Mi Voz: LatinX Student Perceptions of Affirmative Action on Their College Application and Enrollment Told Through Their Funds of Knowledge

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Mi Voz: LatinX Student Perceptions of Affirmative Action on their College Application and Enrollment Told through their Funds of Knowledge

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Presented to

To the Faculty of the Morgridge College of Education

University of Denver

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in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctorate of Education

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by

Ashley Idrees

Advisor: Lolita A. Tabron, Ph.D.
Abstract

In this study, I explored how LatinX students understood affirmative action strategies used by higher education institutions through their Funds of Knowledge and how this knowledge shaped their post-secondary decisions. Using a qualitative case study design, I conducted semi-structured interviews, non-participant observations, and document analysis to center the voices of those underrepresented in the academy to support high school to university transition. The LatinX students’ awareness of affirmative action was present and, in many cases, was a factor in their decision to attend an institution of higher education. This awareness was often the result of guidance from an influential figure in their lives. Of the seven students interviewed, five explained that affirmative action did in fact play a direct role in their decision to enroll in a university in Colorado through financial aid or recruitment strategies. In this study, I offer a new and expanded understanding of affirmative action in Colorado through seven different student perspectives.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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DEDICATION

I would like to begin by thanking God. For without his love and strength, none of this would have been possible. To all of my family, both near and far, thank you for your love and encouragement to follow my dreams. To my grandmother Irene Madrid, who passed away on April 30, 2018, this degree is in your honor. Your resiliency and passion to teach me everything you knew will be forever engrained in my heart. Though your absence will be felt today and every single day afterwards, this degree is ours.

To my husband Saleh, thank you for always making me laugh, especially when I was stressed or worried. Your love and encouragement have never ceased to amaze me, and I am forever grateful to you. Thank you for always taking me on adventures, exactly when I needed them. You are the best adventure. I love you more than all of the stars.

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I begin by providing context surrounding the prevailing tension around the use of affirmative action in higher education at the national level from a critical lens, specifically focusing on dimensions of race. I then discuss how the contentious nature of the use of affirmative action across the nation in recruitment and enrollment practices within higher education shapes high school to university transitions.

Background to the Problem

The social construction of race is and continues to be an integral part of the United States’ social structure and systems including education (Feagin & Elias, 2013, p. 935). The current racial inequities in higher education in the United States reflects a socially constructed racial hierarchy that is systemically sustained through “structured and recurrent patterns of unequal distributions of goods, wealth, opportunities, rewards, and punishments” (Crossman, 2017, p. 34). Specifically, the White race is placed in a superior position while communities of color are held in the margins through race-conscious laws and policies (Bonilla-Silva, 1997; Feagin & Elias, 2013; Omi & Winant, 1994). Prior to the Civil Rights legislations of the 1960s and currently, there continues to be laws and race-conscious policies in place that exclude or provide significant barriers for students of color to attend four-year universities (Fleming, Gill, & Swinton, 1978; Dovidio, Gaertner, & Murrell, 1994; Trent, 1991). To address the continuing effects and perpetuation of racism against communities of color, certain policies have been created and implemented. One that has been a critical component of college access for communities of color at both the national and state level in education is affirmative action.
Origins of Affirmative Action

On September 24, 1965, Executive Order 11246, also known as affirmative action, prohibited discrimination in employment decisions on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or national origin (“Executive Order No. 11246”, 1965) (See Appendix B). Affirmative action was an outcome of the Civil Rights Movement “intended to provide equal opportunities for members of minority groups and women in education and employment” (“Affirmative Action Overview”, 2014). The legal origins of affirmative action were from the Department of Labor in which, “the contractor will take affirmative action to ensure that applicants are employed, and that employees are treated during employment, without regard to their race, creed, color, or national origin” (“Affirmative Action”, 2017). Within education, affirmative action is defined as “recipients [colleges and universities] of federal funds [that] are required to document their affirmative action practices and metrics. Educational institutions which have acted discriminatorily in the past must take affirmative action as a remedy” (“Affirmative Action”, 2017). Affirmative action in college admissions, however, is voluntary and an effort by institutions to accomplish specific diversity initiatives.

Affirmative Action and College Access for LatinX Students

Since higher education institutions have voluntarily adopted affirmative action strategies, the enrollment of students of color in higher education institutions have increased steadily; however, Black and Hispanic students are currently more underrepresented at the elite and selective universities, flagship universities, and the nation’s top colleges than they were 35 years ago (Ashkenas, Park, & Pearce, 2017). This is most evident among Latinos, the largest growing racial and ethnic population within the United States. For example, even though Latinos represented the second largest racial group in the United States, the representation of Latino
enrollment in higher education was a mere 17% (Ramos & Taylor, 2017). From 1990 to 2014, higher education attainment for Latinos continued to remain behind all races and ethnicities—with the exclusion of American Indian/Alaskan Native students, which points to the continued need for affirmative action strategies (U.S. Department of Education, 2015).

**Current Day Relevance of Affirmative Action for LatinX Students**

There is substantial empirical evidence to support that without the affirmative action policy, many students may not be afforded the opportunity to attend top universities. In one study, Thomas Espenshade and Chang Chung (2005), explored the effect of removing affirmative action at three elite universities and detailed that “without affirmative action…the acceptance rate for Hispanic applicants likely would be cut in half, from 26.8 percent to 12.9 percent” (p. 298). This study viewed the detrimental effects of removing this policy within institutions versus elite institutions that use this policy in varying ways. In Goldstein’s (2017) found in his study conducted a decade later that only 22 percent of college freshman were Hispanic and at selective and elite colleges only 13 percent were Hispanic (Goldstein, 2017). Though LatinX students are underrepresented throughout the nation, whether an affirmative action ban has been implemented or not, such studies indicate that in states where the ban of affirmative action has taken place there is a major underrepresentation of students of color on those campuses (Munguia, 2015). Specifically, in those states, “Hispanic students are underrepresented by at least 20 percent at 82 percent of the country’s public research universities” (Munguia, 2015). More troubling is that despite affirmative action efforts in higher education, it is unclear why many students of color continue to encounter unforeseeable obstacles within their journey towards college access.
**Colorblind interpretations of affirmative action.** One potential explanation is colorblind interpretations of affirmative action. This occurs when racism is not acknowledged in policies and strategies developed for racial equity. Gillborn (2005), illustrated this poignantly when he found in the Department of Education’s five-year strategy for race equity that, “minority ethnic pupils are granted a single mention in the text; a 25-word paragraph headed ‘low achieving minority ethnic groups.’ The word ‘racism’ does not appear at all, neither do the more sanitized concepts of ‘prejudice’ and discrimination’” (p. 50). Works such as Gillborn (2005) and Ladson-Billing (2006) serve as reminders that the educational gaps among racial groups is not a matter of their ability to achieve but rather a matter of the United States’ educational debt owed to systematically marginalized communities of color. Carnevale & Strohl’s (2013) work is a clear example of this when they found that, “Whites have captured most of the enrollment growth at the 468 most selective and well-funded four-year colleges, while…Hispanics have captured most of the enrollment growth at the increasingly overcrowded and under-resourced open-access two - and four-year colleges” (as cited in Rippner, 2015, p. 3). Colorblind interpretations and approaches to racial equity allows this educational debt to remain unpaid and sustains the existing socially constructed racial hierarchy.

**Affirmative Action and College Access for LatinX Students in Colorado**

Interestingly, Colorado is an uncommon state in regard to affirmative action policies in higher education admissions as Colorado was the first state to reject an anti-affirmative action ballot initiative, yet only three (United States Air Force Academy, the University of Colorado-Boulder, and the University of Northern Colorado) of the thirteen public four-year universities in Colorado consider race in their admissions process and a clear postsecondary participation gap among LatinX students in Colorado remains (Affirmative Action: State Action, 2014;
Affirmative Action in Colorado, 2015; Gonzales, 2015). According to Colorado’s Department of Education, the disparity between graduating students in Colorado’s high schools and those enrolled in college “was greatest for Hispanics…Hispanic students made up more than one fourth of graduating seniors but accounted for less than one-fifth of students who went to college the following fall” (Gonzales, 2015).

Although this statewide support of affirmative action is distinct from national trends, the continued enrollment gap among students of color, and in particular LatinX students, call into question the efficacy of affirmative action use in higher education recruitment, admission, and retention decisions (Green, 2016). The evaluation of the effectiveness of affirmative action has been researched in a variety of ways. Dominantly this research has been quantitative and has focused largely on application and enrollment behavior (Banks, 2007; Cortes, 2010; Dickson; 2006). Researchers have also examined the ways in which affirmative action has impacted students’ college success, both directly and indirectly (Bowen & Bok, 1998; Yosso, Parker, Solórzano, & Lynn, 2004; Constantini & King, 1985). Affirmative action policies have also been examined in its implementation or removal at varying universities throughout the nation, with specific attention paid to the recruitment and admission strategies; yet the voices of students are often silenced (Weisman, D.L., & Li, D., 2016; Orfield, G., Marin, P., Flores, S. M., & Garces, L. M., 2007).

**Problem Statement**

The decreasing number of LatinX students represented in selective and elite universities and other evidence from the extant literature make the relevance of affirmative action for college access for LatinX students clear, yet the usefulness of affirmative action in higher education remains under fierce scrutiny because of this continued gap. Even with abundant literature on the
use of affirmative action, little is known about affirmative action from a student perspective, specifically from a traditionally marginalized racial group of students (Edwards, 2009, p. 6). Since the LatinX population is currently the fastest growing population in Colorado (Krogstad, 2017), how they perceive, feel, and interact with affirmative action strategies is critical to understanding of how affirmative action shapes their application and enrollment decisions.

**Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this case study is to understand how affirmative action strategies shape the attitudes, experiences, and subsequent application and enrollment decisions of LatinX students, told through their funds of knowledge, at two selective higher education institutions in Colorado. In this study, I captured information regarding the experience and knowledge of LatinX students and the role of affirmative action during their transition from secondary education to higher education. Hearing LatinX students’ perceptions of affirmative action use at these two selective higher education institutions through their own Funds of Knowledge (FoK) revealed how, if at all, conventional understanding of college transition and participation gap diverges from their sources of knowledge and understanding.

**Research Question**

The research question guiding this case study is:

1. How does a selective university’s decision use or non-use of affirmative action strategies shape the college application and enrollment decisions of LatinX students in the Colorado told through their funds of knowledge?
Conceptual Framework

Utilizing the conceptual framework of Funds of Knowledge (FoK) to guide this research, I addressed the gap in the role of affirmative action and student perception of the policy implemented in the Colorado during the student transition from secondary to higher education. The FoK framework enabled me to “uncover, acknowledge, and then apply culturally-relevant knowledge, capital, and histories to education policy and practice, and for these reasons, it is a viable theory and method that can be used to defeat epistemic injustice” (Frank, 2013, p. 369).

The origin of the term Funds of Knowledge are anthropological. Wolf (1966), defined FoK as resources and knowledge that different households use to ensure that their basic needs are met; meaning, all funds within their lives are met-including but in no way limited to funds for rent, funds for social gatherings, etc. The theory of FoK stems from the knowledge, existing resources, and skills that are ingrained within the lives of students and their families (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzales, 1992). Funds of Knowledge refers to the “historically accumulated and culturally developed bodies of knowledge and skills essential for household or individual functioning and well-being” (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzales, 1992, p. 133).

The Funds of Knowledge have been utilized to empower and understand the lives of participants within research. Often times, this framework has been used as an “integrated, harmonious, univocal vertical version of culture”, and provide a potential platform to facilitate the factors associated with social disadvantage for traditionally marginalized groups (Gonzalez et. al, 1995; Vélez-Ibáñez, 1988). Researchers have argued that Funds of Knowledge provide the foundation for understanding cultural systems as well as useful assets for the classroom success (Vélez-Ibáñez & Greenberg, 1992, p. 313). Though this framework has been used extensively within K-12 education, Kiyama (2010) believes that when applied through the lens of college
culture and access, FOK can aid in the understanding of how families perceive education and aspirations.

Through this framework, I was able to reveal an understanding of how LatinX students’ knowledge influenced their decision to attend one of the two institutions discussed within this study. This framework is comprised of four social categories: family, community, popular culture, and peer group (knowledge from fellow students to assist navigation of school life), which were used to frame the interview questions (Moje et al., 2004). The role of the Funds of Knowledge not only provided a framework to guide the research itself, but also areas that inherently impacted the role of affirmative action within LatinX students’ lives. These four social categories provided insight into the resources and knowledge students gained from their home, upbringing, and a starting point to begin investigative work about how this policy may impact future LatinX students as they transitioned from secondary education to higher education. The role of the Funds of Knowledge not only provided a framework to guide the research itself, but also areas that inherently impacted the role of affirmative action within LatinX students’ lives.

There is a need for understanding the gap for LatinX students’ transition to a university and the connectedness that may exist through the FoK framework (Rios-Aguilar & Kiyama, 2012, p. 8). There are varying studies that provide explanations in regard to LatinX student success; however, there is a tremendous amount of information that is unknown within the realm of college preparation and the role of affirmative action in that preparation (p. 8). Kiyama and Aguilar (2018) explain:

When under-represented students appear to make choices that do not lead to successful outcomes (for example, stop or drop out of school in order to take care of family member or to find employment), it is through this
individualistic deficit paradigm that they are assessed. Our concern is that the field of higher education is perpetuating the idea that underrepresented students (and their communities) are lacking or deficient simply because they are not doing what ‘successful’ students do. Since this is the lens through which services, programs, and policies are created, it is no wonder why participation, retention, and graduation rates remain painfully low for underrepresented college students. (section 402)

Utilizing the Funds of Knowledge, provided me with an opportunity to understand the factors associated with under-represented students making choices in their transition. This framework also provided a platform to understand how the affirmative action policy influenced LatinX students’ decisions.

**Strengths of Funds of Knowledge**

What FoK did within the scope of this research was validate the knowledge base of LatinX students in terms of their livelihood and success. Using the FoK framework provided a foundation to further understand the gap that exists within Colorado between LatinX students that graduate from high school and those that enter the two major universities in Colorado.

Currently, there is not research known within the Funds of Knowledge realm that address and acknowledge different forms of knowledge within a student’s perspective of affirmative action. The research available is not inclusive of the communities for which they seek to serve. Because the individualistic deficit paradigm is the way in which students are typically assessed, using the FoK revealed the students’ concept of success and the ways in which this policy has or has not impacted their lives. Emphasis was directly placed upon the experiences and knowledge
of students in regard to a policy that directly and indirectly affected them. Though the FoK provided the framework to guide this research study, there were limitations.

**Limitations of Funds of Knowledge**

Zipin (2009) argued that within the Funds of Knowledge approach, the conception of culture underpins this theory in that, “Cultures are not holistic unities of nations, classes, genders, ethnic groups, or even ‘communities’, but are multiple and situated” (p. 324). Though this may be viewed as a limitation, how the students defined their knowledge is inherent and reflective of their own foundation. Through this perspective and having an awareness of these limitations, the interviews intentionally uncovered the intersectionality of knowledge and culture(s) that exist within the lives of LatinX students and the role of affirmative action in their decisions. Figure 1, is a visual created to enhance and guide the research process. Each square within the visual is representative of a various tenet of the Funds of Knowledge. Each tenet was used in understanding the ways in which the interviewees view affirmative action.

**Funds of Knowledge and LatinX Students.** When incorporating the Funds of Knowledge and applying it to the LatinX student group within this study, it is necessary to connect the beliefs within the dominant culture and the culture of the students (McDevitt, 2016). Funds of Knowledge are not only based on monetary value but also in areas of “family unity and cooperation, religion, household management, multilingualism, and fabric design” (Ginsburg, 2007). Through these areas, the experiences and knowledge of LatinX students was shown through their funds. LatinX students’ knowledge regarding the transition and use of affirmative action strategies will be validated, as told through their perspectives.
When viewing Figure 1, there are four different boxes that lead into the centralized box of affirmative action. The reason all boxes lead to affirmative action is because those are the four funds of knowledge that guided the conduction of this research. The LatinX students answered questions based on these categories that intersected with affirmative action. Because of sociocultural orientation that builds upon experiences and resources, family has been strategically used to view the interconnectedness between that Fund of Knowledge and affirmative action (Kiyama, 2018, section 12). The next two boxes used in this study were community and peer group. These were chosen as there is currently little documentation regarding access to universities and the Funds of Knowledge that are used. Peer groups and
communities have shown to bring infinite possibilities for facilitating “success of under-represented students’ education” (section 390). The last box included within this study was popular culture and selected because the Funds of Knowledge through this lens provides a deeper understanding despite class background (section 274). The responses from the LatinX students were both informative and insightful and were reflective of the four categories within the LatinX students’ Funds of Knowledge and affirmative action intersections.
Definition of Terms

In this section, I present five definitions for my study. For the purpose of this study, the following definitions apply:

**Affirmative action.** A set of procedures designed to eliminate unlawful discrimination between applicants, remedy the results of such prior discrimination, and prevent such discrimination in the future. Applicants may be seeking admission to an educational program or looking for professional employment (Cornell, 2007). Commonly described as race-based or race-specific policies (Affirmative Action Overview, 2014).

