued to be discriminated, exploited, had poor educational attainment, encountered sexism, homophobia and xenophobia. The awareness of these inequalities are similar to that of other students within the K-12 system (Cammarota and Romero, 2007). Some participants discussed how Chicana/o Studies curriculum gave them a place in U.S. history that they were not aware existed. For example, participants spoke about never being taught Mexican-American history in their K-12 education and how significant it was to finally learn the truth and how important it was for them in understating their history. For example, Eztli sates,

The reason why I like Chicana/o Studies is because it was what I was looking for and I could not believe that nobody had told me this existed. I was angry at first! Why didn't anybody ever tell me there were Chicano and Chicana writers? Why didn't I learn this before college? One course that I took with García really made me think. Especially when we learned that there was actually a movement and a community and later realizing that the Chicano Movement was not perfect, but here I was learning about how we, as Chicanas and Chicanos were being discriminated and why we needed to have a movement and push for better working conditions and education.

Also, the Chicana Feminist course really opened my eyes to a lot of sexism. My father, for example is really machista and I never agreed with him being that way but I never knew an alternative. I was just thinking everybody is o.k. with it so

why should I be opposing it. But then it made me think about what can I do if I don't want to be like that? I realized that like the Chicano Movement was fighting for labor rights and education, Chicanas had rights too and they still struggle with gender roles and sexism. This class really made me examine my privileges as a man, but also thought me how I can help in dismantling gender roles.

The impact that Chicana/o Studies taught Eztli is one that begins with anger due to the lack of culturally relevant curriculum he encountered before college. This lack of education can be attributed to a sense of being cheated out of an education that demonstrates the existence and contributions of ones being. However, the transformation Chicana/o Studies has on Eztli is one that allows him to be critical of problems with Chicana/o families and society. The curriculum in Chicana/o Studies gives Eztli an opportunity to really examine the gendered-power dynamics that exist within his family and reverse those roles for equality of all human beings regardless of gender. Although Eztli recognizes his privileges, he also recognizes the need for equality amongst men and women. Unlike Eztli, Guadalupe came across culturally relevant material during her high school education; however, her experience was not a positive one. For example, Guadalupe touches on an incident she had when she was in an Advanced Placement (AP) class in high school,

Chicana/o Studies sparked my interest even more when I entered college based on experiences of being the only Chicana in a predominately white classroom. We were reading *House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros when the [white] teacher suddenly stops and asks me if all Chicanas live like the character in the book. I remember everyone looking at me, expecting me to answer, and feeling uncomfortable. Now that I have graduated with a B.A. in Chicana/o Studies I understand where this ignorance and stereotypes come from. This teacher and students had absolutely no clue as to who I was and put me in a little box, sort of speak. So that definitely impacted me on what I wanted to major in and what I do now because it really opened my eyes in regards to the importance of knowing your history, learning where you came from, learning your culture, maintaining your language and how important that is in staying connected and not losing yourself in the American way of life.

Although Guadalupe's experience in high school was one that forced her to become a "culture representative" it demonstrates how this experience guided her towards Chicana/o Studies and in

return learns the significance of maintaining her identity like history and language, while at the same time resisting assimilation into “dominant” culture. For other participants like Joaquín, Chicana/o Studies exposed him to sexuality and the struggles that Queer Chicanas and Chicanos endure and states the following,

Learning about Chicana and Chicano Queer Theory was new to me. Coming from an inner city and Mexican background, some of those things are frowned upon. It is nothing negative but it is viewed as an outside thing and I came from that background to learning about the struggles of Queer People. This really opened my mind to different ideas and taking some of those biases that I probably did not recognize I had in me and remove them from my way of thinking. The way I see it now is I studied the struggles, I have friends that are Queer, I acknowledge their struggles, where they are, and what they are working for. I acknowledge their rights to live and survive which is something Chicana/o Studies really made me open my mind to in ways I never had learned before.

Joaquín’s response shows how learning about Chicana and Chicano Queer Theory exposed him to the lived experiences of people that are marginalized while at the same time transforming his way of thinking and becoming a supportive person towards the struggle for equality of Queer People. Despite what background Joaquín comes from, there is now an understanding that all people should be treated equally regardless of sexuality.

These testimonials demonstrate that inequalities facing Chicanas and Chicanos have long historical roots as explained in the literature review of this study (González, 1990; San Miguel, 1987). Chicanas and Chicanos in the present are still facing these inequalities. Nonetheless, the participants take this material as a way to create change. Many of them (as seen on Table 4.1 and 4.2) continue their education after a college and want to create some sort of change that will benefit them, their families, and communities.

Chicana/o Studies and Personal Learning

Personal learning is defined as ways in which Chicana/o Studies inspires participants to create change for themselves or others that ultimately contributes to the well-being of society.

For many, this acquired wealth of new knowledge becomes one that must be given to others.

Learning Chicana/o Studies becomes a knowledge that creates change within ones being as well as ones family. Eztli describes the type of personal learning he acquired from Chicana/o Studies as demonstrated below,

In taking these classes I learned that I had history. I never really cared for American history, but I could not get enough of the material I was reading in Chicana/o Studies. It's weird because I remember it made me feel proud. Proud of being Chicano. We contributed to history. This movement happened and we made our films, wrote poetry and books, and we went back and rewrote literature that was written from a Eurocentric point of view. We went back and said, 'no that's not right'. We are going to write it from our point of view and I think that is brave. It takes bravery to do that. Like *With His Pistol in his Hand*, [Paredes] calls out one of the top scholars in that field and he does it so elegantly. To write that takes guts. All of this made me feel like I could do it too... Chicana/o Studies made me want to get up and do something and show these readings to other people. That's the thing that made me disciplined. It wasn't just homework. I wanted to read it! It wasn't like other courses or high school. Even if it was dry, I wanted to read it. I wanted to know what was being written. I wanted to learn!

Eztli's passion for learning about Chicanas and Chicanos comes out of the exposure to material he did not have up until college. This exposure gave him urgency in having others read this material so that they too can feel the powerful outcome a curriculum like Chicana/o Studies can have. Learning the works of previous Chicanas and Chicanos becomes something natural, something that is not forceful, and something that is enjoyable due to the fact that this material is about his history, his existence and contribution of Chicanas and Chicanos to the United States. Lluvia is also one who touches upon the significance of being Chicana and Chicano in the United States and states the following,

For me, Chicana/o Studies was a big factor in where I stand as a person, my identity, and of course, it has helped me in my personal life. For instance, I try to share ideas with my parents and there is a change in them. My father was telling me that although he is Mexican, his life is here in the U.S. He goes to México and it is different now. So I asked him, 'do you know what you just admitted to? You think you are Chicano'. And so I went on to tell him he has two *culturas* [now]. So Chicana/o Studies lets me talk to my parents about these types of things and for me being in [a Doctoral Program in] Spanish, I felt very intimidated by the

native speakers, but [Chicana/o Studies] made me realize that my tongue and language is the way I speak and if they don't like it then too bad. This is part of my *cultura* and I am proud of it!

Lluvia's response demonstrates a connection she makes with her parents due to what she learned in Chicana/o Studies. These connections are important because her parents are able to see what she was studying and how this impacts her life. Contrary to some deficit education models of Chicanas and Chicanos, this is an example of how Mexican families do in fact value and support their children's education (Delgado Bernal, 2001). Hence, the impact Chicana/o Studies had on Lluvia was her sense of pride in having two *culturas*, which can be difficult to accept by others, but nonetheless the two *culturas* gives Lluvia an acceptance of her dual identity as a Chicana in the U.S. Like Lluvia, Pablo also describes his experiences in learning Chicana/o Studies and states,

I really feel that taking these classes pushed me to be more critical and more observant of the world because when I came out of high school I was like a loose kid and aimlessly going every direction without really hitting a target. I came from high school that they fed you and they kept feeding you and feeding you and you never really get a chance to think for yourself. So Chicana/o Studies taught me to undo that process and come up with my own ideas, critiques and analyses and challenging myself to grow personally and academically.

Pablo's push to challenge himself on a personal and academic level was due to having a curriculum that was engaging unlike his previous experiences in high school. In learning curriculum that was culturally relevant, Pablo develops new methods of learning while also becoming a more focused individual with his education. This example demonstrates the ill effects a banking education has on students and the positive impact of anti-banking education as experienced in Chicana/o Studies (Freire, 2007). Rebecca also demonstrates how Chicana/o Studies helped her change and states the following,

Taking *Las Chicanas* with Dr. Jiménez made me feel very enlighten and I didn't realize how I had such a double standard when it came towards women and now I understand why my own mother is the way she is and why I was taught those

things too. For example, in that class I realized that there were all these unwritten rules like women have to cook and clean... I gave a presentation on machismo and *marianismo* and figured out that I used to think like that and still had some of those gendered traditions or unwritten rules stuck within me even though here I was in higher education. I grew up with the mentality that 'if you don't know how to cook, your man is going to leave you for a woman who does' and these stereotypes played out. Like I was telling my mother that my friend wants to get married but she doesn't even know how to cut an onion! And I shared this in class and caught myself and the way I was acting. I saw I was acting in very sexist ways even though I am woman. This class made me shift my mentality as a whole and I was able to learn so much more about myself as a woman and how you are suppose to treat people in general regardless of gender. This class taught me that although my family has these gendered unwritten rules, I could change that by not continuing to replicate them and teach others what I learned.

Rebecca's experience regarding gender norms demonstrates how curriculum in Chicana/o Studies pushes students to be critical about the ways gender is viewed and what roles are ascribed to women and men. This push is significant because it demonstrates how Chicana/o Studies curriculum advocates for equality amongst women and men while at the same time assisting students in developing and dismantling gender ascribed ideas. Within this push to dismantle sexist views and practices, students like Rebecca are being transformed and now attempt to change these ideas in other people. Rebecca's desire to teach others confirms how Chicana/o Studies has a ripple effect and there is a need to share this significant knowledge to others. Like Rebecca, Paloma also expresses similarities and states,

The Chicana class transformed me spiritually and maybe because Dr. Jiménez is a psychologist and she was able to capture the readings and have it have an impact on us. At the end of the semester we had to write a story of an incident that impacted you and most women wrote about a child hood event and it was amazing how we could just open up in that class and be comfortable with each other, but also trust each other. A lot of that came for reading Anzaldúa and Chicana feminism theories form the 70s. These readings made us reflect on how it made us feel and every time I left that class, I remember thinking, 'I can't believe this is a class' because it was so powerful and moving. We started out as strangers and became very close and eventually we became a little community and I don't think that ever happened in my History classes! This happened because it was a Chicana/o Studies class. I remember reading a book on people crossing the border and telling Dr. Jiménez 'I'm not presenting on this and I can't read this' then she asked me why, and I said 'because my mom crossed the border

as a child and was abandoned by the coyote'. It was too real. And she told me that it was o.k. to make connections to these books and be able to talk about these events in our life. We never had anybody telling us it was o.k. to make those connections, to bring the lived experiences into academic spaces.

Paloma's response touches on various things like trust, building community, impact of curriculum and the very deep personal connections to what she read. These connections are significant because it demonstrates how Chicana/o Studies along with safe pedagogical practices really allows students to learn in ways that go beyond the text. This teaches students to connect their lived experiences with academic spaces which are missing in many other disciplines like History. Paloma's example demonstrates how a culturally relevant education places people in a space where they are able to grow personally and intellectually while attaining their education (Sealey-Ruiz, 2007).

The persona learning that Chicana/o Studies curriculum provides participants with is one that is demonstrated in several ways such as learning new material that provides a sense of belonging in history of the U.S., but also an urgency in passing this knowledge on to others. Some participants discuss how this curriculum allows them to have special conversations with their families that take into account their lived cultural and historical experiences as Mexicans and/or Latinas and Latinos. Other participants equate Chicana/o Studies curriculum to having a spiritual impact on them. Overall, the type of personal learning that participants experience is one that assists them in becoming conscious individuals when dealing with inequalities of race, gender, and immigration.

Chicana/o Studies and Baccalaureate Attainment

For many participants majoring or minoring in Chicana/o Studies was an experience they credit to being able to complete their baccalaureate degree. Many state that the culturally

relevant curriculum learned was one that motivated them to acquire and to complete their degree.

Adelita for example discusses the following statement,

As a kid you really don't know you're being discriminated against and you are not very aware of your surroundings. Chicana/o Studies gave me the political consciousness and awareness to see that discrimination... while your true history is really being told. Also, you get to network more. You get to grow and be a family when you get into Chicana/o Studies... you kind of grow as a family [with] the same classmates as oppose to another major. I think because you're going through the same struggles and inequalities, you push each other a little bit more and try to help each other overcome those struggles and inequalities.

Adelita's response demonstrates an awareness of discrimination and notions of family hood. This is significant to Adelita because it reveals how Chicana/o Studies helped her examine ways in which Chicanas and Chicanos encounter social inequalities in education and society due to ethnicity and history. This is a critical development because it allows the participant to make historical connections to the reasons why Chicanas and Chicanos experience educational inequalities and discrimination. Not only is the participant able to understand the historical consequences this has on present issues, but also has answers and tools to continue the fight for educational equality and human rights. Another vital part of Adelita's response is how classmates are viewed as family as they assist each other in overcoming issues in academia or in society. This finding is important for Chicana and Chicano education achievement because once again, this demonstrates how family like support within students assist them in succeeding academically (Delgado Bernal, 2001; Holguín Cuádras, 2005; Pizarro, 1998). Similar to Adelita, Hipólito describes his experience with Chicana/o Studies and the impact it had on completing his baccalaureate degree as follows,

I think that every course and experience really added to who I am as a person in general as well as a lot of skills I got from those courses. It is very interdisciplinary and I went from learning theory and Chicana feminism in one class to covering basic literature to learning all about social justice non-profit organizations to how to write grants. I mean all those were just really great courses, which led me into linguistics of the Nahuatl language, and it was a key

factor in wanting to pursue that academically and even in non-academic spaces. The skills I learned in these courses made my completion of the B.A. one that was not a chore but rather something I enjoyed and knew I had to finish so that I can pursue linguistics in graduate school.

Hipólito's experience with Chicana/o Studies curriculum shows how courses in Chicana/o Studies added to his development as a person as well as how to become active in social justice non-profit organizations. Hipólito's knowledge towards of Chicana/o Studies curriculum is also one that is experienced in a way that is enjoyable while granting him with tools to assist people in the non-profit sector and pursue graduate education. Yolicia expresses the following concerning her experiences with curriculum.

Reading Anzaldúa really made me view how in tuned she was to being native and ho she was so involved in the Chicana Feminist Movement by being hybrid...that hybridity introduced me to a whole new self concept of myself and how Chicana/o Studies educated me. I feel I haven't graduated from Chicana/o Studies and it's still with me. Why? Because I'm growing as a Mexican American adult and now as a married women in a different environment in which I still have to define myself. In my own opinion, as a college student it was difficult and I had a lot of internal conflict and in Chicana/o Studies, I learned that if you don't express those internal conflicts, then you can't continue to grow or you become bitter or confused. Chicana/o Studies really helped me put these things into perspective and gave me the courage to move forward while at the same time understanding societal problems... I learned I had to be in two worlds at the same time like Gloria Anzaldúa but I had the courage to break the norm and educate myself because of all the *mujeres* like Anzaldúa that I became familiar with. This motivated me to finish and move on in my life.

In Yolicia's response, the hybridity she learns by authors like Anzaldúa assists her in realizing that she too has a hybrid being because of her ethnicity, gender, and education status. This example demonstrates that the connections made to the material is one with transformational power in assisting Yolicia attain her baccalaureate degree. This ability to identify with authors and readings becomes a space where students are able to fight and settle their own conflicts in a manner that is positive like graduating from college and moving onto other aspect of their life. The fact that Chicana/o Studies has the power to facilitate students' internal conflicts

demonstrates that there is a need for this type of curriculum to reach many other people in hopes of assisting them in meeting the academic or personal goals. Like Yolicia, David also speaks on fighting negative expectations and states the following,

Learning about the Chicano Movement and how society portrays Latinos and African Americans really helped me examine what little expectations society had of us. Being in Chicana/o Studies, it really helped me rebel in a way and show that I wasn't a stereotype, I wasn't a criminal, and I wasn't an alcoholic. These stereotypes we see on the daily are damaging to our people, but then here I was reading about this, learning and creating change that contradicted all these notions of ourselves. [Chicana/o Studies] gave me the strength to keep on going. Especially knowing what we are still fighting for and knowing I can make a difference too.

David's response demonstrates that Chicana/o Studies was an integral part in his baccalaureate completion because he was examining racism and the impact it has on Communities of Color.

This awareness of racial discrimination creates an impact that serves as resistance to racial stereotypes and encourages David to continue his educational attainment (Solórzano, 1997).

Although the need to demonstrate the opposite of racist notions of himself and his neighborhood, it also serves as a catalyst in creating a difference within his community.

Chicana/o Studies curriculum assisted participants in obtaining their baccalaureate degree in various ways. An example of how curriculum assist participants is the type of motivation they encounter while becoming familiar with the curriculum and the need to contribute to society in order to fix social ills. Becoming conscious of social inequalities assists students in creating a difference, therefore, they see the importance of obtaining a baccalaureate degree is beyond their individual needs, but rather the need of communities.

Chicana/o Studies and the Present

Examining how Chicana/o Studies curriculum impacts participant's in the present is imperative in this study. There is a need to see how people with baccalaureate degrees in Chicana/o Studies use what they learned in their jobs, community, or family. For example,

Guadalupe demonstrates the use of her acquired knowledge of Chicana/o Studies in her present job and states the following,

I work for a Latino resource center and come across a lot of students who have gone through similar experiences like me and lots unfortunately don't ever get exposed to any type of their own history in the U.S. So for me to come across students really impacts me in what I do and what I'm trying to do and letting students know how important it is to maintain their history, teaching them that history, and the benefits that come from it. I use a lot of the same curriculum that was taught to me when I teach my introduction courses and find it to be very transformational with my students.

Guadalupe's statement is one that demonstrates the significance of having a culturally relevant curriculum that teaches students their existence within a U.S. context. Guadalupe also illustrates how her own transformation is due to Chicana/o Studies and how she wishes to pass these experiences to her students because there is an understanding of the significance and impact of a culturally relevant curriculum. The need to pass is demonstrated by Guadalupe's use of material that was used in her classes so that her students can also benefit as much as she did. Like Guadalupe, Conchita also teaches and states the following on how she uses Chicana/o Studies curriculum with her high school students,

Another teacher and I started a Chicana/o Studies class through University Extension at CSUMV and our high school students were able to enroll in it and take the class after school while getting college credit. They had so much interest to learn about something they were not exposed to. So if I had not come across Chicana/o Studies, I would have never thought it to be possible to teach and help my own students now. So, Chicana/o Studies did have a great impact on me. My students that graduated are now taking Chicana/o Studies classes because of the influence we had on them and that makes me extremely happy. I think it is important to have students continue that legacy so that it can help them succeed academically the way it did me.

Conchita's response demonstrates the significance of continuing a Chicana/o Studies legacy because it had such an important impact in her own education. As demonstrated, her students enjoyed the class and continue to take these courses once they attend college. The impact that Chicana/o Studies had on Conchita is transferred over to her students and one hopes that is

transferred on to other people. Chicana/o Studies curriculum is one that people are interested in because there is need to learn about oneself within the U.S. context. Other participants that use Chicana/o Studies curriculum in their present education is Celia. Celia states the following when working on her J.D. with a focus on immigration,

I come across a lot of nasty racist people in Law School but also a lot of people that are down for the cause and I think that in Chicana/o Studies, I learned a lot about being aware of cultures, being aware of myself, being confident of who I am, and giving people the benefit of the doubt. I'm a lot more racially neutral even though I'm a lot more racially aware. One thing I took with me is that I'm Chicana period.

Celia proves that although her experiences in Law School have been mixed, Chicana/o Studies taught her to be open in working with people who shared similar interests. The confidence she carries with her and her identity help her in navigating spaces like Law School in order to create a network of support amongst colleagues and ultimately contributes to completing her J.D.

Estrella is also one that found ways of incorporating Chicana/o Studies in her teaching and express the following,

Taking Chicana/o Studies classes made me realize that I could use this and integrated it in my classrooms. I wanted to be a teacher and was always thinking about how I would teach my students and they needed to learn this and know about their culture, heritage, and cultural wealth. They needed to know that their race has contributed to society in many positive ways. I figured this would make me a stronger teacher while at the same time giving me an education. When you are interested in something, you are inclined to do research and be more engaged and want to teach this as much as possible or at least have an understanding about where my students are coming from, I can relate to them now because of these classes.

Estrella's response is one that acknowledges the significance of passing on this education to her own students so that they too can see the value that lies within them and their communities. This example also reveals how curriculum that is culturally relevant encourages students to learn, research, and become better practitioners. Estrella has the desire to be a "stronger" teacher and

equates Chicana/o Studies as her source of strength so that she too can have a greater impact on her students.

The curriculum in Chicana/o Studies is used by participants in their work and educational spaces. There is an understanding of the significance to pass on this type of curriculum to others, especially those who teach. Also, the curriculum is one that makes people aware of racial inequalities, yet, it is not used to judge people, but rather treat people as equals.

Chicana/o Studies and Future Aspirations

Having a culturally relevant curriculum has demonstrated to assist participants in many capacities like completing their baccalaureate degrees and using the acquired knowledge in their current occupation. Examining future aspirations of students is significant in demonstrating how a completion of the degree in Chicana/o Studies and acquired knowledge is used in determining what their future aspirations are. Joaquín for example explains the following,

Learning from the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo to Dolores Huerta, really gave me a sense of pride in my culture and political activism. Learning these things really interested me and that transformed me to wanting to be a professor one day. I have to say that Chicana/o Studies motivated me to pursue research and also teach what I'm learning.

The curriculum and experiences in Chicana/o Studies motivated Joaquín in pursuing a post-baccalaureate education and the desire to provide his knowledge to other people. Although Joaquín's aspirations are to become a Professor, other participants like Elisa have different and multiple aspirations. For example, Elisa states,

My goal at the beginning was to become a Professor and teach Chicana/o Studies but there are so many things I want to do and it is hard to narrow it down. So, I decided to make more of an impact with teenagers and wanted to go into counseling but by doing that, I realized I didn't want to do that also because counselors do a lot of paperwork and administrative work rather than mentor the kids. So, I think I might go into Social Work so I can have a stronger impact there and still expose them to Chicana/o Studies if possible.

Although Elisa demonstrates several aspirations, she was open to trying out her options and narrowing down to Social Work. There is an interest in being able to pass on her knowledge to youth in hopes of assisting them and impacting their lives in a positive manner. Other participants like Juan began interning in the political sector while attaining his baccalaureate education and states the following,

My dad paints desks. He painted the congressional desk in Washington D.C. and during my internship in D.C. I had the chance to go there and sit there. So, I took a picture of the desk and gave it to my dad and it made him cry that I was sitting on one of the desks he painted. He said 'I've lived my whole life painting desks; I want to see you and your sister sitting on one! So we went to school because we didn't want to break our backs like my dad has. Knowing this and having the opportunities to be in Chicana/o Studies, really helped me view myself in spaces where I can have a good job, be a politician, or teach. I can have my own non-profit organization and tutor young kids if I wanted to go that path.

Juan's experience is another example that is directly connected to the labor of his father. This example illustrates pride and encouragement from Juan's father to continue his education and be able to have a job that comes with less physical hardships on the body. Being in Chicana/o Studies and interning has given Juan not only a vision, but knowledge he can use if he decides to go into politics, teaching, or start his own non-profit educational organization. This vision is significant because it teaches students in Chicana/o Studies that there have been many other people in their shoes and will continue to be. Therefore, a culturally relevant curriculum is once again vital in making this vision become a reality. Like Juan, Alex is also someone that envisions himself creating change and state the following,

Originally, I wanted to be a computer engineer and after taking [Chicana/o Studies] classes, I wanted to help the community and be a good teacher. I just wanted to go back and help out Latino students. I think it would have been different for me to have a Latino teacher when I was in high school and have somebody that I can relate to. I want kids to have somebody they can relate to as well. My future goals are to go into a graduate program and go back to help my community and my family as well.

Once again we see how Alex's response is one that desires to create change in his community and family. Chicana/o Studies curriculum assisted Alex in wanting to become not just a teacher, but a good teacher that can create change for a better future. The curriculum that Alex is learning becomes personal as he reflects what he did not have as a high school student. Yet, the reflection of what he lacked as a younger person is one that encourages him in becoming a good teacher in hopes of helping students in ways he needed help during high school. Similar to Alex, Rosita is also one that hopes to go into teaching and states,

Being in Chicana/o Studies gave me hope that I could do something with myself and not just be a factory worker. Although it is a job that all my family does and I'm not ashamed to say it, it is hard work and I don't want to do that. I want to do something more. I want to be able to have a better life. I would love to go into teaching and teach Spanish so I can incorporate what I was learning in Chicana/o Studies.

Rosita's response is one that demonstrates a desire to have a better quality of life than that of her family. Although she acknowledges their hard working contributions, she knows there is a purpose of her attaining an education and passing on that knowledge to others. Like many other participants, Rosita wants to go into teaching and apply Chicana/o Studies curriculum into her classrooms. This desire to apply a culturally relevant curriculum once again demonstrates the great impact this curriculum has on Rosita, hence her desire to pass it on to her students (Vásquez, González Cárdenas, García, 2014). Like Rosita, David also shares similar interest in wanting to assist other people and states the following,

I initially wanted to work within the teaching field but after taking all these classes, I became more aware of the major need in our communities when it comes to health care and so I really want to just help people in that arena. Chicana/o Studies helped me see that I will continue to help with the community even if I didn't go into teaching. I think that going into a Physician Assistant Program and working at a hospital, I can still help the Latino community and put into practice what I learned in Chicana/o Studies because I of course will be more aware and sensitive to the communities, people, [and the] hospitals I serve.

David's example demonstrate the change in career choices, however the need to serve the Latino community is still present. Chicana/o Studies curriculum helps David understand the health issues affecting Latino Communities while at the same time being conscious of the specific ways in which Latinos are affected. David's example is also one that shows the fluidity of career choices he has because he majored in Chicana/o Studies.

The future aspirations of participants hold social justice notions like the curriculum in Chicana/o Studies. Many of the participants express wanting to be teachers or professors, attend graduate school, or become social workers. The possibilities of being able to go into any field or career are one that correlates to the type of curriculum they are learning. This curriculum exposes participants to the multiple roles Chicanas and Chicanos have been involved in, hence their aspirations to become anything they desire.

Conclusion

This chapter demonstrates how Chicana/o Studies curriculum creates a social justice transformation that impacts students in ways that guide them towards many fields like teaching, social work, and the law. While many baccalaureate degrees create these paths for their students, Chicana/o Studies does this by instilling students with a value for social justice and acknowledging the rich history of Mexican, Chicana and Chicano Communities. Therefore, traditional disciplines of study completely ignore the correlation between social justice ethos and cultural diversity. A social justice curriculum like Chicana/o Studies also exposes students to Chicana Chicano resistance to inequalities, how these communities overcome adversity, and continue to fight for social justice and human rights. Acknowledging the existence, contributions, and social struggles of Chicanas and Chicanos influences students to go into careers where they can serve and strive for the betterment of their communities.

The impact Chicana/o Studies curriculum has on students is one that also contributes to

increased graduation rates and post-baccalaureate education. Although high push-out rates of Chicanas and Chicanos is a larger institutional problem that continues to create inequalities, the Chicanas and Chicanos in this study overcome such adversities and credit having a culturally relevant curriculum to their academic success. A culturally relevant curriculum provides students with a type of learning they connect to, love, and lead them to pursue and apply their learning in their post-baccalaureate education and life. The narratives of participants demonstrate their search for a curriculum that acknowledges their existence, while at the same time learning how to be critical thinkers and approach their work, families, and community with a social justice lens (Hill Collins & Solomos, 2010; Sleeter, 2011; Vásquez, 2005).

Chapter 5 ***'Some Profes Truly Cared About Us': Chicana/o Studies Pedagogical Practices***

Introduction

The Chicana/o Studies Department at CSUMV uses a variety of teaching and learning strategies within their twenty-five undergraduate courses and seven graduate courses. These courses include lecture and seminar style classes where several teaching tools like PowerPoint presentations, group work/activities, and class websites are used to enhance student learning. The majority of faculty members use various teaching tools to determine learning outcomes like essays, quizzes, research papers, and portfolios. Other common tools are class syllabi that set teaching themes and grading standards for both faculty and students. As for pedagogy, participants reported that smaller classes worked best for them, however budget cuts decreased the amount of classes offered and increased the amount of students in the courses. For the purpose of this chapter, I examine research question number two- *how does culturally relevant pedagogy in Chicana/o Studies impact the educational experiences of Chicana and Chicano students?* Using thematic finding of exemplars from the twenty-five interviews, this chapter discusses main topics such as: (1) *Positive Pedagogies: Femtor and Mentor Practices and Its Impact on Students* and (2) *Pedagogies of Neglect: [Tor]Mentor Practices and Its Impact on Students*, (3) *Spectrum of Pedagogical Practices in Chicana/o Studies*, and ending with (4) *Effective Teaching in Chicana/o Studies*.

Participant's Interviews on Pedagogy

In order to determine the impact Chicana/o Studies pedagogical practices can have on students, several things need to be taken into account. For example, creating a culturally relevant pedagogical impact does not solely rely on one thing or action on behalf of professors, but several. Participants of this study describe what I believe to be two types of pedagogical

practices with variation in between like *Positive Pedagogies: (1) Femtor Practices and Its Impact on Students* and *Pedagogies of Neglect: [Tor]Mentor Practices and Its Impact on Students*. Both pedagogical practices consist of numerous components that will be discussed in the following section of this chapter. In addition, pedagogical practices occur in multiples settings and not confined to teaching or a classroom. As participants will demonstrate, pedagogical practices take the form of femtoring and mentoring inside and outside of classroom that goes beyond the boundaries of a classroom setting and time of instruction (Acuña, 2009 and 2001; Camangian, 2009; Darder, 1991; Delgado Bernal, 2001; Howard 2001a and 2001b; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Rendón, 2009).