**Funds of Knowledge (FoK).** FoK refers to the “historically accumulated and culturally developed bodies of knowledge and skills essential for household or individual functioning and well-being” (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzales, 1992, p. 133).

**Hispanic/Latino/LatinX.** A person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race. Used interchangeably with the shortened term Hispanic (NCES, 2017). LatinX. A person of Latin American origin or descent (used as a gender-neutral or non-binary alternative to Latino or Latina) (LatinX, 2017).

**Postsecondary Institution/Higher Education/College/University.** Four-year institutions offering at least a four-year program of college-level studies wholly or principally creditable toward a baccalaureate degree (NCES, 2017).

**Racial/ethnic group.** Classification indicating general racial or ethnic heritage. Race/ethnicity data are based on the Hispanic category and the race categories (NCES, 2017).
Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

In this section, I outlined the assumptions, limitations, and delimitations for this study. They are listed as follows.

Assumptions

There are three assumptions assumed to be true for the purpose of this study.

1. Students in the sample have an understanding of affirmative action.
2. The coding and interpretation of the data will accurately reflect the Funds of Knowledge framework.

Limitations

The following two limitations are assumed to be true for the purposes of this study:

1. The data is limited to a sample of self-identified LatinX students enrolled in two selective universities in the Colorado and should not be generalized to all LatinX students in postsecondary institutions.
2. There may be factors not detailed within the Funds of Knowledge that may have influenced their application and enrollment decisions.

Delimitations

The following three delimitations are assumed to be true for the purposes of this study:

1. This study will be restricted to self-identified LatinX students in their second year of study at a public university in Colorado.
2. I have chosen to focus this study strictly on admissions and affirmative action as I am interested in the transition period between secondary education and higher education. Retention and affirmative action will not be discussed but may be used in future research.

Significance of the Study

Completing this research was necessary, as the experiences and knowledge of LatinX students are underrepresented in regard to the affirmative action policy in higher education enrollment decisions. Findings from this study provide a deeper understanding regarding affirmative action, Funds of Knowledge, and subsequent application and enrollment decisions of LatinX students in Colorado.

Contribution to Theory. Traditionally, research has surrounded the implementation or disregard of affirmative action and the application, enrollment, and success, resulting in diversity on college and university campuses throughout the nation (Darling-Hammond, 1998; Espenshade & Chung, 2005). In this study, I extend the literature by offering LatinX student attitudes towards affirmative action their understanding of how they directly or indirectly interacted with and were affected by this policy. Because no known research has provided the student perspective in regard to their Funds of Knowledge regarding affirmative action, the completed research may begin to unfold areas for improvement that have not yet been created. The improvements may be made at the secondary level to provide an understanding the lives of students and how best to support their transition by validating the knowledge they have learned at home.

Contribution to Policy. The findings may enhance and alter various higher education policies at public institutions in Colorado for prospective and current LatinX students, and how
the affirmative action policy is used for enrollment and retention. Providing LatinX knowledge and experiences in regard to affirmative action may create a platform for a review of the policy in public universities in Colorado to revise and generate strategies to create racially and ethnically diverse college and university campuses. Learning of the importance of this policy within the lives of LatinX students will disrupt what has been assumed about this policy and if there is an impact on student lives. This policy, if implemented throughout Colorado at more than three higher education institutions, may reframe the enrollment gap by changing the way leaders support the college application and enrollment change.

**Contribution to Practice.** This research will impact leaders at both the secondary level and the higher education level. Within the realm of K-12 education, this research will assist college counselors in aiding in the transition for students. If college counselors better understand the funds of knowledge that LatinX students come in with, the process will not only be cohesive but also one in which all benefit. This study will provide useful knowledge that will support and help better tailor recruitment and retention strategies for institutions of higher education to enhance diversity on college and university campuses. Additionally, when leaders are prepared with information to better understand the knowledge of potential students, college and university recruiters will better serve their diverse populations.
Chapter Conclusion

This chapter began with implications regarding the transition for LatinX students from secondary education to higher education and the ways in which affirmative action influenced their collegial decisions. I provided context regarding the use of the Funds of Knowledge and the four categories that guided the research study. Additionally, I included a figure inclusive of the tenets of the Funds of Knowledge to provide a platform about the varying intersections that existed within the semi-structured interviews.

This dissertation contains five chapters. The first chapter provided the reasoning behind the use of the Funds of Knowledge to understand how LatinX students perceived affirmative action in their respective universities. Chapter Two discusses the literature associated with affirmative action in higher education and LatinX students in Colorado from a secondary and higher education perspective. Chapter Three discusses the methodology in detail. Chapter Four presents the findings generated from the qualitative inquiry. Chapter Five includes a discussion of the results, concluding thoughts, and recommendations for future research.
CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The chief purpose of this chapter is to review literature relevant to affirmative action, presenting the judicial and legislative origination, followed by legislative case studies that have occurred at varying universities throughout the United States. The literature selected includes journal articles and books; however, the primary sources used are from scholarly peer-reviewed journals, which aid in the credibility of information presented. The literature was influenced by the Funds of Knowledge framework and organized chronologically. Within this literature review, I also synthesized research pertaining to affirmative action in admissions within higher education regarding how affirmative action has been framed from a historical, legal, sociopolitical, and educational perspective. Below is a graphic to provide the organization and themes within this review of the literature.
Figure 2: Literature Review Overview

Judicial and Legislative Origination of Affirmative Action

Before one can understand the impact of varying court cases, it is imperative to begin with one of the first court cases that dealt with race. In 1896, the *Plessy v. Ferguson* case revealed a ruling that was inherently reflective of separate but equal, however this phrase was not part of the opinion (*Plessy v. Ferguson*, n.d.). In a seven to one decision, “Equal but separate accommodations for whites and blacks imposed by Louisiana do not violate the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment…so long as they were equal” (*Plessy v. Ferguson*, n.d.). It was not until 1954 that a change within the effect of separate but equal was dismantled.

Perhaps the most seminal desegregation case was the *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, 347 U.S. 483* in 1954 (Reams & Wilson, 1975, p. v). On May 17, 1954, the first *Brown* decision came with decrees that would require with the desegregation of public schools with purposeful speed (p. vi). As a result of the *Brown* verdict, it was presumed that all educational institutions at all levels would no longer reject the enrollment of students of color, particularly African Americans. It wasn’t until the Florida ex.rel. *Hawkins v. the Board of Control* in 1954 that the unconstitutional “separate but equal” would be extended beyond elementary and secondary all the way through desegregation in higher education (p. 99). Despite these court rulings, racism, discrimination, and segregation were rampant and intended to be implemented “with all deliberate speed…desegregation was neither deliberate nor speedy” (Education Desegregation, 2017). The social and racial turmoil impacted changes that would soon occur.

In the 1950’s and 1960’s, there was momentum from the series of Civil Rights legislation that began the foundation for policy implementation because of the racial divide that existed within educational systems and society (Education Desegregation, 2017). Affirmative action was
first introduced by President John F. Kennedy in 1961, “in an Executive Order that directed government contractors to take ‘affirmative action’ to ensure that applicants are employed, and that employees are treated during employment without regard to their race” (“Affirmative Action Overview”, 2014). It was also during this time that the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was passed. Congress passed “Public Law 88-352 (78 Stat. 241) in which the provisions of this civil rights act forbade discrimination on the basis of sex as well as race” (The Civil Rights Act of 1964, 2017). Just one year later, Executive Order 11246 was created.

The Kennedy administration created Executive Order 11246, which was policy programming that was known as affirmative action (Fleming, Gill, & Swinton, 1978). In President Lyndon B. Johnson’s 1965 commencement address to the graduates of Howard University declared, “We seek not just freedom but opportunity. We seek not just legal equity but human ability, not just equality as a right and a theory but equality as a fact and equality as a result” (History of Executive Order 111246, 2017). This Executive Order was created to redress discrimination in multiple forms towards racial and ethnic minorities while holding institutions accountable for diversity and inclusivity (Fleming, Gill, Swinton, 1978). To provide additional context to this situation, “In 1965, however, only five percent of undergraduate students, one percent of law students, and two percent of medical students in the country were African American” (“Affirmative Action Overview”, 2014). It was imperative that these institutions applied the policy of affirmative action to their admissions processes to avoid continued discrimination.

Once the order was in place and affirmative action began to be implemented, higher education institutions began to diversify their campuses. Universities were required to create a
more diverse population of students by establishing “goals and timetables” ("Affirmative Action", 2016). Orlans (1992) mentioned:

Many northern institutions began to recruit black students during the 1960’s especially after the disturbances following the 1968 assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. Political pressures and government and private programs spurred their initiatives; whether colleges lead or follow the clamor of events is often hard to determine. (p. 145)

After 1965, colleges and universities began to adopt similar recruitment policies, and enrollment for African American students and Latino students began to increase ("Affirmative Action Overview", 2014).

**Affirmative Action Legislation in Higher Education**

Affirmative action has evolved over time both in the purpose and application. Below are case laws presented in a chronological manner. The legal precedence of each case are included alongside specific implications that occurred as a result of the verdict. It is important, to once again note that affirmative action implementation is not required of universities.

**DeFunis v. Odegaard (1973).** One of the first cases was *DeFunis v. Odegaard* in 1973. The University of Washington Law School was under trial for being unconstitutional in their admissions process as they were accused of having differing admission procedures for students of color (*DeFunis v. Odegaard*, 1973). DeFunis argued that under-qualified students of color had been admitted and he was not (*DeFunis v. Odegaard*, 1973). The ruling was not in favor of DeFunis but instead in favor of the University of Washington Law School because they were attempting to create a more diverse array of attorneys (*DeFunis v. Odegaard*, 1973). The reasoning of students of color being under-qualified because DeFunis was not accepted, again
perpetuated a stereotype that standards needed to be lowered for students of color to gain acceptance, which is not correct nor justified within this ruling.

**Bakke v. Regents of the University of California (1978).** An additional court case that occurred in 1978 was the *Bakke v. Regents of the University of California*. This case was brought to trial as “Alan Bakke, a white male who was twice denied admission to the University of California-Davis Medical School, charged the institution with practicing reverse discrimination…the court rejected it as unlawful” (*Bakke v. Regents of the University of California*, 1978). The decision to rule in favor of the university was to provide equal opportunity to broaden the candidates that applied while enhancing the racial diversity of the medical school. This case allowed race to be considered as a factor that could potentially achieve the diversity sought on university and college campuses (Historical Overview, 2017).

**Wygant v. Jackson Board of Education (1986).** Additionally, in the *Wygant v. Jackson Board of Education* (1986), revealed that “the Court’s ruling in this case also stated that historic social discrimination was not by itself a compelling reason for an affirmative action policy” (Education Encyclopedia, 2017). Though claims of reverse discrimination were made, justification for diversity continued to prevail. Because of the collective bargaining agreement, minority teachers were kept to be role models for students of color. At this point, the policy was implemented to not only aid in the protection of diversifying educators but aiding in the perception of students of color to view those like them in educational roles. This case was specific to educators; however later cases directly impacted the students.

**California Proposition 209 (1996).** Unlike any other state at the time, California chose to enact anti-affirmative action legislation in higher education in 1996. Proposition 209 “amended the California constitution to prohibit public institutions from discriminating on the
basis of race, sex, or ethnicity” (California Affirmative Action, Proposition 209, 2016). Despite increased graduation rates among students of color, there are greater enrollment disparities in elite education since this proposition has been in place (California Affirmative Action, Proposition 209, 2016). Since this ballot, five other states have enacted similar options for voters, which include Washington, California, Michigan, Nebraska, and Texas (California Affirmative Action, Proposition 209, 2016).


Grutter v. Bollinger (2003). In the Grutter v. Bollinger (2003) case, the “United States Supreme Court upheld the affirmative action admissions policy of the University of Michigan Law School. The decision permitted the use of racial preference in student admissions to promote student diversity” (Grutter v. Bollinger, 2016). Despite the claims made by the rejected White applicants, the university argued that they were acting in accordance with the constitution and that their policies were reflective of the racially and ethnically diversity that they wanted on the university campus.

Gratz v. Bollinger (2003). In 2003, the Gratz v. Bollinger case revealed that their university point system was too “mechanistic and therefore unconstitutional” (Gratz v. Bollinger, 2016). In other words, because of the difficulty of the process, race could be used. Again, this perpetuated a concept that only because another system was too mechanistic, race was a good substitution. This case, alongside the Grutter v. Bollinger case, were monumental in that the
previous cases had followed the guidelines from the Bakke case (Affirmative Action: Court Cases, 2018). Additionally, these cases abrogated the *Hopwood v. Texas* ruling that permitted colleges in Texas and other states under the Fifth Circuit jurisdiction to continue using policies of affirmative action (Affirmative Action: Court Cases, 2018).

**Fisher v. University of Texas (2013; 2015).** More recently, the *Fisher v. University of Texas at Austin Et Al.*, (2013) case has dealt with race-based affirmative action (*Fisher v. University of Texas at Austin Et Al*, 2015). Based on a 1997 decision to accept all graduating seniors within the top ten percent of their high school classes, the University of Texas enhanced the policy to consider race in the remainder of the in-state freshman applications (*Fisher v. University of Texas at Austin Et Al*, 2015). Because Fisher was not in the top ten percent of her class, she was denied admission (*Fisher v. University of Texas at Austin Et Al*, 2015). The court ruled in favor of the University of Texas and Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg wrote:

The university’s admission policy treats race as merely one factor in the overall decision to admit a student, which is permissible under previous judicial precedent...the Equal Protection Clause does not require that state universities be blind to the history of overt discrimination and that it is preferable that they explicitly include race as a factor in admission decisions rather than attempt to obfuscate its role. (*Fisher v. University of Texas at Austin Et Al*, 2015)

Unlike the *Gratz v. Bollinger* case, where race was not just something used to replace a difficult system, instead justified why race could and should be acknowledged. Throughout the varying court cases over the past few decades, race remains an issue as diversity is also a top priority. It has only been through court cases that society is able to hear a student perspective; however, this perspective is quite one-sided and usually in opposition of the policy.
Given the court cases and abundance of research concerning affirmative action within higher education in the United States and the Colorado alike, this research is typically quantitative and shown through statistical evidence as the voices of students most impacted, are unheard. Unclear is the intersectionality between affirmative action, and LatinX students, and hearing their voices through their Funds of Knowledge. When the framework of the Funds of Knowledge is used, “the lens of college culture and access [may help] in understanding the development of families’ educational ideologies and aspirations” (Kiyama & Rios-Aguilar, 2018, Section 2385). Clegg (2008), president and general counsel of the Center for Equal Opportunity, argued against affirmative action in college admission decisions and explained, “We cannot do that… if we are admitting the most academically qualified students” (as cited in Nealy, 2008). These statements infer that students of color will not be the same academically qualified students accepted. These sentiments are reflective of various cases discussed above. Federico & Sidanius (2002), revealed that group dominance and White opposition toward race-targeted policies remained the same despite diversity within a university campus. Those who support affirmative action within higher education often view the policy as a way to enhance equal opportunity for students who are often marginalized. Shirley Wilcher, executive director of the American Association for Affirmative Action believes that “affirmative action doesn’t mean preference, and it doesn’t mean quotas. Affirmative action is a set of positive steps taken to promote equal opportunity. One has to acknowledge that the playing field simply isn’t level” (as cited in Nealy, 2008). Given the variations of court cases, diversity is viewed as valuable from many of the universities, despite the verdicts.

Within the varying court cases discussed thus far, students of color may have chosen the institutions they attended based on the culture and climate of the campus. Even after Title VI, 19
states were operating racially segregated higher education institutions (U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights, 1991). Initially, affirmative action was implemented with specific attention paid to recruitment and access. From the beginning of affirmative action within higher education, there have been challenges. Because the institutions of higher education are elite in nature, they are not open, nor are they accessible to all, which was reflected in the number of students who chose to attend historically Black colleges and universities (Loury, 2005). Those who have been historically marginalized have been in this cycle of generational unjustness for decades—specifically in the realm of education. Howell (2010), furthered this notion and detailed the consequence of “post-ban enrollment at four-year colleges is predicted to drop by 2 percent…This result is magnified at the most selective four-year colleges, where the affirmative action ban is predicted to result in reduced minority representation by 10.2 percent” (p. 35). There is historical evidence to support that institutions without the affirmative action policy, may inhibit students of color with the opportunity to attend top selective universities.

Opponents and Proponents of Affirmative Action

Throughout the history of affirmative action and university admissions, public opinion and voting trends have been monumental. Case laws have shaped the rhetoric alongside the portrayal through varying media outlets. Given the divisive nature of this policy and the general topic of race, there are definitive opponents and proponents who have been and continue to be vocal of their stance.

Opponents of Affirmative Action. Those who have opposed and continue to oppose affirmative action in higher education admissions argue that it perpetuates inequity by considering race in admissions decisions (Connerly, 2000). Other critics claim that in an attempt to diversify a campus such as Stanford, has led the university:
To create racially segregated dormitories, racially segregated freshman orientation programs…[and] if diversity were really the goal, then preferences would be given on the basis of unusual characteristics, not on the basis of race. The underlying assumption — that only minorities can add certain ideas of perspectives—is offensive not merely because it is untrue but also because it implies that all minorities think a certain way. (Sacks & Thiel, 2017)

Based on these criticisms, which were not specifically included within the lawsuits, affirmative action bans have become more prevalent across the nation.

Other critics substantiate their beliefs and assumptions around common criticisms of affirmative action in university admissions. The criticisms vary based on assumptions and stereotypes. Some believe that students of color will be treated as undeserving. People will believe they didn’t get admitted on their own merit, thus potentially being treated as such when enrolled at elite or selective universities. Black and Hispanic students are unable to succeed at a selective college because of assumptions that their secondary education is not rigid nor properly prepares them for higher education. Certain opponents claim that diversity is not valuable enough to students to justify upholding the policy and that a perfect system would only admit students of color of low socioeconomic status. One of the most common and prominent in states where bans have taken effect is that affirmative action is racial discrimination, because if it were fair, universities would admit students based on their academic strength. One of the last criticisms of the policy is that universities can use affirmative action policies for class to achieve the same results (Quinlan, 2017).

These criticisms range from academic merit to fairness. Socioeconomic status is presented as an equalizer to race within these assumptions. Given the prominence of those who
oppose affirmative action, eight states have already banned this policy—Oklahoma, New Hampshire, Arizona, Nebraska, Michigan, Florida, Washington, and California (DeSilver, 2014). Of the eight states, who have implemented, seven were adopted by voters, and the remaining was made by legislative referral (DeSilver, 2014). When viewing the race of those who oppose affirmative action, 36% of Whites believe affirmative action on college campuses is not a good thing (Drake, 2014). From a partisan viewpoint, 50% of republicans also view affirmative action and racial preferences as negative (Drake, 2014).

Currently, President Donald Trump is taking aim at the policy within higher education. The Trump Administration will have Justice Department officials investigate and potentially sue universities over discrimination policies that they believe may discriminate against white applicants (Selingo, 2017). Betsy Devos, the Secretary of Education has echoed similar sentiments, in agreeing with recent court cases regarding affirmative action in higher education and in her most recent statement that, “we want an environment where all students have an opportunity, an equal opportunity to get a great education whether that’s at the K-12 level or the higher-ed level” (Maycan, 2017).

**Proponents of Affirmative Action.** Within this research are debates regarding historical discrimination and institutional racism for marginalized groups of students. Feinberg (1996) believed that utilizing a race-based affirmative action policy would address three moral issues, which are: 1. historical debt, 2. equality of opportunity, and 3. economics and distribution of societal resources. Affirmative action seeks to equalize the opportunities afforded to certain groups and not others. This policy was created as a support for historically marginalized groups and people of color. Race-based affirmative action is reflective of the values discussed above, that any and all should have the right to attend a university to enhance their own livelihood while
strengthening their communities. Justice Sandra Day O’Connor stated, “It remains the current reality that many minority students encounter markedly inadequate and unequal educational opportunities” (personal communication, 2003).

When viewing trends regarding affirmative action and public opinion, both race and political affiliation have been analyzed. Through a racial and political lens, 84% of Blacks and 80% of Hispanics believe affirmative action on college campuses is a good thing, with nearly eight in ten Democrats believing it is positive as well (Drake, 2014). Deborah Archer, the director of the Racial Justice Project and professor at New York Law School, defended affirmative action in that the root causes of racial stigma reach back further than the policy itself and will continue even if race-based policies ceases to exist as, “those who argue that race conscious admissions programs should be banned because they stigmatize minority students are part of the problem. Stamping all minority students with badges of inferiority by assuming they lack qualification is racial discrimination” (Quinlan, 2017). Race-based affirmative action is needed as a strategy to diversify and strengthen American universities and society at large.

Affirmative Action Alternatives

Prevalent research within this field has been produced over the past 15 years as more states continue to ban race-based policies in regard to affirmative action (Bowen et al., 2009; Carnevale & Rose, 2004; Linn & Welner, 2007; Espenshade & Chung, 2005). Based on the voting trends regarding the implementation of affirmative action in higher education, there is a need for additional research on these perceptions given that some states vote for its usage in higher education while others do not. Few debates in higher education are as divisive as those regarding affirmative action, and given the growing opposition, it is important to note the
socioeconomic status and race are not equivalent factors in diversifying university and college campuses.

Though there are intersections between race and income, specifically poverty, they are not causal nor dependent upon one another. If race-based policies such as affirmative action would be entirely disregarded, research suggest that few students of color would be admitted to colleges and universities. If race-neutral, policies were used at elite universities, for Hispanic students, 25% fewer would actually be admitted (Quinlan, 2017). Moreover, Gary Orfield (2017), distinguished research professor of education, law, and political science at the University of California, Los Angeles, argued, “Race and poverty are two different things, and they may overlap, but using poverty does not produce significant racial integration.”

Although there are proponents for race-based admissions, class-based approaches have since been used as an alternative option. Gaertner and Hart (2013) explained:

> Because race and class are correlated, class-based approaches often take hold…For example, public universities in Texas, Michigan, and Florida immediately implemented race-neutral programs to maintain campus diversity…class based affirmative action is usually evaluated in terms of its success maintaining levels of racial diversity. (p. 5)

Diversity remains to be an issue on college campuses throughout the nation despite the focus of affirmative action having a centralized race-based focus or a class-based focus. Kiyama & Rios (2018), further this notion by explaining the ways in which underrepresented students face difficulties with social and educational inequities in pursuit of higher education and that their “underrepresentation in colleges and universities has been influenced not by a lack of academic ability but by rising costs of college, increased standards in admissions criteria” (section 2364).
Through the Funds of Knowledge framework, LatinX students may have a platform to share their knowledge in reference to affirmative action and the role it played within their choices.
Chapter Conclusion

From one of the most seminal desegregation court cases of *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* to the more current *Fisher v. University of Texas at Austin Et Al.* case, affirmative action has been on the forefront of policy implementation within higher education institutions. Despite a potential ban of affirmative action in Colorado, affirmative action implementation is more vital than ever. The use of alternative policies to diversify campuses has been used; however, the number of students of color enrolling have not reflected the changes anticipated. With the increasing population of LatinX students in the state, and the decreasing number of those students in universities in Colorado, this policy must be reviewed through the student perspective to understand how it may or may not impact their lives.
CHAPTER III
METHODOLOGY

Data presented in Chapter One identified the enrollment gap among LatinX students at the national and state level. Despite the 2008 rejection of a proposed ban on affirmative action in Colorado, there continues to be disconnect among LatinX high school graduation and enrollment in universities. Although research on affirmative action and LatinX students has been conducted, it has not focused solely on their enrollment decisions, and instead often centralizes upon existing diversity on the campus. In this case study, I qualitatively used the Funds of Knowledge of second-year, self-identified LatinX students who attended a high school in Colorado. In chapter two, I presented synthesized research pertaining to the origination of affirmative action, alongside the most pertinent case laws that have impacted current application of affirmative action in Colorado.

This chapter serves as a foundation regarding how the research was be conducted through a Funds of Knowledge framework. The four themes within the Funds of Knowledge of family, community, popular culture, and peer group, were influential in determining the design, setting and participants, and data collection tools. Triangulation of semi-structured interviews, non-participant observation, and document analysis were conducted to confirm or disconfirm the evidence in regard to affirmative action and LatinX student perceptions and experiences.

**Rationale for Qualitative Research**

The purpose of this case study is to understand how affirmative action strategies shape the attitudes, experiences, and subsequent application and enrollment decisions of LatinX students, told through their funds of knowledge, at two selective higher education institutions in
Colorado. In this study I attempt to understand student attitudes regarding affirmative action through their Funds of Knowledge. This chapter is presented within seven sections (a) research design, (b) the setting and participants, (c) the data collection plan, (d) procedures (e) the data analysis plan, (f) trustworthiness and ethical considerations (g) and finally my research positionality within the study.

I chose to conduct a qualitative inquiry of Latinx students’ perceptions of how affirmative action use in higher education shapes their application and enrollment decisions because their knowledge and experiences deserve to be heard through their own voices. More often than not, studies regarding students of color and affirmative action are quantitative and provide information regarding numbers of students who have applied and have enrolled in the university, but we do not know why that choice has been made.

**Rationale for Case Study Design**

In this study, I utilized a case study design. Creswell (2014), detailed a case study as research that involves “a detailed description of the setting or individuals, followed by [an] analysis of the data for themes or issues” (p. 196). Creswell (2014) continued to describe case studies as a design of “inquiry…in which the researcher develops an in-depth analysis of a case…bounded by time and activity, and researchers collect detailed information using a variety of data collection procedures” (p. 14). My goal was to collect detailed information through various platforms among the semi-structured interviews, non-participant observations, and document analysis, I chose to use two different sites for this study as the University of Alma is considered a flagship university, whereas the University of Flores has a research-based university reputation. Yin (2009) defined case study inquiry that:
• copes with the technically distinctive situation in which there will be many more variables of interest than data points, and as one result
• relies on multiple sources of evidence, with data needing to converge in a triangulating fashion and as another result
• benefits from the prior development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis. (p. 18)

When applying this definition to this case study, the culmination of varying data points, triangulation, and the guiding theoretical framework of the Funds of Knowledge, have strengthened the scope of this research. Conducting non-participant observations provided context for the answers provided within the interview answers. The document analysis also provided substantial evidence to confirm the application process many of the interviewees experienced. Having multiple forms of data within the findings confirmed the importance of affirmative action in the lives of LatinX students.

I bounded my case by selecting two higher education institutions based on their implementation of affirmative action. These two universities have implemented affirmative action differently but share a common goal of increasing their compositional diversity of Latinx students. This common focus made room for an in-depth analysis and comparison within and across contexts and allowed me to explore why certain diversity initiatives and policies, such as affirmative action, work or fail to work (Goodrick, 2014).

Sample

Data Site

There were two research sites with participants from each. The research sites were the selective university in Colorado –the University of Alma, and the partner campus, the University
of Flores. The University of Alma and the University of Flores are researcher-created pseudonyms. Alma is the Spanish word for soul, and Flores is the Spanish word for flowers. These words were chosen to represent the universities because of the growth that occurs during one’s college experience. Though both universities exist within the same university system, the location, diversity, and campus climate are vastly different. An emphasis has been placed on one of Colorado’s selective university (University of Alma) because of the reputation of the institution. The University of Alma is a selective university for the state. To reiterate, voters opposed the ban of affirmative action; however, in preparation of that, UA chose to enact a class-based policy to take preventive measures if necessary. Those at UA understood the ramifications to diversity at the university if this policy would no longer be implemented. Gaertner and Hart (2013) argued that among the values of pursuing a higher education degree is providing access with “two goals that some believe operate at cross-purposes: rewarding academic excellence and removing barriers to equal opportunity” (p. 2). Colorado’s selective university has a $514.2 million endowment, is known for its research, ranked 90 among national universities, and prides itself on the location, and balance of academics and well-being (“Higher Education”, 2017). The University of Flores has a different reputation. UF is ranked 207 among other universities in the nation and has a $428.7 million endowment (“Higher Education” 2017). University endowments are of particular importance because it connects past, current, and future generations of students (American Council on Education, 2014). Endowments serve their institutions by “providing stability, leveraging other sources of revenue, encouraging innovation and flexibility, [and] allowing a longer time horizon (American Council on Education, 2014, p. 3). This university is also known for their research as they are affiliated with the medical campus (“Higher Education”
It is noteworthy to mention again that the University of Flores is also located in an urban setting.

**Participants**

To gain multiple perspectives in the areas of affirmative action and the Funds of Knowledge, I used purposeful sampling. I selected this strategy as it involved identifying and selecting individuals that are especially knowledgeable (Palinkas et al., 2015). This sample allowed me to select a small number of cases with specific criterion for the participants. To do this, a minimum of seven LatinX students were recruited to participate. These students were in their second year at the University of Alma and the University of Flores. The students were selected based on three dimensions: race, gender, and educational level. The participants within this study will self-identify as LatinX, Latina, or Latino. Mixed gender was preferential, as well as being under the age of 22. I have chosen 22 as the cap for age requirements for an inclusive approach as it may include students have who have taken different routes to higher education, such as those who have taken off a year, attended a community college first, etc. Differences between gender and the students’ attitudes and experiences with affirmative action will provide varying perspectives. The students will be in their second year of study at either institution as I aim to utilize their experience and acclimation to the university setting. Immigration status will not be a factor and will not be discussed in any manner throughout the research process. Participants will be asked not to include any information regarding their immigration status before the interview begins. Embedded within the specified criterion for participants, the Funds of Knowledge provided a platform to unveil how their knowledge and experiences have shaped their decision-making and choice to attend a specific university in Colorado. Moreover, the overlap between the students’ Funds of Knowledge and affirmative action was conveyed based
on the interview questions. The identifying factors provided an understanding of the field of power, “not only by social class, but race, ethnicity, gender, and language (Kiyama, 2018, section 1587).

**Recruitment procedures.** The students were identified with the assistance of a gatekeeper from both institutions. Creswell (2014) described gatekeepers as those who can help a researcher “gain access to sites and to study participants” (p. 95). I met with two university members, who I have worked with in the past, at their respective institutions. Each will serve as the gatekeeper for this study. Relying solely on a gatekeeper will harbor some risks, as they are determining which students would be eligible participants for this study. It is through their interpretive scope as to whom they select for my research study. After gaining initial approval from the Office of Research Integrity and Education, the Human Research Protection Program, and the Institutional Review Board (IRB), a selection of seven to 10 students, who meet the desired qualifications and were willing to participate in the study, were confirmed for this study. The gatekeepers, at both institutions, were able to meet with students in a Hispanic and Latina/o organization and ask for volunteers. From there, I sent an introductory email both about myself and the purpose of my research. Upon confirmation, I set up interview times and conducted each interview for a total of seven students. For this study, data was collected in the forms of semi-structured interviews, non-participant observations, and document analysis. Below is information presented in a table for each student who participated in the interviews.
Table 1: University of Alma and University of Flores student profiles.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Name</th>
<th>University</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Specifying Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arturo</td>
<td>University of Flores</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Urban lifestyle, skateboarder, very influential mother figure, identifies as Mexican</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandra</td>
<td>University of Flores</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Pressures from family, loves animals, best friends with Adrianna, identifies as Latina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alicia</td>
<td>University of Alma</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Peer group-high importance, part of various organizations in secondary/higher ed, identifies as Chicana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jose</td>
<td>University of Flores</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Traditional machismo family, pressures to help family, identifies as Latino</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adrianna</td>
<td>University of Flores</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Best friends with Sandra, influenced by peer group, identifies as Latina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alejandro</td>
<td>University of Alma</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Played football, attended games with father, wanted traditional experience, identifies as LatinX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anna</td>
<td>University of Alma</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Traditional experience, involved family, identifies as Cuban</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Collection

Within this study, I had three different data sources. The data sources consisted of semi-structured interviews, non-participant observations, and document analysis. I chose to use a multitude of data sources to provide context and understanding for the funds of knowledge the students provided within their interviews. Triangulating the three data sources provides a justification for themes and when the themes are established based on the convergence of data, the process provides validity (Creswell, 2014, p. 201). I also hand transcribed all data to ensure that I was able to fully understand all areas. Below is a table that condensed the data collection with specifying details.
Interviews. Merriam (2009), described the purpose of an interview as being a tool that can be explored through detailed examination (p. 14). “explore the unique aspects of the case in great detail” (p. 14). In order to understand how LatinX students’ have potentially been impacted by affirmative action when deciding to attend an institution of higher education, I will use interviews to gain rich descriptions from the participants. If I utilized a survey, for example, I may not receive descriptions that will enable full disclosure. An interview “implies a value on personal language as data. Face-to-face interviewing may be appropriate where depth of meaning
is important, and the research is primarily focused in gaining insight and understanding”  
(Newton, 2010, p. 1).