Positive Pedagogies: Femtor and Mentor Practices and Its Impact on Students

Some of the participants in this study expressed thoughts of not being adequately prepared for college level writing or analyses due to the poor K-12 education they received. However, critical teachers have the ability to adapt to these circumstances and create a classroom and learning environment for students that is conscious of such educational disparities. For Chicana/o Studies at CSUMV, some professors possess an understanding of student's educational experiences, along with a social justice ethos that creates a powerful impact on students' educational experiences. In creating a space where students feel safe to make mistakes, the process of having to learn new skills becomes a smoother transition that ultimately leads to higher graduation rates and post-baccalaureate attainment. The practice of assisting students and their learning is conducted by using several methods discussed below such as: (1) *Femtoring and Mentoring*; (2) *Student Support and Building Community*; (3) *Sense of Value: Student-Teacher Relations*; (4) *Teaching with High Expectations and Equality*; and (5) *Facilitating the Self-Transformation Process*.

Femtoring and Mentoring Practices. A femtor, in the case of this study, are Chicana professors who holds a feminist ideology and consciousness of the inequalities students face in the past, present, and future along with an understanding of historical racial implications students have to encounter in the present and future. Femtors also comprise of experiential knowledge based on gender and race as described by scholars of Chicana Feminist Epistemology and Critical Race Theory (Delgado Bernal, 1998b, 2002 and Solórzano, 1997). With such critical understating, the femtor assists female and male students beyond the professoriate responsibilities like femtoring¹⁶ in and outside of the classroom and beyond instruction time. These characteristics of going beyond the classroom setting and time of instruction is one that is practiced because there is an understanding of the importance in assisting Chicana and Chicano students reach their academic and personal goals. In addition, the femtor is given such label due to participants describing her as being somebody who: cares, gives *confianza*, invested in student learning, passionate about Chicana/o Studies, available inside and outside of the classroom, provides critical and positive feedback, allows dialogue in class, assists students in research, conferences, and post-baccalaureate education applications, and brings student's family into departmental events. A femtor is someone who takes on responsibilities to femtor any student because there is a deep care and dedication in preparing students academically and as human beings. With this care and dedication come heavy responsibilities that not every professor is suitable and willing to engage in.

For some professors however, assisting students beyond the professoriate responsibilities is something they are not willing to do (as this chapter will demonstrate later) or simply cannot due to time constraints. For example, the majority of professors are part-faculty and although many participants have strong student-teacher relations, the amount of time dedicated to students

¹⁶ A femtor who mentors enacts in *femtoring*.

is limited for part-time faculty. Although time can be a restriction, part-time faculty mentor students more than other tenure-track faculty. Other female professors (tenure-track and non-tenure) are being discussed as part of this study, however, they are not a femtor because they do not possess all the aforementioned characteristics of a femtor. In fact, one female professor demonstrates the opposite pedagogical practices of a femtor and has negative effects on student learning. In addition, some male part-time- faculty/mentors are not labeled as femtors due to gender even though they possess femtor characteristics. In the case of this study, female participants clearly make the distinction between genders and therefore, a femtor can only be a female. Although some faculty mentors (both female and male) have similar characteristics of a femtor, not all possess the care and dedication that is needed for students. Below are some examples on why participants gravitated towards femtors and mentors. For example, Rose states,

Having experiences that were not very positive with Dr. García and Dr. Pulido where they only focused on the negatives, were the reasons I would go to Dr. Martínez instead. She would talk to me in her office and go over papers I was writing even though it wasn't for her class. I just could not go to the others for help and she would really ask me things like "what do you mean hear" and help me with the overall structure of my writing. I think that extra help was very helpful because it helped me be clearer in my writing. Dr. Martínez really cared about everyone whether we were taking a class with her or not and I felt it was o.k. for me to go to her. I trusted her.

Rose's example of Dr. Martínez is one that demonstrates specific pedagogical practices of a professor going above and beyond their job duties towards students' needs. Aside from academic assistance, Dr. Martínez demonstrates a special type of care for Rose and provides the necessary help, while at the same time demonstrating that the feedback provided is constructive and allows Rose to grow academically. This statement also demonstrates how Dr. Martínez is a femtor that takes it upon herself to ensure that Rose becomes a successful writer and student regardless of what class Rose is enrolled in. Also, this example demonstrates how Dr. Martínez's

pedagogical practices differ from that of Dr. García and Dr. Pulido. Like Rose, Celia also experienced the femtoring process of Dr. Martínez and states the following,

Dr. Martínez was really cool. She gave me a lot of feedback on what I can improve, reorganize, and she questioned me a lot when it came to my work. She also gave me a lot of help when I was dealing with politics on campus. She always gave me this family type of feeling like you get together and sit down and just talk. I felt like she was my *tía*. It never felt like I was going to talk to a professor. I was so happy to know that I had a mentor I could go to.

Celia's example demonstrates once again the significance of providing feedback for students. Providing feedback is a task that should be a common practice for professors, however, Celia demonstrates that this is something Dr. Martínez extended herself with in order to make students' writing stronger. Aside from providing rigorous academic feedback, Dr. Martínez also demonstrates how her femtoring goes beyond coursework and femtors students on various issues like student politics, all while proving a family-type of space. In providing a family-type of space, Celia was able to trust Dr. Martínez and seek her femtoring without hesitation. Elisa describes how a femtors impacts her future aspirations and sates,

Having Chicana professors that looked liked me inspired me and my future decisions because it made me realized that I could be like them too and I didn't just have to be a housewife. The women in the [Chicana/o Studies] Department made me realize that if they could have these respected careers, I could have them too. They served as a role model for me and many of the other female students. Like Dr. Martínez, for example, I looked up to her because she was a woman, [the] chair [of the Department], had a husband, and kids too. To me she had everything together. I would see her and see that I could do that I could have a wonderful career and children too. I don't have to pick one over the other! I could have my career and my family as well and so I went to her for advice and questions on what career to pursue and she really provided guidance for me that I don't think I had ever gotten by any other female faculty at CSUMV.

Elisa's experience with having female professors shows how deep a connection can be when ethnicity and gender are something a student has in common with faculty. Equally important is how these Chicana professors carry multiple personal and professional responsibilities that serve as future inspiration for Elisa. Due to such strong connection, Elisa's aspirations in becoming a

woman with a profession while experiencing motherhood as well. For Elisa, connecting the professional and personal becomes something solid and is confident that she too can achieve anything she desires. Like Elisa, Lluvia's experiences with femtoring are similar and state the following,

Dr. Martínez is the type of person that when she opens the door, she opens it all the way. She helps you and she is going to help you all the way. She doesn't nitpick as to who is so called worthy of being mentored. She is what every professor should be! When she saw that I was struggling in the other classes, she would read my papers and give me feedback. I don't know of any other professor that would have taken the time to help me when I was not even enrolled in her class.

Lluvia's experience with Dr. Martínez's femtoring demonstrates once again the important role a femtor plays on the academic needs of students. This example also reveals that Lluvia does not have any other professor she can go to for extra help nor that she has the type of trust that she has with Dr. Martínez. An important aspect of this example is the awareness of who is considered to be worth the extra mentoring and how Dr. Martínez's femtoring goes beyond those notions and femtors her students equally. Like Lluvia, Connie demonstrates her experiences with Dr. Martínez's femtoring and states,

You aren't talking about a normal professor here. Dr. Martínez is very different than most professors I've had. She goes beyond her regular job duties to mentor us and made a world of a difference in my success in the program. She would sit with me and go over my writing and really pushed me...this was a unique thing about her.

Connie's response is similar to the rest of the participants when expressing themselves about the feedback given by Dr. Martínez. The fact that Connie sees this as abnormal demonstrates that Dr. Martínez is somebody that puts extra effort into making sure that students get the most out of their education. Unfortunately, what is seen as abnormal should be normalized for professors, especially when students really benefit from this type of rigorous feedback and support. Connie equates this support as one that contributed to her academic success which assists in student

retention, completion of a baccalaureate degree and post-baccalaureate education. Like Connie, Paloma has similar experiences and states,

Dr. Jiménez was such a great mentor and genuine with students. You could see she actually cared was invested in my success. So, I wanted to be the kind of person that motivates others in whatever they choose to be, just like Dr. Jiménez. It was great to have her as a female professor and know that I could have a connection with her.

Paloma's experience is one that discusses the positive and caring characteristics of Dr. Jiménez that Paloma would like to also put into practice. This type of learning is not something that is necessarily taught by Dr. Jiménez, but one that is demonstrated by her actions. Being genuine and caring towards students is something Paloma values while at the same time learning how such a powerful way of interacting with students can cause a positive impact on them. Estrella also demonstrates how she uses the femtoring practices she encountered and states,

I totally use what I learned from my professors in Chicana/o Studies like Professor Aguilar and Dr. Martínez. I was taught to build community with students and parents. So, in my first year teaching I made sure to go out of my way and get in touch with parents who could not make it to conference night and join community organizations that worked closely with families and have dinner all because I know that works for my students. If it worked for me, then it has to work for others as well.

Estrella illustrates how the pedagogical skills that were employed with her are now used with her own students and their family. This example also shows how Estrella becomes a femtor herself and goes beyond her own job duties as a teacher in order to make sure her student's parents are informed. This example demonstrates the great need to continue to build community with students and their families.

The femtoring and mentoring practices described above demonstrate a specific type of commitment towards students. This type of commitment is demonstrated in: providing feedback that is both critical and positive, femtoring and mentoring students inside and outside of the classroom, and femtoring or mentoring students regardless of what class they are taking and with

what professor. Also, the femtoring and mentoring practices are some that students credit to facilitating their educational process while learning how to reciprocate those practices in their present life within their communities.

Student Support and Building Community. The ways in which I define support and building community are fluid to allow the participants to have their own voice. Overall, support comes in many forms like a simple understanding of the race and class experiences (Cammarota, 2007), to struggles with academic writing. Connecting this understanding with pedagogical practices, ultimately determines the impact pedagogy has on students. For some professors, the student support they provide coalesces with building a community that further enhances a support system for participants. In creating this support and community, participants credit faculty in being able to advance their educational, personal, and community goals while at the same time learning how to build networks amongst peers. All twenty-five participants discussed how some professors in Chicana/o Studies at CSUMV assisted them with a unique type of support and various examples below demonstrate the fluidity of support and community building. For example, Tito states,

I think Dr. Martínez was very committed to this idea of community. I think she was so committed in building this network that has now become a huge community that started so small and grew exponentially. In creating this network, we help each other out and overcome problems together. Dr. Martínez understood the things we as students were going through and that we needed to work, care for our families, and take classes at the same time.

For Tito, having a professor that creates a community within his peers demonstrates the necessity for a student and faculty support system to prevail over obstacles. Although Tito credits Dr. Martínez's commitment to building community amongst students, this also demonstrates that Dr. Martínez recognizes the importance of peer-to-peer support. This support and community in

return becomes one that is reciprocated amongst peers. Other forms of support come in ways like providing academic feedback as stated by Rose,

Professor Hernández really helped me develop my writing skills and she told me, “Rose you have a lot of good ideas but your grammar, verbs, and nouns get switched around” but, that I was able to understand and deconstruct the text even though my writing needed a lot of work. What I appreciated about her was that she told me my weaknesses, but most importantly, my strengths. Having that support was really necessary for me because I was really struggling in other classes. Like with Dr. García or Dr. Pulido, they only went for the weaknesses and never tried to understand why I was writing the way I was. Professor Hernández supported me in ways that I could never repay her. She understood that English was not my strongest language.

Rose’s experience with Professor Hernández demonstrates the importance of providing positive feedback to a student and having an understanding of language barriers that can be fixed with guidance, learning, and more practice. Far beyond the grammatical issues that can be solved with practice, the negative comments Rose receives from Dr. García or Dr. Pulido do not provide constructive feedback for her. Providing critical (including areas that need improvement) and positive feedback is essential in supporting Rose so that she can perform better academically while at the same time has a professor that she can count on. Focusing merely on negative aspects of writing are counterproductive towards fixing grammar that Rose struggles with. It is important to have a balance when providing feedback considering what type of school systems participants come from. Eztli for example states,

Dr. Martínez and Professor Aguilar really encouraged me to have confidence. I struggled with that a lot having come from the schooling system that doesn’t fully prepare us for college. Sometimes I didn’t think I deserved to be in college... sometimes I didn’t really feel that I wasn’t smart enough, but Dr. Martínez and Professor Aguilar encouraged me to be confident in myself. Professor Aguilar influenced me a lot to think critically and put those thoughts into paper. With Professor Aguilar, we talked about his academic career and come to find out we have a lot of similarities between us and I think that’s why I became really close to him. I felt I could trust him and relate to him.

In this example we see once again how Dr. Martínez and Professor Aguilar provide support to Eztli that encourages him in his education and removes the self-doubt he carried with him due to his K-12 education that failed to prepare him for college (Valencia and Black, 2002). In creating this support, a sense of community is being built and Eztli is able to trust and feel connections to the professors because they are willing to share their own educational journeys and struggles. Having professors share their educational journey with students also demonstrates that they too can understand what the students endure and better serve them. Estrella states the following when discussing the services she received,

Dr. Martínez was available for me like no other professors had, especially when it came to writing research papers. I had a really good experience with her and a community in her. She was very interested in having students go into research institutions and develop them academically. She really wanted the students to succeed and you could tell she had a passion for what she was doing and wanted to help us reach for high goals.

Estrella's statement reveals the importance of having a professor available for assistance in writing papers and how this simple action is a support system for Estrella. Considering Estrella had not experienced this type of availability from other professors, this demonstrates how Dr. Martínez is invested in students and their academic success at CSUMV and beyond. Helping students with coursework material is an opportunity for Dr. Martínez to nurture an environment and relationship that is supportive of students while at the same time guiding them towards a post-baccalaureate education. In creating this type of support a sense of value and student-teacher relationship is being developed. Lluvia expands on the type of student support she received and states,

As a student, it was very important to have Dr. Martínez push my critical thinking skills because I needed them to complete my B.A. but also to begin my M.A. and keep growing and applying those skills in my Ph.D. program. She really prepared me for my future academic career because not only did she help with those skills, but she went beyond and assisted me with when I started doing research and presenting at conferences, writing papers and scholarly activities. I became very

inspired and thought, 'I could do this, it's something that I like and I like sharing my work.' I became very passionate about doing research because it had to do with the people I was surrounded by like other students and Dr. Martínez. The comradery was very significant and that's when I knew I would not settle for a B.A. but go into a Ph.D. as well.

Lluvia's example illustrates how having Dr. Martínez push her critical thinking skills was an essential part of her academic success and future. This type of student support also demonstrates how pedagogy is practiced in various spaces and in return also prepares Lluvia for her future educational goals. Like Lluvia, Yumey finds ways of using Chicana/o Studies student support and states,

The way the professors helped me is a huge plus for me. I could work well with people because I understand where they come from. In Chicana/o Studies, we were thought to work with each other like in study groups and it helps you learn how to work well with others. Now, I can use these skills in any type of job I get. I kind of use it now with my nephews because I like what I learned and so teach them and pass on this knowledge.