The semi-structured interviews within this study were conducted in one phase. Before the interview process began, all participants were provided with an interview protocol and consent form to ensure that they were aware of the entire process and had the opportunity to ask any questions before the interviews began or choose not to be a participant in the interviews. The interviews began with time spent to build comfort with the participants, as I wanted the students to feel at ease throughout the entire process. The interviews were conducted in English; however, if the participant utilized Spanish within the interview, that was permissible as well, as I am fluent in Spanish. The interviews were between 40 to 60 minutes in length and audio recorded. During the interviews, I took brief field notes if something caught my attention in regard to their expressions or body language to ensure that I could later connect it to their answers to provide additional context. Participants were reminded that if they needed a break at any time, they could have stopped the interview. Additionally, they will be reminded that their identity will remain anonymous. Upon completion of the interviews, I transcribed all interviews within two to three weeks after all have been completed. Upon completion of each interview, I immediately transcribed the interview.

*Non-Participant Observations.* Observations were conducted on both university campuses. I spent three days on each campus, with particular time spent in common student areas. I did not interact with students and was a complete observer, paying particular attention to the groupings of students. Creswell (2014) explained non-participant observations are, “open ended-in that the researchers ask general questions of the participants allowing the participants to freely provide their views” (p. 190). The observations were transcribed with rich, thick
descriptions to properly capture what was being viewed. Using this technique provided context to potential answers given during the interview process. Observations also confirmed what the interviewees saw, heard, and experienced. Conducting observations of the university campuses aided in the alignment or misalignment of what was analyzed within the document review and data from the interviews. The non-participant observations may aid in the answering of the research question of the University of Alma’s decisions to use affirmative action because of its known reputation.

*Document Analysis.* In order to gain insight into recruitment strategies taken by both institutions of higher education, I reviewed brochures aimed at recruitment and their respective websites in terms of diversity shown through various images. Reviewing those documents revealed the discourse of language used and provided depictions of race in admissions at both universities. The purpose of this analysis was to understand the impressions of affirmative action in admissions processes for students of color at the University of Alma and the University of Flores. From a non-traditional standpoint, the role of media will also be analyzed. Both universities are very active on social media and utilized a range of means to communicate their messages of racial diversity on both university campuses. When viewing social media, the language used was analyzed in addition to the photos selected. Unlike the other tools utilized in this study, document analysis can provide, “information and insights derived from documents…supplement data from other sources, such as semi-structured interviews and observation” (Bowen, 2009, p. 30).

**Procedures**

Prior to the actual conduction of research, I received approval from the Institutional Review Board. Upon receiving approval, I then confirmed contact with the two gatekeepers I
have identified at the University of Alma and the University of Flores. I then contacted the participants with information regarding the research study, their consent forms, interview protocol, and an opportunity to ask any preliminary questions they may have.

I was intentional in the sites I chose within this study to ensure that I was able to capture the most pertinent information regarding affirmative action and LatinX students as they transitioned from high school to college. While waiting to secure interviews from the gatekeepers who assisted in the recruitment process, I spent a total of six days on the university campuses to conduct the non-participant observations. While observing I spent time in both student unions. After completing the observations and while scheduling, I began to analyze the websites for a thorough document analysis. I also aimed to have this completed prior to the semi-structured interviews as I wanted to ensure that I was well-versed in the application process in anticipation that they may discuss the online portion of applying to the University of Alma or the University of Flores.

**Data Analysis**

To become closer to the data, I transcribed all interviews, journal entries, and field notes. The process of transcribing provided me with the opportunity to initially begin viewing emerging themes. Because each interview was over a specific time period, I chose to transcribe each interview immediately after each interview. I then created files for all data with password protected security. I iteratively viewed the data and coded for the themes that reflected the components of the Funds of Knowledge, through theoretical coding which were family, community, popular culture, and peer group (knowledge from fellow students to assist navigation of school life), that will be used to frame the interview questions, and any other themes that organically stem from the interviews (Moje et al., 2004).
The data was analyzed both deductively and inductively to create the coding themes. The process itself will reflect that of Kiyama and Rios Aguilar’s (2018), in which the interviews will be analyzed on the initial codes (family, community, popular culture, and peer group (knowledge from fellow students to assist navigation of school life). I based the codes on the “intersection and partitioning of these initial codes”, create data matrices to identify themes and subthemes and then organize the final steps of the analysis (section 1560). Creswell (2014), described coding as a way to, “involve generating categories of information (open coding), selecting one of the categories and positioning it within a theoretical model (axial coding), and then explicating a story from the interconnection of these categories (selective coding)” (p. 196). Because I had themes initially set into place, I also ensured that other themes could have existed if provided.

In the analysis of the qualitative data sources for the semi-structured interviews, I used various coding procedures to generate themes. I began with descriptive coding, by putting words or phrases based on what the participant has directly stated (Saldana, 2009, p. 3). During this time, I went through multiple phases of coding by immersing myself into the data. Open coding was completed, and I read and reread the data multiple times to understand the ways in which the data could be grouped and later coded. Initially, I read through the data to familiarize myself with the data itself. I then read through the data each time, applying varying viewpoints that matched the Funds of Knowledge. I then went through multiple phases to ensure that the process was in fact cyclical. As Saldana (2009) detailed, “I advocate that qualitative codes are essence-capturing and essential elements of the research story that, when clustered together according to similarity and regularity –a pattern –they actively facilitate the development of categories and thus analysis of their connections (p. 9). Through this process, a total of 43 codes were identified.
The codes then aligned to the four categories described within the Funds of Knowledge: family, community, popular culture, and peer group, discussed previously.

During this process, I also completed the observations of both campuses. I planned to spend one day on each campus; however, I dedicated additional time to ensure my observation of each campus was consistent and visited each campus on three separate occasions. While waiting for the participants to be selected, I analyzed the documents. This better prepared me for the interviews as some participants referenced what influenced their decision to attend the university they are currently studying at. The data will be triangulated from the forms of data that were collected – interviews, observations, and document analysis.

Table 3: Themes, Theme-related Categories and Assertions for the Semi-Structured Interviews.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY: FAMILY</th>
<th>THEME(S)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Families often discussed college and components of affirmative action.</td>
<td>The involvement, or lack thereof, of families in the college application process and transition influenced the participants’ awareness of affirmative action and diversity, and their enrollment decisions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Families did not discuss college, affirmative action, or set expectations in terms of college.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Families expected the participants to attend college and pushed the participants to apply.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Families were involved in the college transition – including taking the participants to visit various campuses and helping them apply.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. Families were not involved in the college transition.
6. Families made majority of the decisions for the participants.
7. When making a big decision, some participants explained that they were in charge of making the decision.
8. Though unpopular, some participants attended the university of flores because of familial obligations—including financial assistance.

**Category: Community**

| 1. The community within the participants’ high schools promoted affirmative action and college success. | An awareness of affirmative action and the college transition was enhanced based on the community’s involvement. |
| 2. Participants appreciated support from their counselors or teachers in regard to college and their transition. | Based on the gender of some participants, the community was unsupportive of college attendance, attending a university that required living on campus, or based on the distance of the university in proximity from their familial homes. |
| 3. Participants did not always feel supported in their transition to the university of alma and the University of Flores from their racial/ethnic community—particularly female participants. | |

**Theme(s)**
4. Individual teachers helped some participants apply to the university they are currently enrolled in.

**Category: Popular Culture**

1. Participants attended the university of alma because of the traditional reputation of the university.
2. The urban element of the university of flores is what made some participants want to attend.
3. Not living at home, influenced the participants’ decision to attend the university of alma.
4. Some participants felt that though their community did not support their independence because of cultural obligations.

**Category: Peer Group**

1. Participants attended because friends were interested in a specific university, influencing their decision to apply to that university.
2. Participants indicated that their friends did not influence their decision to attend a specific university.

**Theme(s)**

Societal expectations, interjected with cultural and familial obligations, influenced the choice in the participants’ choices enrolling at the University of Flores or the University of Alma.

Enrollment decisions were directly or indirectly a factor in the application and enrollment decision of participants.
3. Participants were aware of affirmative action policies based on the student organizations they were a part of.

4. Participants who applied based on their peer groups have maintained those relationships throughout their college experience thus far.

**Trustworthiness**

To ensure that there was accuracy, I piloted the questions to check for clarity, and non-leading questions. I used the strategy of member-checking. This strategy “determine[d] the accuracy of the qualitative findings through taking the final report or specific descriptions or themes back to participants and determining whether these participants and determining whether these participants feel that they are accurate” (Creswell, 2014, p. 201). While conducting interviews, I often restated what is being said back to the participant, again using strategy of member-checking (Creswell, 2014, p. 201). After transcribing, I contacted the participant to ensure that I properly conveyed what they intended to state during the interview. In regard to the reliability within this case study, I “check[ed] transcripts to make sure that they do [did] not contain obvious mistakes made during transcription…[and] constantly compare[d] data with the codes and by writing memos about the codes and their definitions (p. 203).

An additional form of trustworthiness that I used was a reflective journal and the field notes that were taken throughout the entire process. Having a journal provided me with a vehicle to document the process as a researcher while viewing the changes and information learned
throughout the process. Ortlipp (2008), argued that reflective journals are being used to engage with the notion of creating transparency in the research process and to ultimately explore the impact of critical self-reflection on the research design process (p. 694). Additionally, the field notes collected throughout the process served as data to be viewed and incorporated within the final analysis.

Upon collecting all forms of data, I triangulated the data for credibility and trustworthiness. Through triangulation, a confirming or disconfirming of the evidence based on the data will be presented. The data used can “generate conceptual categories and [be] used to confirm the indication” (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). Whether the data will confirm or disconfirm the evidence, the participants’ Funds of Knowledge will be used to understand the transition period from secondary education to higher education and the impact, or lack thereof, regarding affirmative action. Utilizing these strategies strengthened the trustworthiness of this study.

**Ethical Considerations**

I based my ethical considerations off of the information provided by Creswell (2014, p. 93). To begin, I examined the professional association standards, and submitted my proposal to IRB upon approval of my proposal from my committee. I selected the sites based on the university status within the Western Region, selectivity, differences in location, and gatekeepers available. During the research process of collecting data, I continued to be as ethical as possible. I respected both university campuses while conducting the interviews and interacting with those on their campuses by notifying the appropriate personnel of my visit in advance, checking where I was allowed entry, and being aware of my presence. I chose to dress in casual clothing to blend while conducting the observations to avoid looking out of place. My intention in dress was to blend in as a student on the campus. Because of my familiarity with both campuses, I scheduled
the interviews and asked students if they preferred to meet in the library or student union, as there are work spaces in both locations on both campuses. I ensured that all participants received the same treatment through a protocol that all participants had prior to the interview by practicing with my cohort and practicing non-biased feedback as they answered their questions. I piloted the interview multiple times in my doctoral research seminar course with my cohort and had reactions for potential answers and how best to respond for the most productive use of our time together. The feedback influenced the order in which I asked the questions as the mock interviews revealed that the questions that dealt with race and power should be saved for the latter part as I hoped their comfort would increase as the interviews progressed. During the interview, I avoided collecting harmful information from the participants by reiterating that anything they shared would be used with their permission and that they would remain anonymous. Upon receiving the information, I did not falsify the information and will not plagiarize the information. All information was kept in password-protected files with pseudonyms. Participant privacy was a top priority throughout the process.

**Researcher Positionality**

I have always been reminded by my mother to remember who I am and to always help my people. As a student, I did not realize that I had been empowered because of my parents and the ways in which they helped me develop my own voice and advocate for myself. I hope this research will aid in the success of other students. I define success by helping students realize that they deserve to be heard and they deserve to be at any university that they choose. Through the Funds of Knowledge, I am using their knowledge as a source of power. As my mother always told me, “Your education is the only thing that can never be taken from you” (personal communication). My research goals are to ensure that all students realize this and live by this.
I am a brown woman and educational leader. I am the child of an immigrant and have been surrounded by cultures that are not valued by the dominant culture. I chose to research this area because of the clear and apparent disparity among the number of LatinX students in high schools across the state and the low number of college freshman enrolled in various higher education institutions. As a high school student, I saw many of my friends miss their opportunity to ask the right questions and advocate for themselves. Though their voices have been silenced, it is my mission to strengthen and use their voices for themselves and our people. We do not need to fit the mold. Our voices, both individually and collectively can shatter the mold.
Chapter Conclusion

Given the purpose of my research study, examining this policy through the LatinX students’ Funds of Knowledge enhanced the current research regarding affirmative action. Through semi-structured interviews, iterative coding, member-checking, and non-participant observations, I gained invaluable insight into the transition period for students. Having this opportunity enabled me to provide my findings to others within education to potentially understand the enrollment gap for LatinX students from secondary education to higher education in Colorado and how affirmative action shaped their application and enrollment decisions.
Chapter IV

Results

The purpose of this case study is to understand how affirmative action strategies shape the attitudes, experiences, and subsequent application and enrollment decisions of LatinX students, told through their funds of knowledge, at two selective higher education institutions in Colorado. In this chapter, I describe the qualitative analysis of the data to answer the research question guiding this study: How does a selective university’s decision to use affirmative action strategies shape the college application and enrollment decisions of LatinX students in Colorado told through their funds of knowledge? I analyzed the data into generative themes initially identified and explained in Chapter II and Chapter III. For this qualitative data, themes are presented and supported through category-related sections and quotes from the participants. The qualitative data were collected through seven semi-structured participant interviews, observations, and document analysis. All interviews were hand transcribed and coded for themes immediately following and later analyzed using a variety of coding techniques. The open codes were then combined into larger categories. The categories were examined, and themes were then created.

Findings and Discussion

In the section below, I provide a narrative for each of the participants, detailing the students’ answers based on the identified Funds of Knowledge and the ways in which affirmative action was a facet within their decision-making. A primary goal of this research, was to provide a platform in which students’ voices were not only heard but also empowered. In order to honor the stories, I was told through the semi-structured interviews, I have given each student their own section detailing their answer to the research question that guided this study: How does a
selective university’s decision to use affirmative action strategies shape the college application and enrollment decisions of LatinX students in Colorado told through their funds of knowledge?. Below are the identified themes generated from the triangulation of the semi-structured interviews, non-participant observations, and document analysis.

Table 4: Data categories and theme(s)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>The involvement, or lack thereof, of families in the college application process and transition influenced the participants’ awareness of affirmative action and diversity and their enrollment decisions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td>An awareness of affirmative action and the college transition was enhanced based on the community’s involvement. Based on the gender of some participants, the community was unsupportive of college attendance, attending a university that required living on campus, or based on the distance of the university in proximity from their familial homes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Popular Culture</td>
<td>Societal expectations, interjected with cultural and familial obligations influenced the choice in the participants’ choices enrolling at the University of Flores or the University of Alma.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Group</td>
<td>Enrollment decisions were directly or indirectly a factor in the application and enrollment decision of participants in regard to their peer group.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the discussion below, each student’s analysis is structured to reflect the four categories of the Funds of Knowledge through the phases of interview questions asked. For each category, are data summaries of generalized information from all participants.

**Family.** The following theme-related categories were found to authenticate the theme that guided this assertion: (a) familial discussions, (b) parents and family were directly involved in the participants’ application and enrollment decisions, with/without an awareness of affirmative action (c) parents and family were not involved nor were they a part of the transition and enrollment decisions, with/without an awareness of affirmative action, and (d) parent and family involvement in decision making.
**Community.** I did not define which community was to be evaluated by the participants when conducting the interviews; thus, providing the participants the opportunity to define communities that they were or are currently a part of that helped or hindered their transition to the University of Alma or the University of Flores.

**Popular Culture.** When participants were asked the interview question regarding why they chose to attend an institution of higher education, their answers were very similar to notions about attending college as that it is what you are supposed to do. Students that attended the University of Alma mentioned that they desired a traditional college experience—similar to that often viewed in popular Hollywood movies. Spending time on the University of Alma’s campus was reflective of a traditional experience with students participating in various events, leisurely walking around, and viewing dormitories located in various parts of the campus (University of Alma Observation, Spring 2018). This was different in comparison to the University of Flores, where students were walking quite rapidly to their class, I was unable to view any campus dormitories, aside from one located at least three blocks from the university itself and viewed multiple parking lots all over the entire campus (University of Flores Observation, Spring 2018). Many also explained that college would help them in their wants to have a great job and not have to worry about money in the future.

**Peer Group.** Female participants detailed the ways in which their best friends influenced their decision to apply and attend the University of Alma. The two male participants who played sports were also expressive regarding their peers and the application process. Those participants are still friends with those they referenced, and those friends attend the same universities or universities nearby. The remaining four participants explained that their peer group in high school did not influence their decision to attend the University of Alma or the University of
Flores. Based on my observations, students at the University of Alma appeared to be in groups of at least three, whereas students on the University of Flores were often alone and walking from building to building. These students also stated that they have not kept in contact with their friends from high school.
Arturo, University of Flores

Arturo is a 21-year-old, first generation, sophomore at the University of Flores majoring in graphic design. He chose graphic design as his major for a multitude of reasons. The most important being his undeniable love of art. For higher possibilities of success, his father encouraged a graphic design major instead of Arturo pursuing his passion in art. Prior to a severe leg injury, Arturo was an avid skateboarder. Given that he is on the mend, he also works part-time at Home Depot. While describing his extra-curricular activities and employment, there was a clear discourse in what he enjoyed and what he had to do in order to maintain his college education based on his facial expressions that began as a smile and then a serious look when describing how he doesn’t like interacting with the public but needs to work to help his family and pay for school. This was reflective of families from marginalized communities are from the working class “(Kiyama & Rios, 2018, section 271). Work has always been a part of his life. The Fund of Knowledge regarding family was inherently linked to his goals and working to get what he wanted.

In regard to affirmative action, Arturo was not only aware of this policy, but diversity was an underlying factor in his decision to attend the University of Flores. He wanted to be around people of diverse backgrounds because his high school was not very diverse. Arturo stated, “I wanted to be around my kind. I want to skate in the city, and I want to be able to sell my art in the city.” When I spent time conducting my non-participant observations, I did note that the University of Flores appeared to have more diversity in terms of race and had flags hanging to represent all countries of students on the campus. I also noted that many students of the same race appeared to be spend time together in the student lounge. My observations,
alongside what Arturo explained, affirmed that race not only permeates social structures but also systemic structures (Kiyama & Rios, 2018, section 2027). For Arturo, those who shared his cultural background, were of importance in his decision to attend and sense of belonging.

Arturo self-identifies as Mexican and it is reflected in some of the art that he showed me during the interview. He described the ways in which he views his art as a rebellion to dominant culture, especially now given the political climate. Even more, was his view of art as power. He described his mother as being his source of power. She came to the United States from Mexico and worked two different jobs to give him the best possible life. He highlighted the ways in which his mother was always so proud and did her best to be involved. Despite her work schedules, and not speaking English fluently, she made it a priority to attend every single parent-teacher conference, all the way through his senior year but had little knowledge of how to apply to universities in the United States. Arturo associated affirmative action directly with diversity and inherently linked his mother’s experiences with his higher education choices. Though she didn’t know of affirmative action, her work ethic and commitment to Arturo’s education strengthened his decision to attend the University of Flores. This confirms that through the Funds of Knowledge and Arturo’s awareness and knowledge of affirmative action could improve the education of underrepresented students (Kiyama & Rios, 2018, section, 302).

**Sandra, University of Flores**

Sandra is a 20-year-old first generation student at the University of Flores. She identifies as Latina and is also the first young woman in her family to attend college. When learning of her through the Funds of Knowledge phased questions, she explained that her major is business and hopes to open a pet store one day because of her love of animals. She has ducks, geese, pigs, and dogs at home. When prompted with questions regarding her family, it was clear that they made
decisions for her. She described how her dream university was in California; however, leaving home before marriage, under any circumstance, is not allowed in her family. Sandra not only had to choose a university in state, but also lives at home. Sandra detailed, “Even though it’s my decision, I knew that if I left home, he would never forgive me. My dad lets my brothers do anything they want but keeps my sister and I close to him.” Though she argued that she is happy, she regrets the weight her family has on her own life decisions.

Though she chose the University of Flores in order to live at home, affirmative action, as she described, “I love affirmative action because we are smart too and it’s our right to study where we want,” is of high importance to her. She was involved in her high school’ debate team which provided her with a strong awareness of this policy. Her parents and family are very traditional in their roles and hope to instill those same traditions for Sandra and her siblings, and though they support her dreams, their support was through her growth as their daughter and not overtly involved within her education. Though Sandra has an awareness of this policy, she feels restrained given the traditional role her family expects her to mold in to. As stated above, she is the first female in her family to attend a university. Within the Funds of Knowledge, building social capital among educators, schools, families, and communities has proven to have positive outcomes –specifically in parental support (Kiyama, 2010, p. 344). Had there been a network of communication between the school and her parents, there is a possibility that her journey could have been different.

Though Sandra’s parents supported her development and growth, they were unfamiliar with the education system here in the United States. Despite this, her parents are her motivation to do well. Sandra’s best friend, also included in this interview, are involved in Latina-based organizations at the University of Flores. These affinity groups not only influenced her decision
but also strengthened her knowledge because she needed support in that area. These types of organizations are often aware of LatinX students’ funds of knowledge and provide the information and supports that they may not have received in high school or at home. Sandra believes she has power and wants other Latinas to know that they have it too. Validating her Funds of Knowledge in this interview warrant the need for this type of research.

Alicia, University of Alma

Alicia is a 21-year-old sophomore at the University of Alma. Alicia identifies as Chicana and is a double major in ethnic studies and gender and women’s studies. Her excitement to participate in this study was undeniable as she is extremely passionate about race relations and the role of women of color in employment and education. When prompted with the questions regarding affirmative action, she not only explained the policy but highlighted the ways in which the University of Alma highlights diversity. Alicia explained that when she was looking at websites for universities, Alma’s was easy to use and had students of color everywhere. When viewing the websites for the document analysis there was a detailed video where a diverse group of students, staff, and faculty, are shown on the university campus. Beneath the video are additional options to click on once a student has applied, been admitted, and then confirmed. Alicia detailed how when she applied she was paired with an admissions counselor who supported her the entire way through.

Alicia picked the university because they acknowledge affirmative action and it is where the sorority her sister belongs to is. Alicia stated, “My sister is in a Latina organization, and since she pledged, she had sisters to help her in any way she needed. Because she left her family here, she gained a new one and I wanted that when I went to college.” When I visited the student union for my observations of the university, I noted a tremendous number of race-based
sororities and fraternities. She explained that she wanted to join because even though affirmative action is in place, I wanted support from my Latina sisters. Though this policy is useful in her opinion, her sorority embodies the policy through their collective voices and success. Research within the Funds of Knowledge indicate that Latinas face a variety of obstacles in higher education that range from racist campus climates to cultural stereotypes (Kiyama, 2017, p. 2). The University of Alma’s Latina sororities started because of the lack of diversity and much needed support for Latina students, so they initiated organizations to support their individual and collective growth and success. Both of which Alicia has experienced and why she depends on her sorority sisters for her family of support in college.

Alicia’s support did not end with her admissions counselor, as her older sister also attends the University of Alma and their parents are and have always been directly involved in their education. Alicia’s sister was and continues to be very influential in her life and instilled her views, specifically in regard to affirmative action, which strengthened various funds of her knowledge. When asked why she wanted to go to college, Alicia proudly stated, “It was not if I wanted to go to college, it was where I would go to college...my mother’s expectations were high and rigid...she expects the best and that is what I strive for.” Alicia’s mother is her motivation and because her mother is a proud woman, Alicia has chosen to pursue the same type of mentality.

Jose, University of Flores

Jose is a 22-year-old sophomore at the University of Flores where he is pursuing a degree in business and nutrition. He identifies as Latino. Unlike the other students I interviewed, Jose was indifferent in regard to affirmative action. Though he was aware of the policy and how it was intended to help “black and brown people”, he doesn’t feel it really helped him. Jose spent
the most time during the interview process discussing his father, and the ways in which his father has molded him into the man he is today. Jose referred to his father and upbringing as “machismo” which is known as a patriarchal and masculine way of living. For example, Jose explained, “My dad makes me work at a car wash… I wanted to do work study as I think it’s easier and I can do my homework, but he believes I should be outside and do hard work. Let me tell you, sometimes it will be snowing, and I am outside detailing cars. I understand why but that’s a reason I’m in school, so I won’t always have to work hard.” Jose equates hard work to his father, and education will give him a different way of working hard.

Though his family has been influential in his decision-making, he struggles with the concept of affirmative action, even more so now. Jose detailed the ways in which he applied for financial aid and did not get anything, and his parents do not make enough money to take care of the family and help him with school. He argued, “If they want to help students like me, why don’t they help us get here and stay here?” Jose is only able to take a few classes each semester because of the costs. He chose to attend the University of Flores because he is able to live at home, pay for his classes, and help his family financially as well. This is reflective of the role of funds within a family and characterize the concepts of feeling overwhelmed or burdened in trying to get a college degree. Jose explained that he does not know anyone who is getting help because of this policy and that it’s just a way for a university to claim that they care about diversity.

A central factor in why Jose is working extremely hard in balancing his studies and work is because he equates education with power. He has witnessed his father be disrespected and always have to work extremely hard both physically and mentally, and Jose wants to be able to have a job that for which he is passionate. More than anything though, is Jose’s desire to one day
take care of his parents, specifically his father because “he has taught me more than any class can. I will be the first person to graduate even if I go slower and one day, he will not have to worry about money or our family again, I swear.” Hearing Jose validate his knowledge of family through the funds of knowledge was not only remarkable but proved that his funds will serve him well as he progresses through college.

Adrianna, University of Flores

Adrianna is a 21-year-old sophomore at the University of Flores, who is currently an undeclared major. She identifies as Latina and lives in campus housing. Her entire interview surrounded her mother and access to information. Adrianna’s mother graduated from the University of Flores when Adrianna was in high school. Unlike the other students in this study, Adrianna was the only one who spoke of a parent attending higher education. Her mother influenced her decision to attend the University of Flores namely because of the diversity that exists on the campus through the University of Flores’ strong implementation of the affirmative action policy, as she explained. Adrianna recalled going to the campus and seeing her mother and people who looked like her mother. She recalls feelings of belongingness. Though her mother helped her with the process of applying to the University of Flores, Adrianna encountered a lot of difficulties using the website.

While conducting the document analysis, I approached it as though I was a high school student attempting to apply. This was extremely resourceful in understanding what Adrianna experienced. When conducting the mock application, the first image a freshman applicant views is shown below. Unlike the University of Alma, that has a video and array of racial diversity of the students shown, the University of Flores has a woman who appears to be graduating with a graduate degree.
Beneath this image is a brief synopsis of the university, “cutting-edge research and rigorous academics meet the real world with industry-leading internship, service learning and community engagement opportunities” (Admissions & Costs, 2018). After the synopsis, one may click on the four different application options. In order to get to the Freshman Admissions, one must click on three different sections to get to the information. After clicking on Freshman Admissions, are two quotes from female students. I have included one of the images below as she is a Latina graduate of 2017. Within her quote, she directly addresses diversity, different cultures, and

“...felt comfortable, like home. When I met people on campus, we had a lot in common, but I also love the diversity, because I can learn from different cultures. Also, it’s exciting to be in a big city with more opportunities for jobs than in my own state.”
opportunities within her own state. Though this is current information, and Adrianna applied years ago, it is clear that to get where a freshman needs to apply takes time. The purposeful quote is also reflective of the reasons Adrianna chose to attend the University of Flores.

Adrianna had the unique experience of understanding affirmative action as her mother was in school to become a history and social studies teacher. She described her mother as really caring about affirmative action, whereas Adrianna stated, “It is important, but I don’t think we really need it anymore. We know what we have to do to be successful and if we can’t it’s on us. I am an adult and make my own decisions, if I fail, it’s my own fault.” Her responses were reflective of the positivism that can occur with parents. If a parent had a positive or beneficial experience, this will enhance that student’s familial fund of knowledge as it enhances their educational ideologies (Kiyama & Rios, 2018, section 2547). Adrianna has internalized the individual perspective within the funds of knowledge that often occurs for students of color. Because of her strong fund of knowledge from her family, she was independent of needing additional funds of support.

**Alejandro, University of Alma**

Alejandro is a 20-year-old sophomore at the University of Alma. He identifies as LatinX and has chosen Business, but will also complete a sports management certificate, as he hopes to work as an agent. Alejandro has placed an extremely strong emphasis on the community and peer group Funds of Knowledge from during his transition to become a university student as well as currently. Alejandro played football and soccer as a high school student and pursued a college education as a result of the support from his team mates and coaches.
During the application process, it was his coaches who helped him apply not only apply for the university but also for a variety of scholarships. His soccer coaches were actually the ones who explained what affirmative action was and why it was important for him to understand the role of his race in the application process. One coach in particular emphasized the policy because “it helps our people. We can have any job we want, any car, and have it all now.” Alejandro stated, “If it wasn’t for my coaches, I know I would not have applied, who knows, I probably wouldn’t have even finished high school. Now I am at the UA and killin it.” The coaches, through Arturo’s own funds of knowledge, not only informed his decisions but aided in how he views his race as an asset.

Anna, University of Alma

Anna is a 20-year-old sophomore at the University of Alma. She identifies as Cuban and is majoring in biology with a minor in chemistry. She is a first-generation student and received a full scholarship of study at the University of Alma. Anna knew about affirmative action as she was in the International Baccalaureate and took the global politics class. She studies this policy and how it has been implemented in employment in the United States. Given her background, Anna believes that the United States needs affirmative action more than ever and argued that, “Affirmative action is what is going to change our future. If we don’t have all types of diversity, not just racial diversity, the United States will not be as prosperous as it could be.”

Anna chose to attend the University of Alma for two reasons: the first is that she wanted to be close to her immediate family and the second is that she wanted to have a traditional college experience. Anna does believe affirmative action is needed in higher education, it was not a direct factor in her decision to enroll at the University of Alma. Though her parents did not have formal higher education, they wanted her to not only achieve success but wanted her to
attend a great university. Within her Funds of Knowledge, her parents passed on their desires for success to her (Kiyama and Rios, 2018, section 2369). Anna explained that she works so hard in school to make them proud.

Academic success was not the only Fund that was passed on from her parents, but also pride in where she comes from. She is a daughter of Cuba and carries with her the traditions and culture of Cuba. It is not just a place, but something that influences her choice to pursue a degree in medicine one day. After graduation, she plans to go to medical school to eventually return to Cuba and help her people live their best lives. Her Funds of Knowledge are strong and intersect to make her a proud Cuban woman.
Chapter Conclusion

The role of a family within the lives of the participants was highly regarded in comparison to the other themes presented within the results section. Student participants were able to divulge their truths regarding the role of affirmative action in their college admission and transition experience. One student was completely indifferent towards the policy, given his lack of financial support from the university. One student believed affirmative action was important but not a factor in her decision; whereas the remaining five students were not only aware of the policy, but it was an influential factor in their decision to attend and enroll at the University of Alma and the University of Flores. Within this data, are glimpses into the lives of LatinX students and how their transition to the University of Alma and the University of Flores was not a singular choice but a culmination of varying factors within their lives told through their Funds of Knowledge.
Chapter V

Conclusion

The purpose of this case study is to understand how affirmative action strategies shape the attitudes, experiences, and subsequent application and enrollment decisions of LatinX students, told through their funds of knowledge, at two selective higher education institutions in Colorado. Given these goals, I present a discussion of the findings aimed at understanding the guiding research question: How does a selective university’s decision to use affirmative action strategies shape the college application and enrollment decisions of LatinX students in Colorado told through their funds of knowledge? In that, the students’ have redefined affirmative action through a collective policy that is more than a racial preference. Through their funds of knowledge, affirmative action should be understood as an umbrella of intentional culturally inclusive strategies to support the college transition.

The findings led to five themes: 1) The involvement, or lack thereof, of families in the college application process and transition influenced the participants’ awareness of affirmative action and diversity and their enrollment decisions; 2) An awareness of affirmative action and the college transition was enhanced based on the community’s involvement; 3) Based on the gender of some participants, the community was unsupportive of college attendance, attending a university that required living on campus, or based on the distance of the university in proximity from their familial home; 4) Societal expectations, interjected with cultural and familial obligations influenced the choice in the participants’ choices enrolling at the University of Flores or the University of Alma; 5) Enrollment decisions were directly or indirectly a factor in the application and enrollment decision of participants. In this final chapter, these themes from the qualitative data are converged alongside purposeful analysis and syntheses through the guiding
themes of the Funds of Knowledge. I also provide key learnings, implications for leaders, and implications for further research. This chapter ends with a conclusion of the research and my final thoughts.