Yumey's example displays ways in which pedagogical practices encourage students to work together while at the same time acquiring skills that can be transferred to many spaces. A space this type of skill is transferred to can be a professional or familia setting. Yumey example demonstrates how Chicana/o Studies pedagogical practices learned are also given back to her work place and family.

Supporting students and building community within the academy are necessary components to the education of Chicanas and Chicanos. In supporting students, while creating a community, students are able to develop their scholarship. This type of academic, community, and personal development are then put into practice in other spaces like current occupations or scholarship. In essence, the femtors and mentors are assisting students in many ways that go beyond the professoriate responsibilities, while also teaching students how to value, create and maintain a community space.

Sense of Value: Student-Teacher Relations. In creating a supportive community space, students develop a sense of value because of the student-teacher relationships that become established. This value and student-teacher relation adds to the pedagogical impact a Chicana and Chicano Professor in Chicana/o Studies can have on students. These pedagogical practices have the power to instill in students a sense of value that leads them to pursue goals they did not know existed or think they were capable of reaching. The examples in the next section discuss how these pedagogical practices encourage and assist students in reaching educational goals like pursuing a Ph.D. as Adelita states,

This one is really owed to the two professors that really pushed me like Dr. Martínez. She was really the back bone of my educational experience at CSUMV. Dr. Martínez would tell me, “I think you should research this topic more and present at this year’s conference” and at the last minute I’d tell her I wasn’t going to present the research and she would say “you don’t have a choice, plus you could do it.” She was right. I could do it. I was ready. I got this extra push and confidence and realized that I could do something. I was more than capable. I think what some professors do becomes really important because sometimes you get overwhelmed and they are there to help you out in [your] education, while at the same time growing an building an attachment towards them. They are professors but they are out there to assist you beyond their professional requirements. Dr. Martínez would promote graduate studies to us and it was something I was never aware of. Like I didn’t know what a Ph.D. program was. I thought a doctor could only be a doctor of medicine. Then Dr. Martínez would show us the way into graduate school and tells us “you all should go into a Ph.D., you can do it, I can help you through the process.” The relationships with professors were a huge help that opened my eyes to more opportunities while believing in myself and abilities.

Adelita’s response is another example of pedagogical practices that push students into other realms of education like research and graduate education. Considering that CSUMV is a teaching institution, this example demonstrates that professors teach their students research skills and encourage them to present at professional conferences. Although Adelita felt she could not present her research, Professor Martínez reassured her in making Adelita confident in her ability to perform in new spaces. This example also demonstrates that faculty are preparing students for

graduate education, something that Adelita did not know existed and in return gives her the confidence in attaining a post-baccalaureate education. Cecilia is another example of how pedagogical practices influence student's future and states the following,

Dr. Ochoa absolutely changed my life. He made me cry, made me laugh, he would sit with me hours after class and really push me to go into Law School. It was really cool to have a grown man tell me how successful his career and life were especially because my dad was really absent for most of my life and here I had a male figure that was pushing me to go the same way. He would tell me "you are a very bright girl, you have to go somewhere" and it was really important to have somebody believe in me especially because I sometimes wondered how I even made it college. Dr. Ochoa completely changed my ideas and I was blown away to have somebody believe in me that much and it was significant to have somebody you can relate to and you know they believe in you. Some of my other professors in Political Science just went in and out of class and never mentored me or many of my friends. Even when I visited them during office hours, it was very much like "what is your question?" and that was it, there was no going an extra step for me.

In Celia's response, the student-teacher relationship is once again a powerful experience that goes beyond typical professoriate job duties. This extra step Celia refers to is significant in providing the additional encouragement she needed to believe in her academic abilities. The type of mentoring offered by Dr. Ochoa is one that caters to building a student-teacher relationship because there is an understanding of Celia's abilities to succeed in Law School unlike her professors in Political Science. For Celia, having a professor like Dr. Ochoa demonstrates the need for professors to take on responsibilities like mentoring and pushing students beyond what they might think are their only abilities. This example is important because it demonstrates that if students are encouraged and guided, they are more likely to believe in themselves and continue their educational trajectory successfully. Like Celia, Connie elaborates on performing job duties that go beyond the professoriate responsibilities and states,

My mentor, Dr. Martínez was juggling a billions things at once. Yet, she always had time for me and anybody that sought her help. If it wasn't for all the work that she put in with me like going through my papers, giving feedback, and really believing I could get through this degree, I'm not sure how I would have gotten

through. At the same time, she made me believe in myself and abilities to get through college.

Having a professor like Dr. Martínez that takes time in ensuring that Connie receives the necessary help with her academics, demonstrates how pedagogical practices assists Connie in her education attainment. Although Connie understands the many responsibilities Dr. Martínez has, she also acknowledges the without this type of pedagogical support, she perhaps would not have graduated. This example demonstrates how Chicana or Chicano professors have the power to increase graduation rates of their students. Other pedagogical practices that impact students is stated by Celia as follows,

Overall, what I learned from the professor in Chicana/o Studies and their practices was to be confident. They really demonstrated to me that I too can accomplish higher education especially with pursuing law school. I learned who I was, I learned to love everything about me, and I learned how to take all that with me wherever I go.

Celia's example is one that demonstrates how the confidence learned from professors in Chicana/o Studies is one that gives her the ability to believe in herself and accomplish desired goals. Celia's desire to attend Law School becomes a more concrete goal that eliminates past doubts. This example also reveals how Chicana/o Studies professors teach Celia how to carry on the self-love she has found to help her accomplish her future aspirations. Lluvia provides her experiences in multiple ways and states,

Dr. Díaz was too hard on us as students. While is good to be demanding of us and not have low expectations, I feel that as a teacher she needed to get to know her students and adapt to their needs. Every class is different. The student's background and knowledge is different and I think that is easy for some people to teach because they have the natural teaching gift, skills and experience where you get to know your students and class. I don't think Dr. Díaz knew how to do that. Maybe she thought we had the background information for her courses, but as a good teacher, you need to recognize when your students do not know and fix it somehow. She was smart and knew her material but I think that as a teacher, she just was not good. She expected us to have the same training that other history students had when it was really our first history class and many of us were coming from a literature background. She would just call on us and put

us on the spot and was so nerve wrecking because I was doing the readings and sometimes just did not understand. She didn't get that we were sometimes just really confused. She would just say, "no, that isn't right" to us when she picked at us. She didn't create that *confianza* for us and made it more difficult to want to be in her class. Based on that experience with Dr. Díaz, I ask myself 'what is important for me as a teacher? Is it covering the material? Is it seeing the students as people and helping them in their class so they can do better in the class an in the future? Or is it to just cover the material and that is it and seeing them as numbers.' I'm more like Dr. Martínez where I see my students as humans, not numbers. I know that it is up to me to make sure they get the material but also meet them half way. I don't expect my students in introduction courses to be able to write an essay in Spanish...I have to first teach the basic like grammar and sentence structures and then guide them towards the essay. In that way, I practice what worked for me when I was a student. Yes, it is more work but I know it works and it is very important. So why would I not do the same for my students?

Lluvia's example is one that has multiple layers of her experiences with how she was treated in the classroom as a student. Some of the incidents experienced by Lluvia are negative while others are positive and demonstrate how she caters to her students now. This example also shows how Dr. Díaz is not very flexible or takes time to really understand what the needs of her students are and how Lluvia makes sure she does not replicate those actions. Essentially, Lluvia has learned to be a teacher from the negative and positive pedagogical skills practiced on her as a student and create a student-teacher relationship with her students that is similar to those that assisted her.

The sense of value students acquire from their femtors and mentors is one where students, for the first time, are able to see themselves as people that are capable of excelling in this academics, conduct research, and obtaining a post-baccalaureate education. This sense of value within a positive student-teacher relationship provides important lessons to students and continues to use these in their present life (Morrison, 2008). Although participants benefit from the positive, they also learn from professors who do not possess positive pedagogical practices and make sure they, as teachers, do not engage in negative pedagogical practices.

Teaching with High Expectations and Equality. Although many of the participants expressed their doubts in their abilities to accomplish their baccalaureate degree, they credit some professors at CSUMV for having high teaching expectations and equality towards them. For some participants, transitioning into college was difficult, yet, they wanted to improve their education. One of the ways in which participants' education was improved was by having a professor who understood their struggles, were anti-deficit thinkers, and held high expectations of them. The following examples demonstrate how professors enact pedagogical skills that assist students in their educational attainment. Tito for example states,

In the classroom, Dr. Martínez would push really hard to have a good work ethic and she integrated that really well with all the material she taught us. She knew what educational backgrounds we were coming from and how our K-12 schools don't prepare all of us equally. Granted she didn't hold our hands either, but she always knew how to cater to each one of our needs and push us to levels we didn't think we could reach.

Tito's experience illustrates how Dr. Martínez's work ethic is one that students value and appreciate. In addition, this example demonstrates the ability to cater towards each student based on their individual academic needs while at the same time pushing students to higher levels of education. Although Dr. Martínez understands the K-12 educational neglect her students received, she believes in their capabilities to learn and succeed. The ability to understand a student's past, present, and future, is a key characteristic of a femtor because it demonstrates an awareness of the past, where the student is currently at, and where the students is headed.

Conchita also states her experiences with high expectations and states,

I think that Dr. Martínez, Jiménez and Professors Díaz, Hernández, and Santana, were supportive in the classroom and took it even further outside of the classroom. They weren't just in the classroom or department events because they needed to, but because they wanted to be there. It wasn't an obligation for them and it was aside from their job call. It was very important because it made me feel I wasn't alone and I was being supported in my education process. They weren't just teaching me things to tell me things, they were actually proving to me that I too could have this balance of education and quality teaching along with building

community with students. They had high expectations that I too could have multiple responsibilities and their actions demonstrated that to me.

Conchita demonstrates how several professors are supportive of her education in the classroom and via multiple department events. This support and involvement in Conchita's education show that there is a large commitment to the well-being of student's educational attainment as well as setting expectations for students. Another key finding is demonstrated by how the professors lead by example and makes Conchita feel that she too can be involved in many things while servicing her community and job responsibilities. This example illustrates a ripple effect that a culturally relevant pedagogy instills in students like Conchita. Eztli further elaborates on his experiences and states,

Dr. Martínez's style of teaching came with this sense of knowledge of where students were coming from and she would work hard with us on bringing out the academics and merging both, while Dr. García's style came from her own educational experiences. Dr. García wanted to make sure we really defended our argument but I don't think she really connected our experiences with our academics. Both of them were about preparing you but Dr. García was more about preparing you about academics and Dr. Martínez was preparing you more for a holistic experience, not just academics. If we made mistakes in our argument, Dr. Martínez didn't make you feel bad; she just helped clarify as opposed to Dr. García.

Eztli's response demonstrates once again that Dr. Martínez has a pedagogical approach towards her students that goes far beyond just academics. Although Dr. Martínez prepares students towards re-finishing their academic skills, she also has the ability to understand them on a personal level. In acknowledging student's previous educational experiences, Dr. Martínez builds a certain type of trust with students like Eztli. Dr. Martínez, unlike Dr. García has the ability to bring a personal touch to her students where they feel comfortable enough to learn, make mistakes, and move forward. Although Dr. García also possesses high expectations and pushes students toward higher forms of learning and performing those skills, she separates the personal from the academics leaving Eztli with an educational knowledge that was not a holistic human

experience. Although Dr. Martínez and Dr. García teach with high expectations, they practice different pedagogical skills that create a different type of transformation in a student's educational attainment. Once again, we see how Dr. Martínez has pedagogical practices that include the past, present, and future of her students. Like Eztli, Joaquín also discusses ways in which he is pushed to other levels and encounters higher expectations and states,

In Dr. Martínez's class, I learned more of *perdiendo el miedo* and stepping away from "I don't know how to pronounce that, I can't do it, I don't know how to do this" to simply saying "you know what, you're going to get it done" and I saw that mostly from example because everything she did in the class was self-enforced. She would really push you out of your comfort zone to become more critical on a subject. Like she would give you a prompt and we would have to go research it and in doing so, I learned I could do more than what I thought so.

Joaquín's statement on *perdiendo el miedo* symbolizes the ways in which pedagogical practices by Dr. Martínez teaches him to believe in himself and his abilities in being a critical student. One of the personal lessons learned is how Joaquín pushes himself and coming to the realization that he is capable of doing anything if he simply practices it. This realization and lesson learned is something that comes from a classroom setting that provides a nurturing environment for student to learn and grow as human beings. Another example of how high expectation assists students is discussed by Rosemeri and states,

Now that I've had the curriculum and teachings of Chicana/o Studies, I feel more confident in my abilities to talk to my daughter's teachers and sit-in on the classroom. *Nomas me siento* and tell her 'I need to see how you are teaching my daughter' and during open house, I examine the ways in which they are trying to present to us and how they are trying to seal the deal with us. I know what kind of teacher I want my daughter to have and they know what I expect of them too.

Rosemeri exemplifies how the teachings of professor in Chicana/o Studies have given her standards that are now transferred to her daughter's teachers. This shows how Rosemeri has become actively involved in the education of her daughter while at the same time, letting the teachers know that she has high expectations of them (Yosso, 2005). This example is significant

because it demonstrates how Chicana/o Studies pedagogy is used within the family and their educational future.

Teaching with high expectations and equality is something that participants greatly benefit from. The examples above show how the femtors and mentors have pedagogical practices that are anti-deficit and believe in the abilities of the students while at the same time, pushing students towards higher learning outcomes (Acuña, 2011). An important finding in this section is how a femtor and mentor is able to understand the past, present and future of Chicana and Chicano students, therefore, their pedagogical practices differ from a typical professor. There is a clear understanding of inequalities facing students, yet, professors expect student grow academically and assist them in that process. Other professors like Dr. Díaz has high expectations, however, she does not have the same positive impact that Dr. Martínez has. In fact, some participants (throughout this study) state how Dr. Diaz's pedagogical practices are many times intimidating and lack of understanding. Although Dr. Díaz is knowledgeable of struggles facing Chicanas and Chicano, she does not fully attempt to remedy these struggles in a holistic way like mentoring all students equally or provide a safe space for students to make mistakes, learn, and grow without fears.

Facilitating the Self-Transformation Process. Participants express various ways in which Chicana/o Studies pedagogical practices influence and transform their educational experiences. Some of the transformation Chicana/o Studies has on students is due to having femtors or mentors that understand the backgrounds of students and social inequalities they face. Having professors who share cultural background along with a social justice mind frame, has the potential to create a transformation in students education that leads them to obtain their baccalaureate degree and more. However, a self-transformation in students has to have professors that understand the necessity and urgency in Communities of Color obtaining an

education. Sharing cultural background with students is simply not enough in creating a transformation, hence the necessity for professors to provide specific pedagogical practices.