Discussion

The triangulation of semi-structured interviews, document review, and non-participant observations were used to answer the research question as this design encouraged me to culminate the data, my analyses, and inferences. Data were collected concurrently based on my personal interpretation, “couching in understanding that the inquirer brings to the study from a personal culture, history, and experiences”, and later analyzed both separately and then collectively (Creswell, 2014, p. 200). The validity strategies used within this study included: triangulation, member-checking, thick description of observations of the University of Alma and the University of Flores and presenting all information pertinent to the study’s purpose (p. 201). The sections below are organized based on the Funds of Knowledge themes of family, community, popular culture, and peer group (knowledge from fellow students to assist navigation of school life) (Moje et al., 2004).

Updated Conceptual Framework

Throughout the entire research process, reflection has been a key component to ensuring my understanding of the conceptual framework of the Funds of Knowledge and realized that my initial figure did not properly reflect the varying intersections of the funds the students within my study presented. Below are two figures. The first figure is what I created prior to conducting research, and the second image is the revised conceptual image framework that encompasses my findings.
Figure 5: Funds of Knowledge within affirmative action.

Figure 6: Revised Funds of Knowledge within affirmative action.
Within the revised figure, I have not only incorporated additional arrows but now the arrows are unending and connect to every aspect within the funds presented. I realized during the coding and analysis of my data, that there was not one specific relationship between a fund of knowledge and affirmative action. The relationships were interwoven and connected in ways that were not conveyed in the first image. The revised figure is now reflective of the interconnectedness between affirmative action and the four funds of knowledge I analyzed in this study. For example, Arturo’s mother’s experiences, being on a university campus with a strong racial community and participating in popular culture was very influential in both his understanding of affirmative action and his decision to attend the University of Flores. Additionally, for the two female students who attend the University of Flores, their intersections were not only present between their families and their peer group, but their community also effected every element of their decision to attend the University of Flores because of the use of affirmative action.

**Familial Patterns and Relationships**

The first theme analyzed within the scope of this research surrounded the participants and their role within their families, and the role of their families in their transition. There were prominent patterns within the relationships between the participants and their families. The assertion within this guiding theme was: The involvement, or lack thereof, of families in the college application process and transition influenced the participants’ awareness of affirmative action and diversity and their enrollment decisions. I listened to multiple students explain the magnitude of the involvement of their parents. Within the context of the FoK, it was evident that parents who were involved in some way, enabled their child to have an awareness of affirmative action and access to information regarding the University of Alma or the University of Flores.
The students who had involvement from their parents and families, explained that their transition was easier than expected. Kiyama & Rios-Aguilar (2018), explained that Funds of Knowledge “has not been used to study the connection between values and resources in the home with college access” (section 2384). This statement supported my research in attempting to understand how families potentially influence a student’s knowledge of affirmative action and access to post-secondary education.

When considering the educational ideologies and aspirations of the students, the literature supported my findings, as those whose families had involvement in the application and enrollment process had a clear awareness of affirmative action and strategies of accessing information (section 2385). Arturo described his mother as a motivational figure in his life, as she taught him of her struggles in coming to the United States and facing financial, cultural, emotional, and spiritual difficulties, which is why she wanted him to know of issues regarding his race as he pursued his college dreams. Arturo’s sentiments regarding his mother were reflective of Feinberg’s (1996) reasoning behind a race-based affirmative action policy regarding the three moral issues of historical debt, equality of opportunity, and the economics and distribution of societal resources. Pursuing his dreams through a university education has the potential to change his life in positive ways; thus, diminishing the types of struggles his mother encountered.

In analyzing the information received by students who were supported by their families and parents, they were confident in the choice to attend the University of Alma or the University of Flores. Three of the four students who were supported in their transition, expressed gratitude to their parents for their support and acknowledged that they may not have had a positive transition experience if they had to do it on their own. The answers provided to the questions
regarding familial support were reflective of the ability to uncover, acknowledge and apply culturally relevant knowledge to their awareness of affirmative action and attending a university in Colorado (Frank, 2013, p. 369-371). Familial support revealed the extent of students’ understanding of affirmative action and their choice in attending a prominent university in Colorado.

During the semi-structured interviews, I learned that three students did not have direct familial or parental support in understanding affirmative action or in their transition from secondary education to post-secondary education. Listening to these three students explain how their lives progressed from childhood into adulthood was telling in that there was always an awareness of working hard despite any circumstance. All three students explained in detail the ways in which their parents always worked extremely hard –typically physically laborious jobs. Two students detailed how at least one of their parents worked two jobs, which they explained meant their parents were not directly involved. These three students, while in high school and currently, work or continue to live at home to aid in the care of younger siblings which, in many ways explain why they work so hard in school. It is clear in the answers provided by the students, that affirmative action levels the playing field (Nealy, 2008). Two students were supported by their families in varying ways; however, these two students did not consider affirmative action in their application and enrollment decisions. If this policy did not exist, they may not have been afforded with the same opportunities as those of the dominant culture, as many of the students shared in their experience with affirmative action.

**Community Patterns and Relationships**

To reiterate, the Funds of Knowledge are resources and knowledge that different households use to ensure their basic needs are met, which are inclusive of varying communities
that LatinX students are a part of. My assertion regarding communities was based on: An awareness of affirmative action and the college transition was enhanced based on the community’s involvement when conducting the interviews. I did not specify which community the students should reference while answering. This was purposeful, as I wanted their FoK to dictate how they defined a community, which communities they were a part of, and the depth of those communities’ influence on their transition and awareness of affirmative action. Some students chose to detail their racial/ethnic communities, whereas other students described their high school community and high school sports communities that were quite influential in their decision to attend a university.

Relational trust was the strongest factor within the communities discussed by the students. Communities and networks within the students’ lives were substantial and “served as information channels and highlighted relationships built on trust that allowed for exchange of support and resources (Kiyama, 2018, section 2527). This was evident for two students, who were part of the sport’s community in their respective high schools. They were not only influenced by their coaches, but also inherently influenced by their peers to continue persevering just as they did during a game. Upon coming to this realization, this community was something entirely unexpected but ultimately changed the course of these students’ lives into realizing their potential and attending a university in the Western Region. Though the sport’s communities were influential, other communities discussed were not as supportive.

The third assertion within the data provided on the theme of community was: Based on the gender of some participants, the community was unsupportive of college attendance, attending a university that required living on campus, or based on the distance of the university in proximity from their familial home. As detailed within chapter four, one female student
encountered multiple issues from her racial community. She explained the ways in which she felt pressure from those in her community to just get married and have children. Those in her community, that identified with her, were already married and with children. This example highlights the discourse that occurred for this young woman in a community that had identified a traditional role that her father wanted her to fulfill. Another female also dealt with the stigma of moving out of her familial home from her community and found it necessary to attend an in-state university with the option of living off campus as a freshman student. Because this was her only option, the literature supports the importance of this finding because of Kiyama and Aguilar’s statement that, “under-represented students appear to make choices that do not lead to successful outcomes” (section 401).

**Popular Culture Patterns and Relationships**

My fourth assertion for this identified theme was: Societal expectations, interjected with cultural and familial obligations, influenced the choice in the participants’ choices enrolling at the University of Flores or the University of Alma. The choice between the University of Alma and the University of Flores was purposely made based on the reputation and concept of what a university experience should be. While coding and later analyzing the data, I learned of the ways in which students made their decisions to attend one of the two universities in the Western Region.

Students who chose to attend the University of Alma, did so because they sought to have a traditional college experience. As discussed within the literature review, the reputation of both campuses is vastly different. While the University of Flores is located in the heart of a city, and known as an Urban campus, students within this study lived an “urban lifestyle” (Arturo, Adrianna and Sandra). Not only did they explain the ways in which they liked the location of the
campus but was also based on the differing organizations they participated in such as skateboarding, hip hop club, and graffiti club. Had they attended a more traditional school, they may not have been afforded with the opportunities to participate in these types of clubs and organizations. Additional responses were also reflective of being able to work. In terms of popular culture, the University of Flores enables the balance of work and study. Their website details over “600+ coveted student internships awarded every year” (Welcome Page, 2018). Because work is a substantial factor in their own popular culture, underrepresentation is not a direct result of social and educational inequities but instead because of the rising costs (Kiyama & Rios, 2018).

For the students who chose to attend the University of Alma, a traditional college experience, as defined in their opinion, was the reason they desired to attend that university. For one student, it was the university’s football team, one of which the University of Flores does not have. Whereas others compared the University of Alma to the universities they often viewed in films that portray a typical college experience. The University of Alma is a selective university and one that prides itself on its reputation and experience for students to, “Start your morning with your own adventure on one of the many trails through the [Western Region], spend the afternoon exploring the [University of Alma] campus, then enjoy a relaxing evening shopping one-of-a-kind boutiques and savoring [The Western Region’s] cuisine” (Admissions, 2018). Without other factors, these students were able to choose to experience a traditional college life versus other students who had to consider other factors when determining their university.

Peer Group Patterns and Relationships

Data gathered in this theme led me to the following assertion: Enrollment decisions were directly or indirectly a factor in the application and enrollment decision of participants. I was
quite surprised while collecting the data regarding the peer group influence for both students’
transition as well as information regarding affirmative action. I was under the impression that the
students’ peer group would influence and, in many ways, dictate their choice in which university
to attend; however, only one of the seven students stated that they were influenced by their peer
group and in particular one friend. That student remained friends and that same friend is also a
student at the University of Alma. This friendship was quite monumental in not only the decision
to attend the University of Alma, but also regarding decisions she currently makes. This
student’s “concept of success” was entirely dependent on her friendship and nothing else (Zipin,
2009). My view of peer groups has grown and changed since the beginning of this study. I now
have a deeper understanding of peer group patterns.

For the remaining six students, though there was emphasis of their peer group as a non-
influential factor, their remarks were different based on the university they chose to attend. For
the students who went to the University of Alma, students within this study found that it was
easy to make friends, particularly based on similar racial backgrounds or interests. Living on
campus definitely aided in this and was reaffirmed by my observations of both campuses. This
was not always the case for the students who attended the University of Flores. One student
explained, “I know the people in my class probably didn’t have to babysit their brothers and
sisters while their parents worked two jobs and do work study here on campus—that’s why I had
to come here. If I went to another school, there’d be no one to help my mom” (Student #4).
Though some University of Flores students discussed wanting to create and maintain friendships,
because they commute to campus, as many others do, there isn’t designated time, and many went
to their other jobs or responsibilities. I was most surprised by this data, as I was under the
impression that the peer FoK would be extremely influential in their journey from secondary education to their lives as university students.

**Alternative Explanations of the Findings**

When conducting research, I was unaware of the depth at which certain questions would be answered. In regard to the results, I was under the impression that peer groups would be an influential factor; however, it appeared as various supports within the students’ high schools were much more influential. I also had an inherent bias that their motivational figures within the lives of students would have been someone outside of their immediate family, this was definitely not the case. There was a significant rise in answers regarding mothers. Six of the seven students discussed their families based on the questions, but also made it a point to discuss the role of their mother’s, not only in their transition but in life as well. Though completely unintentional, I am not sure if the students were guided into selecting their mother’s as a motivational figure because of previous questions regarding the role of their family in their transition and dealing with the affirmative action policy. In general, the results regarding their perceptions of support from their family, whether they were or were not directly involved, was significant. Their definitions of support, affirmative action, and cultures were all self-determined and explained and quite revealing of their personal Funds of Knowledge.

**Conclusion**

**Lessons Learned**

I knew embarking on qualitative research, viewing a gap that dealt with race and education, would provide me with an unforgettable and unparalleled lens. I knew that this research would be life-changing; however, I did not realize the magnitude of this change. One lesson I relearned within this study, through the students in my study, was the empowerment
students feel when they are able to understand the implications of their race and use that as an asset in their own personal journeys. Families of color were able to express their skills, abilities, experiences, and most of all, strength through their funds of knowledge and that transferred to the students I was able to interview (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzales, 1992). The pride that was expressed in the interviews and hearing of the collective struggles that were used to strengthen their journeys was something I connected with on every single level. The students expressed that this was the first time someone asked about their journey and experience and they were both prideful and enthusiastic to share their truths.

In turn, I was able to learn of the support that existed outside of my traditional notions of how secondary LatinX students were provided with guidance, and their awareness of affirmative action. The involvement of sports coaches assisting in the college application and transition to higher education was astounding and provided rich experiences for the students who discussed their role. I learned that unless a parent, family member, or teacher discussed affirmative action in any sense, the students were not aware of the policy itself unless associated with diversity. I was made aware, through the interviews, that when the students knew about the policy they believed it to be very important. I had an opportunity to see and learn first-hand how this policy is used and how it impacted their lives. In the same way that so many students are silenced, when they are not afforded with the information that may impact their life, the inequities will always persist.

The guiding framework I used within this study enabled both the participants and myself to learn of the students’ Funds of Knowledge. The theme of family was the most prominent conversations that occurred during all of the interviews. There was a difference in the support provided by all parents, the decisions, and how their FoK guided their decisions. Traditions
about the role of a female were discussed at length and provided a viewpoint of how traditions take time to shift and they ways in which they do—though the female student was not allowed to attend an out of state university, she broke the mold within her family, by choosing to attend a university instead of getting married. The students’ funds of knowledge were both compelling and completely informative in so many ways.

The Collective We

While conducting the analysis and extensively reviewing the quotes within the semi-structured interviews, there was a consistent theme of collectivism and togetherness. The students within my study continued to refer to their individual perspectives and reasons with a collective we. Months later, I was able to get in contact with four of the students who used the term “we” throughout their interviews and asked if that was a purposeful decision in their word choice, and many explained that they use it because it is not just their success in college. The success is that of their family, their friends, and their community. If one succeeds, all succeed. Similar to the purpose of affirmative action. This policy was not created for one person, but instead to achieve diversity of all types on university campuses.

Implications

Policy. As stated previously, most of the students had an awareness of affirmative action and diversity when considering their options for higher education. Though they had knowledge, they did not openly discuss how the policy was used in the University of Alma or the University of Flores. Without knowledge or an awareness, this policy being implemented, or not, has lasting effects. In universities where this policy is no longer used, or vaguely applied, it caused substantial reductions in the applications of students of color (Long & Blume, 2014). Through my study, I realized that if the universities didn’t have a presence at the high schools of the
students interviewed, they would not have known of the process for applying. Of the seven
students interviewed, only one considered delaying his start date because of financial reasons.
University of Alma and University of Flores leaders must inform potential students of the
benefits of this policy, in particular to students of color. Diversity is no longer an added bonus
but should be viewed as a necessity on university campuses. The students within this study
understood the importance of this policy, specifically racially. The findings in this study revealed
that students do in fact care about policies such as affirmative action; thus, more needs to be
done in terms of informing students of this policy and how it will affect them.

The findings from my study could be extremely beneficial for policy decision makers
across the nation. Though I focused only on one racial group, it is clear that student voice is often
missing from the conversation regarding policy implementation that directly impacts and affects
them. While reviewing studies based on affirmative action and university applications, I was
unable to find specific documentation regarding student voice and this policy. If students
continue to be ignored, and their voices consciously or unconsciously silenced, more and more
universities will not implement this policy. Based on the data presented in my literature review,
when this policy is banned or not implemented, the enrollment of students of color decreases.
Given that six of the seven students within this study had knew what affirmative action was and
how it was used in universities and believed in its importance, they could testify for the
continued implementation of this policy. Current and future students could also describe the
ways in which additional resources could be provided through this policy based on their funds of
knowledge.

Practice. Results from this study can be used to inform leaders at the secondary
education level as well as the higher education level. The statistical evidence of a mere one fifth
of LatinX students moving from high school to college is in fact reflective of the diversity that exists both in Colorado and at a national level. Through my extensive literature review and conducting the research, I offer the following suggestions:

**Secondary education staff.** Providing professional development to current staff and teachers regarding current affirmative action policies within universities in Colorado, the supports offered from that policy, and how to provide access to all students, is a step that can be taken immediately and reach all students ready to complete the college application process. Because so many students’ knowledge stemmed from their Funds of Knowledge from school communities, it is imperative to utilize those platforms. Additionally, school leaders can inform parents as parents and families were monumental in the students’ awareness of affirmative action. Provide additional supports to coaching staff in regard to college enrollment and the application process, as they often serve a monumental role in the lives of students who may not have additional supports.