Below are some examples of how Chicana/o Studies pedagogical practices, when accomplished correctly has the power to facilitate self-transformation in transformation in people. Paloma states,

I remember thinking Dr. Jiménez was a person, not just a professor. You could actually relate to her and that never really happens. I remember meeting Chicana Ph.D.s and thinking, ‘wow, this does happen. They exist in flesh and blood’ and even though I was in McNair going for my Ph.D., there they were. Taking Dr. Jiménez’s class had a tremendous transformation in me because I saw myself as being able to do what she was doing. Being a History major didn’t really make me see myself that way because they didn’t have any Chicana Professors! Dr. Jiménez was so good at what she did that I was always comfortable in the class and learned so much about myself and what I wanted to do in life.

Paloma’s experience with having a Chicana professor that made her feel comfortable in the classroom exemplifies the powerful impact that high-quality pedagogy can have on students.

Something as simple as comfort along with having a professor, who shares ethnic background, has the power to transform a student and their future. Although Paloma states she was already in route towards a Ph.D., having Dr. Jiménez as her professors made Paloma’s future an even more capable reality. Pablo states the following when having professors that he can relate to ca relate to and states,

It’s really interesting to see professors that are your skin color teaching you. What really helped me a lot was to see that I was represented and seeing that these people made it to the teaching field, were giving back, and mentoring us. It really changed my perspective to what professors have to offer. I really felt that in Chicana/o Studies, my education was like a family and if you let one of them down, it was like letting your family down. It was inspiring and motivating and very encouraging because I hadn’t seen that many Professors of Color. Seeing this gives a great sense of accomplishment and that there is nothing I could not accomplish. Especially because these professors made it and came a long way.

Having professors that share his ethnic background demonstrates the significant impact they had on Pablo’s life when dealing with his future possibilities. Pablo’s example also exemplifies how

Chicana and Chicano professors are conducting multiple responsibilities that have a *familia* sense and therefore, assisting Pablo in becoming a determined person when accomplishing his future goals. Like Pablo, Tlaotani has similar experiences with professors and states,

Professor Garza was a good teacher! I loved his class and his teaching style. He used to teach from the bottom up perspective. I used to think, 'I want to teach like him one day.' His interactions with us were really good and taught us not to give up on our dreams.

Tlaotani's example demonstrates once again the self-transformation pedagogy has on future aspiration of going into teaching. Having a positive experience with Professor Garza demonstrates that pedagogical practices like encouraging students to keep reaching for their dreams is something that becomes an attainable reality for Tlaotani. The ways in which teaching takes place, like bottom-up approach is something Tlaotani looks forward to being able to practice in his classroom as a teacher. Tlaotani also discusses ways, in which he uses pedagogical practices that worked with him in other space and states,

I share what I learned in Chicana/o Studies with my friends that didn't finish high school or went to college. I'm mentoring the way I was mentored and trying to inspire my friends and a few of them even back to school. I hope that they can give back the way the professors in Chicana/o Studies gave me and the way I'm giving back.

Tlaotani's example once again demonstrates how Chicana/o Studies pedagogy, if practiced properly, serves multiple spaces that go beyond a classroom setting. This also illustrates how the powerful impact Chicana/o Studies pedagogical practices influence Tlaotani's self-transformation in spreading this knowledge to people in his community so that they too can acquire the type of experiences he received. The need to give back to people is a necessity that professors have instilled in Tlaotani. Yumey also expresses the transformation having a Chicana professor had in her education and states,

When I first went to CSUMV I just wanted to get the B.A. and that was it. I wanted to please my parents and say 'here is your degree' but now that I've had

these professors like Dr. Martínez, I want more for myself. Dr. Martínez was instrumental in instilling those ideas in me and now I want to get an M.A. and perhaps a Ph.D. I have no doubt that I can accomplish these things.

Yumey demonstrates how having a Chicana professor with a Ph.D. allows her to see that her educational goals can go beyond a baccalaureate degree. The femtoring Yumey has received from Dr. Martínez demonstrates the multiple influences a femtor can have on students. This is also another example where gender and racial similarities has the power to create a transformation on students. Like Yumey, Lluvia also discusses the ways in which Dr. Martínez assisted and states,

Dr. Martínez was the one that really impacted me. She is the one that believed in me before I even believed in myself. She saw something in me and I think that is why I became so close to her. Having that Chicana connection with Dr. Martínez is huge! My god, *ella tambien es Chicana*, her parents are not rich, she is the first to go to college and graduate school. And look at her now? Shoot, I could do that too! She represents who we can be!

Lluvia's experience with Dr. Martínez demonstrates once again how a femtor develops and cultivates a personal connection with her students while at the same time creating a confidence in students. Having this personal connection with students and assisting them in seeing their own value, is transformative and students take on goals they did not think they can accomplish. Lluvia's emphasis on ethnicity, gender, and class similarities with Dr. Martínez is especially important because she too comes from this background and the possibilities of becoming a professor become real and tangible. Another significant pedagogical practice is the belief that Lluvia had many skills to offer that can assist her with future goals. Pablo also discusses his experiences and self-transformation with Chicana/o Studies femtors/mentors and states,

All I could think of sometimes when watching how professors were teaching was 'this would have been helpful when I was younger' because the material and style of presenting really made me think about how I want to be a professor and would like to go to grad school and teach Chicana/o Studies or History. I think I really got my money's worth out of CSUMV in majoring in Chicana/o Studies. The dedication, especially of Dr. Martínez, Professor Aguilar, Garza and Díaz was

amazing. They would tell us not to drop out of school, to keep going, and not be a statistic. There was always this extra encouragement to keep pushing forward. That specific way of teaching and mentoring made a whole lot of difference in me. Here I am now working with youth in hopes that I could encourage them and help them not be a statistic either.

In Pablo's example, the self-transformation is once again attributed to the way in which professors have a personal connection with him and provide advice that should be considered part of teaching, yet, Pablo views it as extra. This extra support has the power to transform Pablo's education and provides him with a sense of hope in wanting to also be a professor. Another example of the impact these professors had on Pablo is demonstrated in his desire to pass on these experiences and knowledge to the youth he works with. In practicing these types of pedagogies, Pablo understands its power and significance of passing this on because it demonstrates the dire need to assist youth and their future the same way he was mentored/mentored. Like Pablo, Rebecca states the following when experiencing self-transformation and states,

I began to understand why my mother and father think the way they do when it comes to gender because of Professor Aguilar's teachings. This class changed my perspective in the way I see the world. I saw things one way growing up and then I saw it a whole another way in Chicana/o Studies. I feel like it opened my mind. I suddenly had another lens to what history was and how it relates to me. This helped me grow on levels I didn't know I could and it helped me challenge gender roles. In the classroom, we were all valuable regardless of gender.

In Rebecca's example, the self-transformation is tied to her experiences with family and gender norms demonstrating that Chicana/o Studies has a direct link to the personal lives of students. The pedagogical lessons learned by Professor Aguilar gives Rebecca the ability to have different perspectives on gender norm as well as a historical understanding as to what space her parents operate from. Another impact that pedagogy has on is stated by Joaquín,

Some of the things I learned growing up actually had meaning. Sometimes we think it doesn't have value but Chicana/o Studies taught me that there is a lot of knowledge in our community. The professors in Chicana/o Studies really

reinforced the ideas that our traditions or culture are important. The fact that Mexican Americans have Ph.Ds. and have positions as professors, served as an example for me to finish my B.A. and continue to a Ph.D. The way they interacted with me showed that it was possible to finish my B.A. because they too had gone through what I went through. After getting this education I felt more like I had a right to talk and my own contributions. That was a big part of my education.

Joaquín's example is one that connects the value of his culture with the ways in which professors reinforce those ideals. Having professors that share ethnic background exemplifies the significance this has for Joaquín and his completion of his baccalaureate education. Having Chicana or Chicano professor with positive pedagogical practices, serves as future role models for Joaquín.

The pedagogical practices and curriculum of Chicana/o Studies, facilitates the self-transformational process of students (Acuña, 2009; Hurtado, 2005; Paris, 2012; Ladson-Billings, 2014). For the participants in this study, this transformation takes place at a personal level as well as an educational level. These transformations are seen in the way in which participants deal with inequalities people endure due to their gender, sexuality, and patriarchy. Another significant transformation is how participants see themselves in the future and aspire to be like their professors in continuing to provide mentorship to other people.

The above sections on positive pedagogical practices have demonstrated the significant impact pedagogy can have on students when practiced correctly, with compassion, and with a feminist social justice approach. The various ways a femtor and mentor practice their teaching; can assist students in various facets of their education and future. In addition, when positive pedagogical practices are created and include a curriculum that is culturally relevant, the opportunities of students become endless.

Pedagogies of Neglect:[Tor]Mentor Practices and Its Impact on Students

All of the previous testimonies thus far have demonstrated how positive pedagogies of a femtor or mentor are developed and nurtured in order to create an impact on the participants' education. Although participants credit positive experiences to their educational attainment and transformation, some of those experiences are the complete opposite when dealing with a [tor]mentor. A [tor]mentor, in the case of this study is defined as a male professor who practices pedagogies of neglect like: lack of caring, name calling of female students, instilling fear, banking education, does not provide constructive feedback, does not mentor students, and is not involved in departmental events. Although the main [tor]mentor as described is male professor, some participants equate some female professors as having [tor]mentor characteristics and therefore, a female can also be a [tor]mentor. The complexity of a [tor]mentor and pedagogies of neglects will be further examined in the section that follows and include: (1) *Lack of Caring*; (2) *Banking Education: 'Not Included in a Dialogue'*; (3) *Sexism in the Classroom: 'Mi Voz No Tenia Valor'*; (4) *Moving Past the [Tor] Mentor and Resistance*; and (5) *Lessons Learned: The [tor]mentor Impact on Students*.

Lack Of Caring. The ways in which I define lack of caring are due to the insufficient mentoring, availability, understanding of social background, time and effort provided to students. The lack of the aforementioned is demonstrated in many different ways by the participants as well as their critiques of the lack of caring by the [tor]mentors. For example, Rose states the following,

Dr. Pulido and Dr. García only critiqued my weakness in my writing and never tried to understand that English is not my first language. I had a lot of mistakes but my ideas were good. Yet, the comments were always so negative and it always left me with a feeling that they were not invested in my education and learning. They really lacked a connection with students if they were not really good writers.

Rose's experience with Dr. Pulido and Dr. García exemplifies how focusing merely on the negative aspects of her writing is counter-productive towards her development as a writer. The fact that Rose is left with negative feelings regarding way in which she is being treated, demonstrates that there is a lack of connection regarding the type of issues Rose struggles with. This example also demonstrates that because of Rose's writing problems, she is not treated as somebody that is worth connecting to or even assisting her in becoming a better writer. This example also demonstrates how Dr. García has the tendency of moving in and out of the, mentor and [tor]mentor role, hence, her disconnection with students. Juan also states the following when taking course with Dr. Pulido as follows,

I witnessed a lot of people not have specific tactics when dealing with Dr. Pulido and they really suffered for it. They got scrutinized. They got ridiculed by him in class and out of class. People that didn't really have all their strengths and weaknesses completely defined would get attacked by Dr. Pulido and he would take it out on them in a public matter. Which is wrong but it was his class and he runs it. Some of us were afraid to challenge him too. If the class was small with 5-10 students, you were open to criticism. For example, he would ask [a student] "we covered all these topics in class, why didn't you include ABC and D?" The student would say "you never told me Prof." and he would say "well, he (while pointing at a male student) was able to figure it out." The only reason that other student would figure it out was because he had to track him down in his office. He was egotistical and it was more like an environment of "this is an institution I'm running. *Yo soy el hombre!* and I run it my way!"

Juan's experiences with Dr. Pulido are layered with multiple problems. One of the biggest problems is the way in which students are not in a learning environment that is safe to make mistakes, learn, and grow. Considering that many of the students at CSUMV come from an education background that has not adequately prepared them for a rigorous college education, Dr. Pulido attacks students and fails to acknowledge these educational gaps to work with students meeting their academic goals. In the process of attacking students, a climate of fear has been established in the classroom. This climate of fear is then turned into a space where students feel they cannot speak out or stand up for their human rights because Dr. Pulido holds the power

of a professor. An excellent critique of the power is how Juan views this as an institutional-gendered problem that Dr. Pulido has embraced in order to run his classes in whatever way he wishes, regardless of learning outcomes. Like Juan, Alex encountered similar experiences and states,

Dr. Pulido would pick on students that were not doing very well in the class. If a student asked for help or clarification, Dr. Pulido would tell the student that she/he should already know the answers to that. Also, if one of us messed up in the format of the paper like something as insignificant as the title, Dr. Pulido would decrease our grade by an entire letter grade. What was that about?! He had absolutely no patience or understanding that this was all new to us and we were just learning.

Alex, experiences once again demonstrates the hostile classroom environment created by Dr. Pulido's when the only things students are asking for is a normal explanation of the material. After all, students are paying for an education and should be able to acquire clarification from professors when asked for. This example also demonstrates the lack of understanding as to where students are coming from and how the material and paper formats are new to them. The fact the Dr. Pulido punishes students for an improper title format, exemplifies the lack of caring towards students, but also the power dynamics that are taking place. Another similar experience on how students are treated is discussed by Paloma and states,

I took the literature class with Dr. Pulido and it was a whole different experience [compared to other classes]. When I first met Dr. Pulido, I remember thinking he was such a smart man and he knows what is talking about, but as we got further in the class, I felt like he was targeting people in the class as far as telling us what not to do and using them as an example. It was very obvious who he was talking about and I remember thinking that was mean because some of us are not good writers and English is not our first language. I felt he targeted certain people that were not very strong writers.

This example is one that is similar to previous testimonies, therefore demonstrating that the practices by Dr. Pulido are common and have little care for students and their development. Dr. Pulido's practices of targeting specific students for skills that they have not yet mastered, is a

form of intimidation that once again sets up the type of environment students have to endure.

Conchita is one that experiences different type of lack of caring on behalf of Dr. Pulido and states,

I was lucky that I never had to take a class with Dr. Pulido because I took his mandatory classes while he was on sabbatical with another professor. Still, I remember being part of research day at the university along with some of his students he was supposedly working with...who he helped very little by the way and I never saw him at the event. In fact, he was never at any events the department held. Everyone else was there except him. Even though he was part of the department and he had like two students working with him, he was never a part of events or things his students were involved in... his students eventually ended up leaving and going with Dr. Martínez for the mentorship because he was never around. He only did the minimal like teach and office hours. No more. That was it! If he had students and he was telling them to be part of activities with the university and department, then why was he not there? What is he trying to show his students? He didn't show any support or care, that is what he showed.

Although Conchita states she never took classes with Dr. Pulido, his classroom pedagogical practices were similar to those outside of the classroom setting. This example demonstrates how other professors in the department are mentoring the students that are being neglected because there is an understanding of supporting students in all their endeavors. Although Dr. Pulido has two students working with him, eventually they too seek the mentoring of Dr. Martínez due to the lack of effort that is given to them. This example demonstrates the thirst students have in wanting to conduct research and be part of research day, yet, the support on behalf of Dr. Pulido is absent. Conchita's critique of the way her colleagues are being treated demonstrates her understanding of the lack of caring, even when it does not directly impact her. Although Conchita's example focuses outside of the classroom, the classroom setting need to be further analyzed to see what other forms students are being affected by the [tor]mentor.