**Student support.** Provide a platform for students –potentially online and in-person, outside of the classroom where students are able to connect with other LatinX students who have successfully transitioned into high schools. Many of the students were first generation to attend a university and did not have someone who knew how to navigate the application and enrollment process and having a mentor-like relationship will lessen the burden while building a community.

**Familial support.** Provide supports to parents of LatinX students. These supports can range from provided documents, in-person meetings, and online tools –both in English and Spanish. It may also be beneficial to connect parents of current college students and graduates, with parents of students in high school. This has the potential to alleviate any discomfort of
visiting schools and be based on the schedules of working adults. Given the answers from the 
students in this study, their parents were involved in a variety of ways but did not always have 
knowledge regarding the college application and enrollment process and this could benefit 
everyone involved in the process.

For leaders of universities in Colorado, additional outreach is definitely needed. These 
suggestions are based on the information I gathered from the interviews and my observations of 
the university campuses. Because some of the students in this study did not have the means to 
visit a campus, university representatives should aim to visit high schools with a high population 
of LatinX students to increase their enrollment. Visiting as many high schools within the 
Colorado will help ensure there is equitable access to students who may not have the means to 
visit the university.

Both the University of Flores and the University of Alma can review and edit their 
websites to ensure that they are accessible to students who may not have supports in the 
transition process. One student detailed the difficulty she had in navigating the application 
process on the website because of all of the options. Additionally, both universities should create 
a program that connects students of similar racial/ethnic backgrounds to ensure that the student 
will feel supported in the process and have someone when they potentially attend that university. 
Two students detailed the ways in which someone who attended the university they applied to 
supported their application and enrollment, and even beyond.

My next recommendation is founded in providing access to parents, whose native 
language may not be English, the change to be a part of their child’s journey into higher 
education. Given that many of the students in this interview had parents whose native language is 
not English, will give them the opportunity to continue their involvement. The students described
in detail how important their families and parents were and this should be acknowledged by the University of Alma and the University of Flores.

If these recommendations are implemented on both levels, LatinX students may not only be afforded with the opportunity to apply and attend a university within Colorado, but also potentially, change the course of their lives.

As a Latina educational leader, I am completely aware of the value in providing access, information, and opportunities to students of color. Acknowledging and empowering LatinX students, through their own FoK has not only proven to be substantial within this study but also in the greater context of understanding their transitions and awareness of affirmative action. It is clear, that once the students I interviewed were at the university of their choice, they were prospering and growing into the individuals they sought out to be. Their voice was not only listened to but heard, and my aim in conducting this research, is to have others hear their voices and inspire others to use their voice. Given the prominence of family within both the affirmative action policy and the students’ transition, it shows that, “family…played an important role in the trajectory of each of these students, serving as motivation and as examples of ‘hard work’ … in their pursuit of higher education” (Kiyama & Rios, 2018, section 3612).

**Suggestions for Further Research**

Future research on the Funds of Knowledge regarding LatinX students’ transition and retention at universities in Colorado. The purpose of this case study is to understand how affirmative action strategies shape the attitudes, experiences, and subsequent application and enrollment decisions of LatinX students, told through their funds of knowledge, at two selective higher education institutions in Colorado. Expanding the interview questions to their current status or even broadening it to students in their final year of study could be considered.
Collecting data from other students of color could also provide additional insights into this policy. Providing a platform for students who are traditionally marginalized will continue to have lasting impacts on their success and the success of other future students through the continued validation of their Funds of Knowledge.

**Improving Practice**

The problem of practice I viewed was the ways in which affirmative action shaped LatinX students’ application and enrollment decisions in Colorado. There was a clear gap in the current literature regarding student voice and affirmative action. Through the LatinX student perspectives provided in this study, based on their Funds of Knowledge, I learned that students often times have an awareness of affirmative action through their varying funds of knowledge. Building online and in-person support networks for students and their families will provide a platform to ensure LatinX students have the opportunity to apply and attend a university that best fits their needs. The students within my study explained the ways in which they sought out others in similar situations to their own and having someone who can assist with this unknown process may increase the number of LatinX students who apply and enroll at universities here in Colorado.

Additionally, support at the policy level, by bringing in this study, will strengthen the needs to hear from students about policies that directly impact their lives and continued success. This study bridges the gap between voice, funds of knowledge, and affirmative action. Moving forward, I learned that using the students’ funds of knowledge as a foundation uncovered their regard for affirmative action. After a thorough synthesis of the data, I learned that through their collectivism and united approach to affirmative action, this policy is highly influential in the lives of the majority of students I interviewed. Though all students agreed that the policy was
influential, only two did not believe it was a factor in their application and enrollment in higher education. This policy, in origination, and today is not individualistic, and the students realized this. Merging the FoK framework alongside affirmative action, allowed me to further conceptualize the policy as one that is shared for groups of people to achieve success. This policy began as one to move traditionally marginalized groups of people forward with equitable access and continues today as these students understand this policy and how impactful it is not only to their success, but all of our success.
Closing Thoughts

In this chapter, I utilized qualitative findings to answer the guiding research question, provide a platform for LatinX students who have been historically marginalized, detailed implications at the policy and practice level, with special attention provided for leaders in Colorado institutions of higher education. There is little research regarding the intersections of the Funds of Knowledge and affirmative action and through this case study, I believe the provided suggestions may increase the number of LatinX students attending higher education in Colorado. The implications that emerged are reflective of the Funds of Knowledge and the need to uncover even more Funds that have not been viewed or researched within the context of race-based policies and the student transition period from secondary education to higher education. Implications for practice centralized upon connecting educational information and access to families and community leaders of LatinX students. The chapter concludes with suggestions for future research providing concepts for current and future university students to broaden the use and understanding of their Funds of Knowledge. As history has powerfully demonstrated, a voice can truly never be silenced.
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Appendix A

Amendment 46 Discrimination and Preferential Treatment by Governments

*Be It Enacted by the People of the State of Colorado:*

Article II of the constitution of the State of Colorado is amended by the addition of the following section:

**SECTION 31: NONDISCRIMINATION BY THE STATE**

(1) The State shall not discriminate against, or grant preferential treatment to, any individual or group on the basis of race, sex, color, ethnicity, or national origin in the operation of public employment, public education, or public contracting.

(2) This section shall apply only to action taken after the section's effective date.

(3) Nothing in this section shall be interpreted as prohibiting bona fide qualifications based on sex that are reasonably necessary to the normal operation of public employment, public education, or public contracting.

(4) Nothing in this section shall be interpreted as invalidating any court order or consent decree that is in force as of the effective date of this section.

(5) Nothing in this section shall be interpreted as prohibiting action that must be taken to establish or maintain eligibility for any federal program, if ineligibility would result in a loss of federal funds to the state.

(6) For the purposes of this section, "state" shall include, but not necessarily be limited to, the State of Colorado, any agency or department of the state, any public institution of higher education, any political subdivision, or any governmental instrumentality of or within the state.

(7) The remedies available for violations of this section shall be the same, regardless of the injured party's race, sex, color, ethnicity, or national origin, as are otherwise available for violations of then-existing Colorado anti-discrimination law.

(8) This section shall be self-executing. If any part or parts of this section are found to be in conflict with federal law or the United States Constitution, the section shall be implemented to the maximum extent that federal law and the United States Constitution permit. Any provision held invalid shall be severable from the remaining portions of this section.
Appendix B

EXECUTIVE ORDER No. 11246

September 28, 1965, 30 F.R. 12319

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Under and by virtue of the authority vested in me as President of the United States by the Constitution and statutes of the United States, it is ordered as follows:

PART I----NONDISCRIMINATION IN GOVERNMENT EMPLOYMENT

Section 101. It is the policy of the Government of the United States to provide equal opportunity in Federal employment for all qualified persons, to prohibit discrimination in employment because of race, creed, color, or national origin, and to promote the full realization of equal employment opportunity through a positive, continuing program in each executive department and agency. The policy of equal opportunity applies to every aspect of Federal employment policy and practice.

Sec. 102. The head of each executive department and agency shall establish and maintain a positive program of equal employment opportunity for all civilian employees and applicants for employment within his jurisdiction in accordance with the policy set forth in Section 101.

Sec. 103. The Civil Service Commission shall supervise and provide leadership and guidance in the conduct of equal employment opportunity programs for the civilian employees of and applications for employment within the executive departments and agencies and shall review
agency program accomplishments periodically. In order to facilitate the achievement of a model
program for equal employment opportunity in the Federal service, the Commission may consult
from time to time with such individuals, groups, or organizations as may be of assistance in
improving the Federal program and realizing the objectives of this Part.

Sec. 104. The Civil Service Commission shall provide for the prompt, fair, and impartial
consideration of all complaints of discrimination in Federal employment on the basis of race,
creed, color, or national origin. Procedures for the consideration of complaints shall include at
least one impartial review within the executive department or agency and shall provide for
appeal to the Civil Service Commission.

Sec. 105. The Civil Service Commission shall issue such regulations, orders, and instructions as
it deems necessary and appropriate to carry out its responsibilities under this Part, and the head
of each executive department and agency shall comply with the regulations, orders, and
instructions issued by the Commission under this Part.

PART II NONDISCRIMINATION IN EMPLOYMENT BY GOVERNMENT CONTRACTORS
AND SUACONTRACTORS

SUAPART A DUTIES OF THE SECRETARY OF LABOR

Sec. 201. The Secretary of Labor shall be responsible for the administration of Parts II and III of
this Order and shall adopt such rules and regulations and issue such orders as he deems necessary
and appropriate to achieve the purposes thereof.

SUAPART B CONTRACTORS' AGREEMENTS
Sec. 202. Except in contracts exempted in accordance with Section 204 of this Order, all Government contracting agencies shall include in every Government contract hereafter entered into the following provisions:

"During the performance of this contract, the contractor agrees as follows:

"(1) The contractor will not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, creed, color, or national origin. The contractor will take affirmative action to ensure that applicants are employed, and that employees are treated during employment, without regard to their race, creed, color, or national origin. Such action shall include, but not be limited to the following: employment, upgrading, demotion, or transfer; recruitment or recruitment advertising; layoff or termination; rates of pay or other forms of compensation; and selection for training, including apprenticeship. The contractor agrees to post in conspicuous places, available to employees and applicants for employment, notices to be provided by the contracting officer setting forth the provisions of this nondiscrimination clause.

"(2) The contractor will, in all solicitations or advertisements for employees placed by or on behalf of the contractor, state that all qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, creed, color, or national origin.

"(3) The contractor will send to each labor union or representative of workers with which he has a collective bargaining agreement or other contract or understanding, a notice, to be provided by the agency contracting officer, advising the labor union or workers' representative of the contractor's commitments under Section 202 of Executive Order No. 11246 of September 24,
1965, and shall post copies of the notice in conspicuous places available to employees and applicants for employment.

"(4) The contractor will comply with all provisions of Executive Order No. 11246 of Sept. 24, 1965, and of the rules, regulations, and relevant orders of the Secretary of Labor.

"(5) The contractor will furnish all information and reports required by Executive Order No. 11246 of September 24, 1965, and by the rules, regulations, and orders of the Secretary of Labor, or pursuant thereto, and will permit access to his books, records, and accounts by the contracting agency and the Secretary of Labor for purposes of investigation to ascertain compliance with such rules, regulations, and orders.

"(6) In the event of the contractor's noncompliance with the nondiscrimination clauses of this contract or with any of such rules, regulations, or orders, this contract may be cancelled, terminated or suspended in whole or in part and the contractor may be declared ineligible for further Government contracts in accordance with procedures authorized in Executive Order No. 11246 of Sept 24, 1965, and such other sanctions may be imposed and remedies invoked as provided in Executive Order No. 11246 of September 24, 1965, or by rule, regulation, or order of the Secretary of Labor, or as otherwise provided by law.

"(7) The contractor will include the provisions of Paragraphs (1) through (7) in every subcontract or purchase order unless exempted by rules, regulations, or orders of the Secretary of Labor issued pursuant to Section 204 of Executive Order No. 11246 of Sept. 24, 1965, so that such provisions will be binding upon each subcontractor or vendor. The contractor will take such action with respect to any subcontract or purchase order as the contracting agency may
direct as a means of enforcing such provisions including sanctions for noncompliance: Provided, however, That in the event the contractor becomes involved in, or is threatened with, litigation with a subcontractor or vendor as a result of such direction by the contracting agency, the contractor may request the United States to enter into such litigation to protect the interests of the United States."

Sec. 203. (a) Each contractor having a contract containing the provisions prescribed in Section 202 shall file, and shall cause each of his subcontractors to file, Compliance Reports with the contracting agency or the Secretary of Labor as may be directed. Compliance Reports shall be filed within such times and shall contain such information as to the practices, policies, programs, and employment policies, programs, and employment statistics of the contractor and each subcontractor, and shall be in such form, as the Secretary of Labor may prescribe.

(b) Bidders or prospective contractors or subcontractors may be required to state whether they have participated in any previous contract subject to the provisions of this Order, or any preceding similar Executive order, and in that event to submit, on behalf of themselves and their proposed subcontractors, Compliance Reports prior to or as an initial part of their bid or negotiation of a contract.

(c) Whenever the contractor or subcontractor has a collective bargaining agreement or other contract or understanding with a labor union or an agency referring workers or providing or supervising apprenticeship or training for such workers, the Compliance Report shall include such information as to such labor union's or agency's practices and policies affecting compliance as the Secretary of Labor may prescribe: Provided, That to the extent such information is within the exclusive possession of a labor union or an agency referring workers or providing or
supervising apprenticeship or training and such labor union or agency shall refuse to furnish such information to the contractor, the contractor shall so certify to the contracting agency as part of its Compliance Report and shall set forth what efforts he has made to obtain such information.

(d) The contracting agency or the Secretary of Labor may direct that any bidder or prospective contractor or subcontractor shall submit, as part of his Compliance Report, a statement in writing, signed by an authorized officer or agent on behalf of any labor union or any agency referring workers or providing or supervising apprenticeship or other training, with which the bidder or prospective contractor deals, with supporting information, to the effect that the signer's practices and policies do not discriminate on the grounds of race, color, creed, or national origin, and that the signer either will affirmatively cooperate in the implementation of the policy and provisions of this Order or that it consents and agrees that recruitment, employment, and the terms and conditions of employment under the proposed contract shall be in accordance with the purposes and provisions of the Order. In the event that the union, or the agency shall refuse to execute such a statement, the Compliance Report shall so certify and set forth what efforts have been made to secure such a statement and such additional factual material as the contracting agency or the Secretary of Labor may require.

Sec. 204. The Secretary of Labor may, when he deems that special circumstances in the national interest so require, exempt a contracting agency from the requirement of including any or all of the provisions of Section 202 of this Order in any specific contract, subcontract, or purchase order. The Secretary of Labor may, by rule or regulation, also exempt certain classes of contracts, subcontracts, or purchase orders (1) whenever work is to be or has been performed outside the United States and no recruitment of workers within the limits of the United States is
involved; (2) for standard commercial supplies or raw materials; (3) involving less than specified 
amounts of money or specified numbers or workers; or (4) to the extent that they involve 
subcontracts below a specified tier. The Secretary of Labor may also provide, by the rule, 
regulation, or order, for the exemption of facilities of a contractor which are in all respects 
separate and distinct from activities of the contractor related to the performance of the contract: 
Provided, That such an exemption will not interfere with or impede the effectuation of the 
purposes of this Order: And provided further, That in the absence of such an exemption all 
facilities shall be covered by the provisions of this Order.

SUAPART C POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE SECRETARY OF LABOR AND THE 
CONTRACTING AGENCIES

Sec. 205. Each contracting agency shall be primarily responsible for obtaining compliance with 
the rules, regulations, and orders of the Secretary of Labor with respect to contracts entered into 
by such agency or its contractors. All contracting agencies shall comply with the rules of the 
Secretary of Labor in discharging their primary responsibility for securing compliance with the 
provisions of contracts and otherwise with the terms of this Order and of the rules, regulations, 
and orders of the Secretary of Labor issued pursuant to this Order. They are directed to cooperate 
with the Secretary of Labor and to furnish the Secretary of Labor such information and 
assistance as he may require in the performance of his functions under this Order. They are 
further directed to appoint or designate, from among the agency's personnel, compliance officers. 
It shall be the duty of such officers to seek compliance with the objectives of this Order by 
conference, conciliation, mediation, or persuasion.
Sec. 206. (a) The Secretary of Labor may investigate the employment practices of any Government contractor or subcontractor, or initiate such investigation by the appropriate contracting agency, to determine whether or not the contractual provisions specified in Section 202 of this Order have been violated. Such investigation shall be conducted in accordance with the procedures established by the Secretary of Labor and the investigating agency shall report to the Secretary of Labor any action taken or recommended.