The lack of caring by Dr. Pulido and Dr. García is evident in various ways in the previous testimonies. Participants equate this lack of caring to not providing constructive feedback with writing assignments, not supporting students during their learning process by scolding and

humiliating them inside the classroom. The lack of caring is also demonstrated outside of the classroom by the deficient support given to students, especially during departmental events. The fact that the few students being “mentored” by Dr. Pulido end up seeking the mentoring of Dr. Martínez, demonstrates that students are more than willing to learn and grow as scholars and will eventually find other people that can be supportive of such development.

Banking Education: 'Not Included in a Dialogue'. Freire (2007) demonstrated the ill effects of banking education in a classroom setting. As discussed in the literature review chapter of this study, banking education refers to power dynamics that place the teacher as the person who holds all the valid knowledge and deposits information to students. This banking system also places students beneath the teachers and takes away their power and neglects the knowledge they have. Banking education therefore, means that teachers teach and students learn without there being any dialoged between the both. Although the foundations and ethos of Chicana/o Studies are anti-banking, however, the examples below show the contrary. Maya states the following,

All of Dr. Pulido's classes were the same readings and the same assignments. I think he's really lazy. I don't understand how a lower division and upper division course could be taught the same! Exact! Way! I did not appreciate it at all. I was being cheated out of my education, but I had to take his courses because it was a mandatory course [for the major]. He wasted my semester where I could have really learned something. His teaching style was so traditional like 'here are some empty pots and I'm here to deposit information into these empty pots because they can't think for themselves' and that's what it was like. That is what we had to deal with and be extremely disengaged in his classes. He would go as far as to tell us that a B.A. in Chicana/o Studies was not going to get us anywhere! Look at me now!

Maya's example is one that not only shows the lack of effort that is put into course thought by Dr. Pulido, but also the pedagogical practices of banking education. Combining both of these problems in the classroom reveals the ill impact it can have on students. The disengagement experienced by Maya in a Chicana/o Studies classroom is one that should not be endured considering what the purpose of Chicana/o Studies is. This problem also demonstrates how Dr.

Pulido is a professor that has been institutionalized to perform within the academy, whether or not the students learn. Although there is material that needs to be covered as part of the curriculum, not all courses have the same requirements and Dr. Pulido does so in a manner that does not engage students in a dialogue. A major disappointment is also demonstrated in the lack of encouragement in attaining a baccalaureate degree in Chicana/o Studies, therefore, teaching in hegemonic system that dismisses the importance of Chicana/o Studies. This lack of teaching material that is appropriate to the course level and anti-Chicana/o Studies pedagogy, is also demonstrated in Pablo's experience and discusses the following,

I took one class with Dr. Pulido and he didn't really seem to be very interested in teaching. I felt like he lacked passion for Chicana/o Studies. He would teach through a yellow pad and it wasn't extraordinarily painful to be in his class, but I felt that his learning style was more formal like all the other professors I had in the past with general education courses. This class did not have too much room to be creative and explore and come out of your comfort zone. He was like "this is right and this is wrong" so I really felt that it didn't give us room to express ourselves. This class didn't scare me and I was still going to say what I had to say about the readings but I didn't want to upset him either because he had a tendency to hold on to things like grudges and mess with our grades. He took things really personal when all we were doing was trying to learn, be critical, and use all the tools we had from our other classes.

Pablo's example illustrates the need for Dr. Pulido's classes to have a dialogue like other professors he had in Chicana/o Studies. The banking education is equated to that of general education courses that do not hold the values of what Chicana/o Studies should have, yet, Dr. Pulido does not have those values either. Pablo equates Dr. Pulido to being somebody that does not care by stating the lack of passion for Chicana/o Studies. This example also shows the recurring problem that students face like the fear in expressing themselves due to how their grade will suffer. Another key component of this example is how Pablo equates Dr. Pulido to taking things personal when students were engaging critically in the material and using tools they had acquired from previous professors in Chicana/o Studies. This once again demonstrates the power

dynamics that have been established in the classroom and how students are careful in navigating that space out of fear. Eztli's experience provides more insight as to how the classroom is used as a banking space and states,

Eztli states, Dr. García's classes were great readings and she really challenged my writing skills and while I appreciate that, I feel like it lacked a more interactive dynamic. She came prepared with PowerPoint and lectures, but we rarely did group work or had the opportunity to interact with each other as a class. I think being able to debate and discuss with all the people in the class is more effective than just sitting there listening to a lecture. Dr. Pulido on the other hand, teaches in a real traditional way like he teaches and we listen. I took a class with Dr. Pulido and I like the material, both didn't, which bothered me. We read *Borderlands* and he didn't like it. He criticized what I liked and when I spoke about in class, he just shut me down. A lot of us wanted to talk about Anzaldúa in specific ways and he didn't let us. He just gave us work that was really busy work. It wasn't like other courses where we could have a dialogue. Other professors are o.k. with you questioning them. They would encourage that because they want you to have your own mind, your own position and Dr. Pulido wasn't like that. It's a threat to him, he doesn't like us giving an opinion that opposed his opinion and would get upset at us.

Although Dr. García has been credited for pushing students to a specific writing level and she does not fall under the [tor]mentor characteristics, she is still one that practices what many participants describe as banking education. Again, this form of learning is not one that is conducive in any space because participants like Eztli state how the benefit of dialogue is greater than listening to a professor lecture the entire time. Dr. Pulido exemplifies the same banking education techniques, but goes into the [tor]mentor realm when it comes to student's opinions. Eztli demonstrates how there is no avenue for students to speak freely without disrupting established pedagogical practices by Dr. Pulido. An important aspect of this example is how Eztli recognizes the differences between other professor who value his opinion and scholarly development while Dr. Pulido does not and instead enacts his power of a professor over a student by shutting the conversation off.

The banking education methods demonstrated by Dr. García and Dr. Pulido have a negative impact because it stifles the analytical process of learning (Freire, 2007). These pedagogical practices experienced by participants do not allow students to fully engage in a dialogical manner, therefore, hindering their abilities to fully engage in their development as students. Dr. Pulido, however, takes his non-dialogical practices to a whole different level in which students are treated as individuals without any knowledge. However, students have experiential knowledge that can be used in combination with positive pedagogical practice in order to enhance their educational experiences and future aspiration (Delgado Bernal, 1998b and 2001).

Sexism in the Classroom: 'Mi Voz No Tenia Valor'. Several of the participants discuss ways in which inequalities took place towards female students due to their gender. These experiences illustrate how the space created by the [tor]mentor is one that incorporates pedagogical practices of banking education and also oppression of female students. Although both female and male students attempt to fight for their right to express themselves, the battle for equality become ones where students either defend their humanity and take a loss of grade or remain silent due to retaliation of the professor. The following examples demonstrate how the [tor]mentoring students takes place in the classroom as stated by Alex,

Dr. Pulido would treat women differently than men. A man can say something that was not very thought-out and Dr. Pulido would agree. However, if a woman said something that was on point, Dr. Pulido would disagree and not credit her opinion at all.

This example demonstrates in a simple form the type of acknowledgement that is giving to students due to their gender. Although, the male students in Alex's example could have been one that was not very clear with his example, it still demonstrates the lack of recognition that a more cohesive female union has. The fact that Alex is able to examine these interactions only

demonstrates that this is something that students are noticing and also a common practice on behalf of Dr. Pulido. Maya further explains these unfortunate common practices and states,

When I began to argue with Dr. Pulido about his views on Anzaldúa's *Borderlands*, Dr. Pulido called me a femanazi! In class! Can you believe that?! Just because I had the guts to argue against his points on Anzaldúa's *Borderlands* being too radical and how he didn't agree with her. He didn't allow for any discussion in his class on different perspectives yet this was a book we were assigned to read. Class was his way and that was it. He thought he knew everything! He sure did mess with our grades, but I was tired of the sexism and by that point, I didn't care about my grade...besides, he had disrespected me already.

The [tor]mentor practices of Dr. Pulido dehumanizes Maya on as a person and specifically targets her gender in the process of the attack. Calling Maya a femanazi simply because Maya has a passion for women's rights, is in no way appropriate and dehumanizes Maya. This example demonstrates how many university ethical rules are broken in creating an environment that is conducive of student learning. Maya is more than aware of the assault she is taking based on her gender, yet, she decides to continue to fight for her dignity and defends women's rights like many previous Chicanas (Anzaldúa 1987 and 1990; Gómez-Nieto 1973 and 1974; Ruiz, 1998), even though her grade will ultimately suffer. In addition, equating Maya to being a nazi simply for having a feminist perspective, is as if Maya is guilty for the killing of millions of people. Like Maya, Celia also encounters similar assaults and states,

Dr. Pulido's style is "I'm always right" and so I learned how to figure out his style and give him what he wanted. Doing that was hard because I'm very opinionated woman and he always shut me down in class with condescending questions like "what Celia? What do you have to say now, Celia?" He was hearing my opinions but not listening. I always felt it really didn't matter because he was stuck on his answer being the right one and we just [had to] go with it.

Although Celia's experience is not as horrible as Maya's encounters with Dr. Pulido, this interaction demonstrates once again how women's opinions are not valued in a classroom setting. Also, Celia's experience illustrates how Dr. Pulido finds way of shutting her opinion by being condescending and disrespectful. Conducting such pedagogical practices show that Dr. Pulido is a

professor that is not equipped to be in the class room and create a change that can be transformational towards students and their learning. Student learning is put on halt and enables them from demonstrating the critical tools they have acquired thus far from other Chicana/o Studies classes and professors. Paloma's example below also demonstrates ways, in which she was not able to further her understating of Chicana Feminism and states,

When we read Anzaldúa and other short stories by Chicana authors, we never really went that in depth [with the reading]. It felt like we just read them because that is what you read in Chicana/o Studies Literature course, but Dr. Pulido would leave very key works of Chicana literature towards the end and spend very little time discussing these works in comparison to Chicano authors. It felt like we were sort of floating through the literature that really delved into Chicana Feminisms and we couldn't do anything about it. I could not get the education I deserved with Dr. Pulido.

Paloma's example demonstrates tactics of avoidance by Dr. Pulido. Leaving key works of Chicana/o Studies as a discipline of study towards the end represents how Dr. Pulido refuses to go into depth with such material and allow for a dialogue on Chicana Feminism readings. Another imperative finding is how Paloma, as a student, felt powerless in her abilities to discuss such readings and the impact it was having on her. This is once again an example of how female students along with female authors are not valued in a classroom setting. Not only were students silenced, but so were the Chicana authors.

The gender discrimination experienced by female participants as stated by the participants above, is one that is completely unacceptable in any environment. However, considering these [tor]mentoring practices are taking place in an educational setting, this speaks to the many power dynamics instilled by Dr. Pulido onto his students. The harassment of Dr. Pulido are a clear example of how females are targeted for their values and philosophy on women's rights, therefore, making the classroom a hostile space for learning and an unsafe space. Although many Chicanas in the past have fought for gender and educational equality, Dr.

Pulido's actions demonstrate the continued oppression experienced by female participants in the classroom (Anzaldúa, 1978; Nieto Gómez, 1974; and Smith, 2002). Aside from noting the [tor]mentoring practices of Dr. Pulido, the above examples also demonstrates ways in which students do engage in the fight for gender and education-determination even though their freedom of speech is being denied.

Moving Past the [Tor] Mentor and Resistance. Although participants of this study encountered dehumanizing experiences with Dr. Pulido, one of the [tor]mentors, they still find ways to move past the trauma, resist, and gain the most out of their experiences. The way in which I define resistance is demonstrated in different ways by the participants. Some of the resistance tactics are finding ways of avoiding Dr. Pulido, or finding ways of making him feel as if he is truly a great professor with equal and just pedagogical practices. Other ways tactics used by students are to take his classes when he is on leave with other professors. The next example will go more into depth on ways participants were able to intact their agency and resist the [tor]mentor. Juan for example states,

I receive all As in the classes I took with Dr. Pulido. I knew it was because we had rapport and a social connection because I was one of those students that figured him out quickly. I figured, I better become his friend so I don't get bashed in class like the others. So my strategy worked for me and I began giving advice to other students so they can get on his good side, it almost felt like we were all joining forces to fight this power trip he was on and it worked for many of us.

Juan's example is one that shows how students have agency even though they cannot fully exert it in Dr. Pulido's classroom. This example is particularly important because it demonstrates how students, not just Juan are aware of the unjust education they are receiving from Dr. Pulido and rather than fight him, they strategize ways in which they can act as if they are build a student-teacher relationship. This example also shows the unity and strength students carry while trying to overcome such adversity and how at the end, students will find ways of avoiding hardships

and simply get through the requirements of taking Dr. Pulido's classes. Other students like Yumey find other tactics in dealing with Dr. Pulido and state,

I avoided Dr. Pulido like the plague. Other professors helped me avoid him by advising me to take his classes when he was going on leave. I didn't like the interaction I had with him or the way he was treating my friends so I waited patiently until he was gone!

Yumey's tactic in avoiding Dr. Pulido was one that benefited her greatly. Although Yumey didn't take classes with him, she was aware of his [tor]mentoring practices. Another tactic of avoidance is seeking guidance from other professors that shows, which shows how professors are also aware of the pedagogies of neglect that are taking place and finds ways to teach students important lessons on how to move past the [tor]mentor. Like Yumey, Conchita also states,

I waited for Dr. Pulido to go on leave and then took his classes. I just didn't want to deal with him and risk being treated badly. I had plenty of responsibilities and stress already being a full-time student with a full-time job and helping my parents out. I was not going to allow this man to add more problems to my life. Listening to other people was enough to have me avoid him.

Conchita's example is similar to that of Yumey's example in which she too decided to wait until Dr. Pulido was on sabbatical to take his classes. This example once again demonstrates the actions taken by students in order to avoid the [tor]mentor and overcome hardships.

The strategies taken by participants were some that demonstrate ways in which they were aware of the problems with Dr. Pulido and his pedagogy and find ways to either control the situation that will benefit Juan or avoid Dr. Pulido all together. It is important to examine that although participants were vulnerable as students, they have agency. The agency form participants become a tool to successfully navigate the university in ways that will benefit them as human beings and as developing students/learners.

Lessons Learned: The [Tor]mentor Impact on Students. The experience of the [tor]mentor and pedagogies of neglect are some that affects students' ways that takes away their humanity and

freedom to express themselves while at the same time creating fear that enable many to stay silent. Although these are harsh lessons to be learned in a space where students auth to be growing academically, they still try to make a negative experience into a positive one. The next examples demonstrate how participants learn lessons that ultimately change their lives. Rose states,

I know a lot of us students struggled with writing and since we could not get help from Dr. Pulido or Dr. García, we went with Dr. Martínez because she related with us. She would tell me to go see her as much as possible and that she would help me. That was never the case with the other two. They weren't very open minded or supportive to students. So one of the major things I learned was to move on and forget about them. I knew I could do better if I was guided differently and learning from other professors who truly cared about me. *Cuando una puerta se cierra, pues a abrir otra.*

Rose demonstrates how the failure of Dr. Pulido and Dr. García to provide necessary feedback, pushed her towards Dr. Martínez who has demonstrated to be a femtor that cares about students. An important lesson in negating help to Rose did not stop her; therefore, she learns different ways in navigating the Chicana/o Studies Department. Although some professors are not available, Rose finds those that are willing to work with her. Like Rose, Juan finds other ways in navigating Chicana/o Studies and states,

One of the lessons I learned was that no matter how many times I was able to get Dr. Pulido on my side, he was still somebody that didn't care. Like when it came down to Raza Graduation, he was nowhere to be seeing. He didn't participate or care enough to be there for all of us who had to go through so much in his classes. The only people there were present were Dr. Martínez, Dr. García and Dr. Jiménez. You had Professor Díaz doing the music for the event, Professor Garza volunteering with other things, but not Dr. Pulido. He just wasn't supportive and that showed me that he was a coward! All I know now is that I will not be like him with my own students, ever!

The feelings expressed, but Juan towards Dr. Pulido are honest and understandable considering what Juan and many other students went through with [tor]mentoring practices of Dr. Pulido. This example illustrates how other professors from Chicana/o Studies show their support of

students and their accomplishments, yet, Dr. Pulido was not present. A key finding in Juan's response is the way in which he vows never to be like Dr. Pulido with his own students. This lesson demonstrates that although there is a negative experience, Juan turns it into a life lesson on how one should treat the future generations. Eztli is also somebody finds the positives of [tor]mentor practices and states,

All have impacted me positively, even Dr. Pulido. I don't ever want to be like him. I don't want my ego to get in the way and make others feel like I'm better than them. After being in Chicana/o Studies for a year, I wanted to get a Ph.D. and teach, but Dr. Pulido in a way almost scared me. I would question if that's what academia was going to be like. Taking him was such a contrast to other professors that demonstrated how academia was not this horrible space; it was just Dr. Pulido who was a horrible human being. I never want to let myself be that way. I just won't do it.

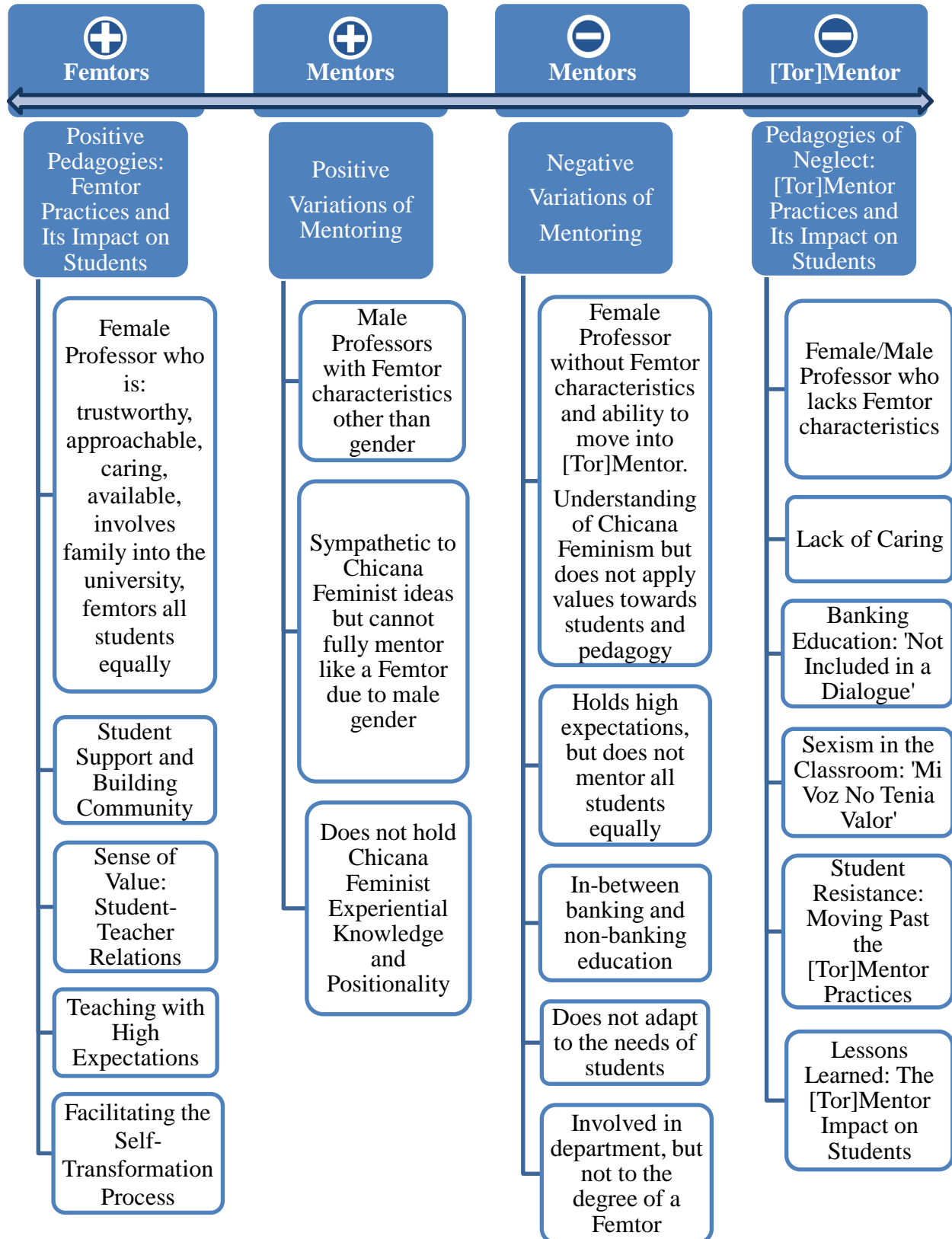
Eztli's response expresses his stance on the pedagogical practices by Dr. Pulido and refuses to fall into being a professor that practices negative pedagogies. Once again, the negative actions of Dr. Pulido are seen as an example of what not to become and focus on the positive ways in which other professors treat their students as a guide for his future. A significant illustration in Eztli's example is how there has been an interest in attaining a Ph.D. from early on in his education, however, Dr. Pulido's [tor]mentoring practices almost derail Eztli from his future goals.

The impact from the [tor]mentoring practices of Dr. Pulido and Dr. García are lessons that participants turned into positive experiences and found ways of resistance against such treatment of them (Cammarota & Romero, 2014; Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001). The examples above demonstrate the awareness of the ill-pedagogical skills practiced on them as students, yet, participants use these as lesson of growth. A positive aspect of these harsh pedagogical practices is that participants know not to replicate such actions and instead, focus on being better human beings towards other humans.

Spectrum of Pedagogical Practices in Chicana/o Studies

The previous testimonies on *Positive Pedagogies: Femtor and Mentor Practices and Its Impact on Students* and *Pedagogies of Neglect: [Tor]Mentor Practices and Its Impact on Students* provide a special insight on the pedagogical outcomes of a Chicana/o Studies Department. The trust participants unveil is one that is honest, without reservations or fear. The fact that many participants experience similar positive or negative pedagogies by various professors demonstrates that these experiences are not based on an individual, a course, or a year, but rather several individuals throughout several years. Figure 5.1 provides a visual of the spectrum of pedagogical practices along with characteristics of femtors, mentors, and [tor]mentors as discussed in the findings of this chapter. My hopes in providing this pedagogical spectrum is to demonstrate that professor at CSUMV have teaching variations with students that are positive and negative. The complex variations in Figure 5.1 are due to the experiential knowledge (Delgado Bernal 1998b; Freire, 1970; Nieto Gómez 1974; and Solórzano, 1997) that is either practiced or neglected, therefore Figure 5.1 demonstrates that: (1) only female professors could be femtors due to their gender, knowledge and social justice practice of Chicana feminist epistemology, and Chicana positionality; (2) some male professors share the values and pedagogical skills of a femtor, but are not femtors due to their male gender and not possessing the experiential knowledge and positionality of a Chicana, yet, they are as supportive of students as a femtor is; (3) not all female professors are femtors even though they have an understanding of Chicana feminist epistemology because they lack the practical aspect within their pedagogical skills and have demonstrated to move in and out of [tor]mentor practices; (4) a [tor]mentor as demonstrated can be female and male professors who although have the scholarship knowledge, they are not fully in support of students and lack adequate treatment and positive pedagogical practices.

Figure 5.1: Spectrums of Pedagogical Practices and Outcomes in Chicana/o Studies at CSUMV



Conclusion: Effective Teaching in Chicana/o Studies

The findings of this chapter have illustrated the range of professors and pedagogical practices that exist within Chicana/o Studies at CSUMV. The type of mentorship that falls in between does not fully qualify as femtors or [tor]mentors, hence the need to create a spectrum of pedagogical practices that demonstrates the variations of mentoring regardless of gender. Based on the experiences of participants with Chicana/o Studies professors and their pedagogical practices, I have developed several characteristics that assist in further describing the types of professors at CSUMV. In developing Figure 5.1, my attempt is to provide a visual that includes the range of pedagogical practices participants underwent while obtaining their baccalaureate degree. The left side of the spectrum indicates high-quality practices while the opposite indicates poorer qualities. The types of mentoring characteristics in between are also complex in which various pedagogical actions are displayed by professors. Also, the in between mentorships is where most of the male professors fall due to their gender that does not qualify them to be femtors, as mentioned earlier in this chapter. Yet, all these types of practices, whether positive or negative, have an impact on students and their educational experiences. My hopes in developing this pedagogical spectrum is that it can serve as a guide for professors in the field who are looking for ways to enhance their teaching and mentoring practices with their students. I also hope that professors examine their privileges and power and the type of influences they have in increasing retention and graduation rates as well as assisting and guiding students for post-baccalaureate or professional aspirations.

Chapter 6

Discussion

The twenty-five participants of this study are major contributors. Without the voices of these strong women and men, this study could not have been completed. The testimonies, *confianza*, tears, and happiness shared are moments I have taken and tried to make the best of. I am extremely grateful for the openness of each individual that allowed me to write their experiences without fear of repercussions they once had due to their student status. I hope that these shared experiences can be used to inform current and future educators regarding the importance of having Chicana/o Studies and teachers that go beyond and above to provide good quality teaching. I thank each participant for allowing me to be the person to write such significant experiences on a field of study that has historically been a struggle to obtain. I also thank the participants for being the voices of so many Chicana/o Studies alumni. With this said, I would like to continue to discuss the research questions of this study, its findings, the future of Chicana/o Studies, the significance of a baccalaureate degree in Chicana/o Studies, theoretical, practical, and policy implications, and future research.

Revisiting the Research Questions

Two research questions have been answered to determine the impact a culturally relevant education like Chicana/o Studies has on students who major or minor in the field. The first question regarding curriculum in Chapter Four is, *how does culturally relevant curriculum like Chicana/o Studies impact the educational experiences of Chicana and Chicano students?* The second question answered in Chapter Five regarding pedagogy is, *how does a culturally relevant pedagogy impact the educational experiences of Chicana and Chicano students?* The next section will briefly discuss the overall findings of curriculum and pedagogy.

Curriculum Findings

Chapter Four findings on Chicana/o Studies curriculum address many things like how participants came into Chicana/o Studies. For the majority of them, Chicana/o Studies was introduced through a general education course and in taking this class, participants became interested and decided to major or minor in the discipline. One of the major things learned about when taking Chicana/o Studies was the inequalities Communities of Color have experienced in the past and present. Motivated by this new learning and social justice ethos of Chicana/o Studies curriculum, participants took this knowledge and applied it to their daily lives within family, education, and work. In learning this curriculum, participants are able to personalize the material because it is relevant to them, their families, and communities. In connecting with the past, present and future, people have an understanding that this curriculum is something they cannot hold onto and must also pass on to others. Some of the ways in which Chicana/o Studies is used in the present is demonstrated by how some participants use the curriculum in their classrooms (for those that are teachers), graduate/professional education, and fields of social services like health care, social work, and the law. Having a culturally relevant curriculum like Chicana/o Studies also facilitated the future aspirations like entering the aforementioned fields. Overall, the Chicana/o Studies curriculum is one that transformed the participants and is rooted in social justice (Acuña, 2011; Cammarota, 2007; Sealey-Ruiz, 2007; and Sleeter, 2011). Having a social justice approach to the present and future allows the people in this study to continue to create change in their communities and beyond.

Pedagogy Findings

The transformation that participants encounter with curriculum is one that cannot fully be created without positive pedagogical practices of professors in Chicana/o Studies. Some participants discussed how the curriculum is transformational; however, the professors have the

ability to teach the material in ways that it can create an even greater impact. The best pedagogical practices are labeled in Chapter Five and are *Positive Pedagogies: Femtor and Mentor Practices*. Some of the characteristics of femtors and mentors who held the best pedagogical practices were described as caring, respectful, of *confianza*, had high expectations, and were able to understand the past, present and future of challenges facing students. In seeking professors that offered this type of support, participants practiced community building performed by some faculty. Participating in community building, the student-teacher relationship became stronger and was one that benefits participants. In addition, positive pedagogical practices attached to culturally relevant curriculum created a self-transformation for participants in ways that benefited them like completing their baccalaureate degrees, attaining graduate or professional education, and aspiring to be like the professors that femtored or mentored them.

Although the best pedagogical practices come from femtors and mentors, there was a complete opposite praxis such as *Pedagogies of Neglect: [Tor]Mentor Practices*. These pedagogical practices were those that adopted a banking education system that did not allow for students to be active members in the classroom or within their education. While teaching in such manner, participants also experienced other types of pedagogies of neglect by their [tor]mentor such as offensive name calling towards women who are feminist, fear of speaking in the classroom, lack of caring, and witnessing students being scolded for making mistakes on writing assignments. These practices by the [tor]mentor are harsh, yet, the participants were resilient enough to use those moments as lessons and move on with their education. Some participants stated their desire to not become a person like the [tor]mentor while others figured out ways of resisting and avoiding these professors. Participants stated that the [tor]mentor reminded them of the importance of being a human being that cares for their community and future of Chicana/o Studies.

Other types of impact a culturally relevant pedagogy had on participants was educational experiences they acquired that included ways in which, as students, they became confident in their abilities to succeed and grow as critical scholars. Other students discussed how having positive pedagogical practices assisted them in obtaining their baccalaureate education and could not have been possible without the assistance of their femtor and mentors. As participants grow academically, so do their future aspirations like continuing onto post-baccalaureate education. The desire to continue their education develops as a product of having professors who femtor and mentor the participants through the process of research, presenting at professional conferences, and applying to various post-baccalaureate programs. Other key findings of pedagogy, specifically mentoring, are the pedagogical spectrum of Chicana/o Studies Faculty. Although this study has positive pedagogies and pedagogies of neglect, many other forms of mentoring exist within. Some of the mentoring that exist between is complex because it does not completely fall under femtoring or [tor]mentoring, but can benefit from changing and adapting some practices that are closer towards the femtoring spectrum in order to create a more powerful impact on students and their education.

Responsibilities of Chicana and Chicano Studies Faculty

In examining pedagogical practices like those practiced by the [tor]mentor, one can easily determine the unethical and inhumane ways in which students were treated. As students, it becomes difficult to fight these types of power dynamics that exist, yet, professors have a responsibility and ethics to create a space that is conducive of learning without harassment. Every university clearly state the type of behavior that is expected of students (mainly during orientation), but the participants in this study experienced the opposite unethical treatment from the [tor]mentor. So I pose this question, how do we, as educators hold other educators to an ethical code of conduct that is respectful of students, allows them to voice their opinions without

fear and humiliation? I propose that a solution be created by students and faculty to hold each other accountable and avoid the ill treatment of students. Also, how do we as educators hold one another responsible for the future of the *estudiantes*? Remaining silent to avoid whatever consequences arise, is not an option when educators should be responsible for safe learning environments. For many students, their undergraduate career is a time of learning, but also a time with a lot of uncertainty and little knowledge of reporting these types of abuse. Hence, the classroom should be a space to transform the future in hopes of creating better living conditions for all human beings. Therefore, professors in a Chicana/o Studies Departments hold the possibility of creating intellectuals that can continue to fight for social justice in whatever space is needed even when it includes [tor]mentoring practices.

Future of the Field and Departments

As demonstrated in this study including community into academic spaces is highly valued and something that Chicana/o Studies Departments must continue to strive for. The foundation of Chicana/o Studies, as stated in *El Plan de Santa Bárbara* (1969), stresses the importance of including community in the education of students. One of the purposes of establishing Chicana/o Studies was so that family and community could both be involved and determine what type of education their children should receive. Another goal for a culturally relevant education like Chicana/o Studies was to challenge racist practices and social inequalities. However, in this study we see how hegemonic, racist and inhumane practices are upheld by professors that resemble the population of students currently experiencing injustices outside of a Chicana/o Studies classroom. The examples of the [tor]mentoring practices clearly demonstrates some of the institutional and racial issues discussed by Frantz Fanon (2004) when dealing with power and subjugating other peoples. If this type of behavioral of [tor]mentors is not addressed, then what does the future of a department and its students look like? Professor

with such pedagogical practices need to realize that without students, who would they teach and would they be employed? The questions I ask are of course done so that social justice educators in and out of Chicana/o Studies begin to discuss and solve problems for the sake of students and a field that is constantly under scrutiny by some university administrators.

Importance of a Chicana/o Studies Baccalaureate Degree

The value of a baccalaureate degree in Chicana/o Studies is often times under question by people who are not familiar with the field or its career paths upon graduation. Reasons for this unfamiliarity are partly due to the ignorance people hold, but also to what this society considers value to be. Many people value certain degrees like business for example, as something that will bring monetary value to the future of an individual's life, thus adhering to a capitalist system of majoring in a field that will provide the a large amount of economic worth. Traditionally speaking, many fields of study uphold western thoughts that a college degree must only serve the purpose of monetary mobility. However, in Chicana/o Studies, an interdisciplinary field holds multiple definitions of value and challenges hegemonic ways of thinking. The participants in this study uphold values such as, giving back and contributing to their families and communities while creating social change. A degree in Chicana/o Studies gives people the ability to see the inequalities people face and become active members in changing those inequalities. Hence, the continuation of fighting battles against institutional oppression like racism, education, and the law become different types of value that are rooted in a more holistic approach towards humanity and society . The participants in this study actively participate in creating an impact in society for the betterment of those that for many reasons do not have the means to do so. Therefore, comparing a Chicana/o Studies degree with that of a degree in Economics, is like comparing apples and oranges. The outcomes of a Chicana/o Studies degree are greater and far beyond economic wealth and instead demonstrate the importance of a social consciousness.

Time after time I am asked what a degree in Chicana/o Studies can do for people or what types of job can somebody who majors in the field acquire. The question is an important one that merits a response, people after all are interested in the field, but also need to know how this will benefit them and their future. So, I turn to the participants of this study to demonstrate that because Chicana/o Studies is rooted in social justice and interdisciplinary (humanities, social sciences, the arts, and gender and sexuality fields), people who major in Chicana/o Studies can go into multiple careers with their baccalaureate degrees. Tables 6.1 and 6.2 demonstrate the occupations of participants during the interview and their current occupations.

Table 6.1: Female Current Occupations

Female Participants	Occupation During Interview	Current Occupation
Rebecca Avelar	Working at Law Firm	Will Begin Law School in the fall
Conchita Blanca	High School Spanish Teacher	High School Spanish Teacher
Yolicia Esqueda	Non-Profit Latina/o Community Center	Stay-At-Home-Mother
Maya Flores	Working on M.A. in Chicana/o Studies	Working on Ph.D.
Estrella García	Special Education Teacher	Special Education Teacher
Paloma López	Working on Ph.D. in History	University Professor in History
Yumey López	Looking for Employment	Finishing Prerequisites for Physical Therapist
Connie Madrigal	Waiting to begin MSW Program	Starting Non-Profit Organization
Adelita Magón	Social Worker in Hospital	Leading Health Care Administrator
Celia Mares	Studying for the Bar Exam	Immigration Lawyer
Rosmeri Martínez	Early Education Non-Profit Organization	Early Education Non-Profit Organization
Elisa Miranda	Non-Profit Community Center	Completed MSW in 2015
Rose Ríos	Looking for Employment	Physical Therapist Assistant
Guadalupe Valencia	Assistant Director: University Latina/o Center	Assistant Director: University Latina/o Center
Rosita Villa	Elementary School Aid and Tutor	Substitute Teacher
Lluvia Zapata	Working on Ph.D. in Spanish	Completed Ph.D. and University Professor in Spanish

Table 6.2: Male Current Occupations

Male Participants	Occupation During Interview	Current Occupation
Alex Calvario	Service Industry while applying for Graduate School in Counseling	Completed M.A. in Counseling
Pablo Cruz	Private Tutor	Currently Unemployed
Juan Diego	Private Tutor	Coordinator for Education Non-Profit Organization
Hipólito Gómez	Taking Pre-Requisites for M.A. in Linguistics	Working on M.A. in Speech Pathology
Tito López	Musician and Music Teacher	Musician and Music Teacher
Joaquín Murrieta	Working on M.A. in American Studies	Working on Ph.D. in American Studies
David Ortega	Working on Pre-Requisites for a Doctor's Assistance Program	Working in the Medical Field at a Hospital
Eztli Rojas	Working on M.A. in Latin American Studies	Working on Ph.D. in History
Tlaotani Sandoval	Health Care Administrator at a Hospital	Financial Health Care Administrator at a Hospital

As the tables above demonstrate, the participants are in various fields that are largely based on assisting other people. Many of the current occupations cater to education, social services like non-profits organizations, hospitals, and the law. Although the current occupations of participants are most likely proving a comfortable life style, the emphasis in their chosen careers are to help other people, hence the social justice approach participants bring with them from Chicana/o Studies curriculum and pedagogical practices.

Theoretical Implications

Chicana/o Studies curriculum is successful in itself; however, pedagogical practices are essential in creating a learning environment that challenges western ways of thinking,

knowledge, and practice. Operating under a CRT lens, western notions of pedagogy and knowledge can be challenged and view the significance of Chicana/o Studies as demonstrated by the twenty-five participants. The femtors and mentors in this study are clearly teachers that enact pedagogical practices that are non-western and understand that traditional forms of the academy (like teaching and mentoring) are not sufficient when teaching within Chicana/o Studies.

Participants in this study were more likely to seek femtoring or mentoring from professors that understand the value of cultural, familial, and personal knowledge as demonstrated by Delgado Bernal (1998b and 2001). This type of approach towards education is what Freire (2007) would refer to when discussing the need to have teachers understand the greater impact they can have when practicing as equals to their students. Viewing equality in such manner when teaching, removes hegemonic power structures of student-teacher relationships within western institutions of learning.

The [tor]mentors in this case are examples of professors who uphold western values and knowledge (Memmi, 1965 and Fanon, 1963) and therefore perform in hierarchical ways where students' knowledge is not valid, but the professor's knowledge is. The [tor]mentoring practices demonstrates how some professors in Chicana/o Studies have been co-opted in practicing in detrimental ways that lean more towards valuing western traditions of teaching. Sexist and detrimental pedagogical practices that are harmful like that of the male [tor]mentor, continues to be part of the problem facing students and push-out rates along with re-living forms of inequalities (Anzaldúa, 1987; Cammarota, 2007; Howard, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Moreno, 1999; Valencia and Black 2002).

Practical Implications

Chicana/o Studies curriculum and pedagogical practices (including Chicana Feminists practices) that are demonstrated throughout this research are important for all educators

regardless of the field or educational level they teach within. This type of curriculum and positive practices that femtors and mentors have is something that every educator should strive for. Like many others study and scholars have demonstrates (Howard, 2010; Hurtado, 2005; Morrison, 2008; Rendón, 2009; and Sleeter, 2011), the participants in this study demonstrate that having a curriculum that is relevant to them along with having professors that care about them and understand the social ills in the past, present, and future, have been instrumental in their retention and completion of their education. Although this study focuses on students in higher education, every educator, regardless of ethnicity or field of study, should approach their teaching in a manner that is understating of where their students come from and their experiences. In practicing positive ways of pedagogy, educators become part of student-retention efforts that ultimately leads to higher graduation rates.

Policy Implications

The findings of this study demonstrate the need for the expansion and departmentalization of Chicana/o Studies programs at all levels of education. As demonstrated in Tables 6.1 and 6.2, the participants of this study become significant members of society that continue to service people in various fields like law, social services, and education. Considering how rapidly the Chicana/ Chicano or Latina/Latino population is growing, an education that is culturally relevant is necessary. The education push-out rates of Chicanas and Chicanos at all levels of the education pipeline remains high. However, the participants in this study credit Chicana/o Studies as the pivotal life changing point that gave them the ability and desire to obtain their baccalaureate degree. The ability and desire by participants then lead them to continue onto a post-baccalaureate education or social services to their communities. Therefore, Chicana/o Studies should be implemented in the K-12 education systems a way to increase retention and graduation of students at a much younger age as demonstrated by Cammarota and

Romero (2007, 2009, and 2014). By the time students come across Chicana/o Studies in higher education, a significant number of Chicanas and Chicanos have already been pushed-out and do not ever set foot onto a university campus. In creating Chicana/o Studies in the K-12 educational system, students are given a higher chance in graduating and moving onto higher education in larger amounts. Chicana/o Studies can provide students with an avenue that allows them to make sense of historical, present, and future obstacles on a particular set of peoples while simultaneously creating ways in which to overcome such adversities for the sake of a better society and life for all human beings.

Future Research

The participants of this study have provided me with much more than I could have ever imagined in the initial stages of this work. The wealth of information acquired is something I wish to continue to take onto to other areas of research. Some of those areas include a focus of mentoring and creating a study that focuses on the professors that participants credit the most for their academic and personal growth. Another area of study is examining the importance of Chicana/o Studies in the K-12 sector. One of the last questions for participants was on the significance of teaching Chicana/o Studies in K-12 and how they would have benefited from this type of education at a much younger age, hence, the need to further examine this specific area. Another future project as alluded to earlier in this chapter, is the creation of a Chicana/o Ethics/Code of Conduct for professors in order to hold all professors accountable for the harassment and abuse of students. Other future research and direction of this work is to create a Chicana/o Studies Alumni Educational Pipeline that will help determine what the post-graduation attainments for students looks like. Once again, I thank all the participants... the contributors to this body of work because without them, I would not have such future research agendas.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Oral Interview Questionnaire

Background

1. Can you tell me a little about your background like family, education, where you grew up, country of origin, or immigration?
2. What do you do for a living and how long have you been doing this for?

Curriculum

3. Why did you major or minor in Chicana/o Studies?
4. Can you discuss some of the classes you took?
 - a. What kind of subjects/classes did you have?
 - b. What impact did the material have on you when you were a student?
 - c. What impact, if any, did Chicana/o Studies educational materials have on your educational or professional aspirations following the completion of the bachelor's degree?
5. What about the classes you did not take?

Pedagogy

6. Did you have professor that impacted you at CSUMV?
 - a. How did they deliver or teach the material?
 - b. Did their teaching (or delivery of the curriculum) stand out to you?
 - c. Do you think their teaching was important or different because they were part of a Chicana/o Studies Department?
 - d. How did the professors assist you in your classes?
7. Did the professors assist you or encouraged you to do other things outside of the classroom setting?

- i. How and what was it?
8. How did the professors assist you in your development as a student and as a person?
9. You mentioned certain professors that stood out to you when it came to teaching and mentoring. What about the other professors in the department?
 - a. Can you talk more about them?
 - b. Were there particular reasons why you did not mention them?
10. Do you use what you learned from all your professors in your current job or education? If so, explain.
11. Do you think the teachings of these professors in Chicana/o Studies influenced your decisions to do what you are currently doing (academics/jobs)? How so?

Conclusion

12. What does Chicana/o Studies mean to you?
13. Do you think it is important for universities to continue offering Chicana/o Studies?
14. What change do you think Chicana/o Studies can bring to the educational system, Communities of Color, and the U.S.A?
15. Do you think Chicana/o Studies should be thought in the K-12 educational system? Why?

Appendix 2: Script for Solicitation of Participants

Hello (Insert interviewee name),

I am requesting to conduct an interview with you regarding your participation as a student of Chicana/o Studies at California State University, MarVista. Participation in this study is completely voluntary and refusing to participate will not penalize you in any way. The purpose of my research is to examine the impact of Chicanas and Chicanos who majored or minored in Chicana/o Studies. If you agree to participate in this research, I will ask you to participate in an oral interview that may take one to two hours. I will ask you questions regarding your educational experiences as a Chicana/o Studies major or minor. I will record this interview in an audio format. By participating in this study, you will have an opportunity to contribute to scholarship on Chicana and Chicano Education. Although I do not foresee any risks for you by participating in this study, I will take steps to protect your privacy and confidentiality. You will possess the right to deny answering any questions I ask, and if you wish, you will have the right to designate a private area to conduct the interviews. I will also keep your interview confidential by storing it on a password protected hard drive. If you have any questions, please contact me at gonzalez.elizabeth@ucla.edu

Sincerely,
Elizabeth González Cárdenas
Doctoral Candidate
Graduate School of Education & Information Studies
University of California, Los Angeles

Appendix 3: Consent to Participate in Research

Chicana/o Studies and its Impact on Chicana and Chicano Undergraduate Students: The Role of a Culturally Relevant Education

Elizabeth González Cárdenas
Doctoral Candidate
University of California, Los Angeles
Graduate School of Education and Information Studies

I, _____, do hereby give to Elizabeth González Cárdenas the interview recorded with me beginning on or about _____. I also grant permission to Elizabeth González Cárdenas to use for research, educational, promotional and other purposes portions or all of my interview I contribute. I give this as an unrestricted gift and I transfer to Elizabeth González Cárdenas all right, title, and interest, including copyright. In addition, I have the right to rescind any information provided during the interview at any date in the future. I also understand that consent to participate in this project as provided in this agreement is entirely voluntary.

We, the undersigned, have read the above. The interviewer affirms that she has explained the purpose of this educational research. The interviewee affirms that she/he has consented to the interview.

This release is subject to the following conditions (if blank there are no conditions): _____

Full Name of Interviewee

Full Name of Interviewer

Signature

Signature

Address

Address

() _____
Phone Number

() _____
Phone Number

City State ZIP

City State ZIP

Date

Date

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