(b) The Secretary of Labor may receive and investigate or cause to be investigated complaints by employees or prospective employees of a Government contractor or subcontractor which allege discrimination contrary to the contractual provisions specified in Section 202 of this Order. If this investigation is conducted for the Secretary of Labor by a contracting agency, that agency shall report to the Secretary what action has been taken or is recommended with regard to such complaints.

Sec. 207. The Secretary of Labor shall use his best efforts, directly and through contracting agencies, other interested Federal, State, and local agencies, contractors, and all other available instrumentalities to cause any labor union engaged in work under Government contracts or any agency referring workers or providing or supervising apprenticeship or training for or in the course of such work to cooperate in the implementation of the purposes of this Order. The Secretary of Labor shall, in appropriate cases, notify the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the Department of Justice, or other appropriate Federal agencies whenever it has reason to believe that the practices of any such labor organization or agency violate Title VI or Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 or other provision of Federal law.
Sec. 208. (a) The Secretary of Labor, or any agency, officer, or employee in the executive branch of the Government designated by rule, regulation, or order of the Secretary, may hold such hearings, public or private, as the Secretary may deem advisable for compliance, enforcement, or educational purposes.

(b) The Secretary of Labor may hold, or cause to be held, hearings in accordance with Subsection (a) of this Section prior to imposing, ordering, or recommending the imposition of penalties and sanctions under this Order. No order for debarment of any contractor from further Government contracts under Section 209(a) (6) shall be made without affording the contractor an opportunity for a hearing.

SUAPART D SANCTIONS AND PENALTIES

Sec. 209. (a) In accordance with such rules, regulations, or orders as the Secretary of Labor may issue or adopt, the Secretary or the appropriate contracting agency may:

(1) Publish, or cause to be published, the names of contractors or unions which it has concluded have complied or have failed to comply with the provisions of this Order or of the rules, regulations, and orders of the Secretary of Labor.

(2) Recommend to the Department of Justice that, in cases in which there is substantial or material violation or the threat of substantial or material violation of the contractual provisions set forth in Section 202 of this Order, appropriate proceedings be brought to enforce those provisions, including the enjoining, within the limitations of applicable law, of organizations, individuals, or groups who prevent directly or indirectly, or seek to prevent directly or indirectly, compliance with the provisions of this Order.
(3) Recommend to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission or the Department of Justice that appropriate proceedings be instituted under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

(4) Recommend to the Department of Justice that criminal proceedings be brought for the furnishing of false information to any contracting agency or to the Secretary of Labor as the case may be.

(5) Cancel, terminate, suspend, or cause to be cancelled, terminated, or suspended, any contract, or any portion or portions thereof, for failure of the contractor or subcontractor to comply with the nondiscrimination provisions of the contract. Contracts may be cancelled, terminated, or suspended absolutely or continuance of contracts may be conditioned upon a program for future compliance approved by the contracting agency.

(6) Provide that any contracting agency shall refrain from entering into further contracts, or extensions or other modifications of existing contracts, with any noncomplying contractor, until such contractor has satisfied the Secretary of Labor that such contractor has established and will carry out personnel and employment policies in compliance with the provisions of this Order.

(b) Under rules and regulations prescribed by the Secretary of Labor, each contracting agency shall make reasonable efforts within a reasonable time limitation to secure compliance with the contract provisions of this Order by methods of conference, conciliation, mediation, and persuasion before proceedings shall be instituted under Subsection (a) (2) of this Section, or before a contract shall be cancelled or terminated in whole or in part under Subsection (a) (5) of this Section for failure of a contractor or subcontractor to comply with the contract provisions of this Order.
Sec. 210. Any contracting agency taking any action authorized by this Subpart, whether on its own motion, or as directed by the Secretary of Labor, or under the rules and regulations of the Secretary, shall promptly notify the Secretary of such action. Whenever the Secretary of Labor makes a determination under this Section, he shall promptly notify the appropriate contracting agency of the action recommended. The agency shall take such action and shall report the results thereof to the Secretary of Labor within such time as the Secretary shall specify.

Sec. 211. If the Secretary shall so direct, contracting agencies shall not enter into contracts with any bidder or prospective contractor unless the bidder or prospective contractor has satisfactorily complied with the provisions of this Order or submits a program for compliance acceptable to the Secretary of Labor or, if the Secretary so authorizes, to the contracting agency.

Sec. 212. Whenever a contracting agency cancels or terminates a contract, or whenever a contractor has been debarred from further Government contracts, under Section 209(a) (6) because of noncompliance with the contract provisions with regard to nondiscrimination, the Secretary of Labor, or the contracting agency involved, shall promptly notify the Comptroller General of the United States. Any such debarment may be rescinded by the Secretary of Labor or by the contracting agency which imposed the sanction.

SUAPART E CERTIFICATES OF MERIT

Sec. 213. The Secretary of Labor may provide for issuance of a United States Government Certificate of Merit to employers or labor unions, or other agencies which are or may hereafter be engaged in work under Government contracts, if the Secretary is satisfied that the personnel and employment practices of the employer, or that the personnel, training, apprenticeship,
membership, grievance and representation, upgrading, and other practices and policies of the labor union or other agency conform to the purposes and provisions of this Order.

Sec. 214. Any Certificate of Merit may at any time be suspended or revoked by the Secretary of Labor if the holder thereof, in the judgment of the Secretary, has failed to comply with the provisions of this Order.

Sec. 215. The Secretary of Labor may provide for the exemption of any employer, labor union, or other agency from any reporting requirements imposed under or pursuant to this Order if such employer, labor union, or other agency has been awarded a Certificate of Merit which has not been suspended or revoked.

**PART III NONDISCRIMINATION PROVISIONS IN FEDERALLY ASSISTED CONSTRUCTION CONTRACTS**

Sec. 301. Each executive department and agency which administers a program involving Federal financial assistance shall require as a condition for the approval of any grant, contract, loan, insurance, or guarantee thereunder, which may involve a construction contract, that the applicant for Federal assistance undertake and agree to incorporate, or cause to be incorporated, into all construction contracts paid for in whole or in part with funds obtained from the Federal Government or borrowed on the credit of the Federal Government pursuant to such grant, contract, loan, insurance, or guarantee, or undertaken pursuant to any Federal program involving such grant, contract, loan, insurance, or guarantee, the provisions prescribed for Government contracts by Section 202 of this Order or such modification thereof, preserving in substance the contractor's obligations thereunder, as may be approved by the Secretary of Labor, together with
such additional provisions as the Secretary deems appropriate to establish and protect the interest of the United States in the enforcement of those obligations. Each such applicant shall also undertake and agree (1) to assist and cooperate actively with the administering department or agency and the Secretary of Labor in obtaining the compliance of contractors and subcontractors with those contract provisions and with the rules, regulations, and relevant orders of the Secretary, (2) to obtain and to furnish to the administering department or agency and to the Secretary of Labor such information as they may require for the supervision of such compliance, (3) to carry out sanctions and penalties for violations of such obligations imposed upon contractors and subcontractors by the Secretary of Labor or the administering department or agency pursuant to Part II, Subpart D, of this Order, and (4) to refrain from entering into any contract subject to this Order, or extension or other modification of such a contract with a contractor debarred from Government contracts under Part II, Subpart D, of this Order.

Sec. 302. (a) "Construction contract" as used in this Order means any contract for the construction, rehabilitation, alteration, conversion, extension, or repair of buildings, highways, or other improvements to real property.

(b) The provisions of Part II of the Order shall apply to such construction contracts, and for purposes of such application the administering department or agency shall be considered the contracting agency referred to therein.

(c) The term "applicant" as used in this Order means an applicant for Federal assistance or, as determined by agency regulation, other program participant, with respect to whom an application for any grant, contract, loan, insurance, or guarantee is not finally acted upon prior to the
effective date of this Part, and it includes such an applicant after he becomes a recipient of such Federal assistance.

Sec. 303. (a) Each administering department or agency shall be responsible for obtaining the compliance of such applicants with their undertakings under this Order. Each administering department and agency is directed to cooperate with the Secretary of Labor, and to furnish the Secretary such information and assistance as he may require in the performance of his functions under this Order.

(b) In the event an applicant fails and refuses to comply with his undertakings, the administering department or agency may take any or all of the following actions: (1) cancel, terminate, or suspend in whole or in part the agreement, contract, or other arrangement with such applicant with respect to which the failure and refusal occurred; (2) refrain for extending any further assistance to the applicant under the program with respect to which the failure or refusal occurred until satisfactory assurance of future compliance has been received from such applicant; and (3) refer the case to the Department of Justice for appropriate legal proceedings.

(c) Any action with respect to an applicant pursuant to Subsection (b) shall be taken in conformity with Section 602 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (and the regulations of the administering department or agency issued thereunder), to the extent applicable. In no case shall action be taken with respect to an applicant pursuant to Clause (1) or (2) of Subsection (b) without notice and opportunity for hearing before the administering department or agency.

Sec. 304. Any executive department or agency which imposes by rule, regulation or order requirements of nondiscrimination in employment, other than requirements imposed pursuant to
this Order, may delegate to the Secretary of Labor by agreement such responsibilities with
respect to compliance standards, reports and procedures as would tend to bring the
administration of such requirements into conformity with the administration of requirements
imposed under this Order: Provided, That actions to effect compliance by recipients of Federal
financial assistance with requirements imposed pursuant to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of
1964 shall be taken in conformity with the procedures and limitations prescribed in Section 602
thereof and the regulations of the administering department or agency issued thereunder.

PART IV - MISCELLANEOUS

Sec. 401. The Secretary of Labor may delegate to any officer, agency, or employee in the
Executive branch of the Government, any function or duty of the Secretary under Parts II and III
of this Order, except authority to promulgate rules and regulations of a general nature.

Sec. 402. The Secretary of labor shall provide administrative support for the execution of the
program known as the "Plans for Progress."

Sec. 403. (a) Executive Orders Nos. 10590 (January 19, 1955), 10722 (August 5, 1957), 10925
(March 6, 1961), 11114 (June 22, 1963), and 11162 (July 28, 1964), are hereby superseded and
the President's Committee on Equal Employment Opportunity established by Executive Order
No. 10925 is hereby abolished. All records and property in the custody of the Committee shall be
transferred to the Civil Service Commission and the Secretary of Labor, as appropriate.

(b) Nothing in this Order shall be deemed to relieve any person of any obligation assumed or
imposed under or pursuant to any Executive order superseded by this Order. All rules,
regulations, orders, instructions, designations, and other directives issued by the President's
Committee on Equal Employment Opportunity and those issued by the heads of various departments or agencies under or pursuant to any of the Executive Orders superseded by this Order, shall, to the extent that they are not inconsistent with this Order, remain in full force and effect unless and until revoked or superseded by appropriate authority. References in such directives to provisions of the superseded orders shall be deemed to be references to the comparable provisions of this Order.

Sec. 404. The General Services Administration shall take appropriate action to revise the standard Government contract forms to accord with the provisions of this Order and of the rules and regulations of the Secretary of Labor.

Sec. 405. This Order shall become effective thirty days after the date of this Order.

Lyndon B. Johnson

The White House

September 24, 1965
Appendix C

Field Notes Template

Field Notes

Researchers: Ashley Idrees

Place: University of Alma/University of Flores

Purpose: Observation

Date: Spring 2018

Time Start: Time End:
You are invited to take part in a research being conducted by Ashley Idrees, a researcher from the University of Denver. The information in this form is provided to help you decide whether or not to take part. If you decide you do not want to participate, there will be no penalty to you, and you will not lose any benefits you normally would have.

Title of Research Study:
Mi Voz: LatinX Student Perceptions of Affirmative Action on their College Application and Enrollment Told through their Funds of Knowledge.

Researcher(s): Ashley Idrees

Study Site: University of Alma/University of Flores

Purpose
Why is this study being done?
The purpose of this case study is to understand how affirmative action strategies shape the attitudes, experiences, and subsequent application and enrollment decisions of LatinX students, told through their funds of knowledge, at two selective higher education institutions in Colorado.
Why Am I being asked to be in this study?

You are being asked to participate in this study because you have identified yourself as a LatinX student and are currently in your second year of study.

Procedures

What Will I be Asked to Do in this Study?

If you consent to be part of this research study, you will be invited to participate in an interview. Each interview will last approximately 45 minutes.

Voluntary Participation

Participating in this research study is completely voluntary. You may decide not to begin or to stop participating at any time. Even if you decide to participate now, you may change your mind and stop at any time. You may choose not to answer any question during the interview for any reason without penalty or other benefits to which you are entitled. If you choose not to be in this study or stop being in the study, there will be no effect on your employment, evaluation, or relationship with the University of Denver.

Participation Alternatives

The alternative to being in the study is to not participate.

Risks and Discomforts
The researcher has taken steps to minimize the risks of this study. The things you will be doing are no more than risk that you would come across in everyday life. Even so, as a participant, you might still experience some related to feelings that may be evoked from questions being asked in the interview. The study may include other risks that are unknown at this time. If, however, you feel embarrassed, stressed, upset, or uncomfortable at any time to answer a question, you may decline to answer the question or to end the interview. You may also choose to withdraw from the study. There will be no penalty, no negative consequences, and no removal of other benefits to which you are entitled if you decline to answer any question, end the interview, or withdraw from the study.

**Benefits**

Participating in this study will provide others with insight into the ways in which affirmative action influence enrollment decisions. It may aid in the successful transition of other LatinX students move to higher education.

**Incentives to Participate**

You will not be paid for being in this study.

**Study Costs**

You will not be expected to pay any costs associated with the study.

**Confidentiality**
Will information from this study be kept private?

The researcher will make all efforts to keep your information private. No identifiers linking you to this study will be included in any sort or report that might be published. The name of the university will also be kept confidential. You may choose your own pseudonym and a pseudonym for your university. The researcher will destroy the original data once it has been transcribed and the study is completed. The analysis of this data may be made available to the university and Western Region school districts but will not contain information that could identify you. The results from this research will be used for learning purposes and may be published in the future. Information about you will be kept confidential to the extent permitted or required by law. Research records will be stored securely on a password-protected software, and only Ashley Idrees will have access to the records. Representatives of regulatory agencies such as the Office of Human Research Protections (OHRP) and entities such as the University of Denver Human Subjects Protection Program may access your records to make sure the study is being run correctly and that information is collected properly. Further, should any information contained in this study be subject of a court order or lawful subpoena, the University of Denver might not be able to avoid compliance with the order or subpoena. The research information may be shared with federal agencies or local committees who are responsible for protecting research participants.

Member Checking
I will follow-up with you throughout the writing of the report to ensure that your opinion, experiences, and ideas are accurately reflected. If you do not agree to quotes or other results arising being included, even anonymously, please tell the researcher.

Questions

If you have questions about this project or your participation, please free to ask questions now or contact Ashley Idrees at (720) 347 – 9294 and or email Ashley.Idrees@gmail.com at any time. If you have any questions or concerns about your research participation or rights as a participant, you may contact the DU Human Research Protections Program by emailing IRBAdmin@du.edu or calling (303) 871-2121 to speak to someone other than the researcher.

Options for Participation

Please initial your choice for the options below:

___The researcher may audio record me during this study.
___The researcher may video record me during this study.
___The researcher may photograph me during this study.
___The researcher may NOT audio record me during this study.
___The researcher may NOT video record me during this study.
___The researcher may NOT photograph me during this study.
Please take all the time you need to read through this document and decide whether you would like to participate in this research study. By participating in the interview, you are giving permission for the investigator to use your information for learning purposes only.

If you agree to participate in this research study, please sign below. You will be given a copy of this form for your records.

________________________________________  __________
Participant’s Signature                   Date

Appendix E

Interview Guide and Protocol

Research Question:
1. How does a selective university’s decision to use affirmative action strategies shape the college application and enrollment decisions of LatinX students in the Western Region told through their funds of knowledge?

**Informed Consent Follow-Up:**
Provide the Informed Consent Form to the participant and ask that the form be read. After the participant has read the form, as the participant if he/she has any questions about his/her consent, the research, or the process. Answer any questions the participant may have and ask the participant if he/she is willing to participate in the study and to sign the Informed Consent Form. If willing to participate, a copy of the form will be provided for his/her records.

**Introductory Protocol:**
I would like to audio record our discussion today so that I can ensure the best accuracy in note taking for this study. For your information, please know that my instructor, Dr. Lolita Tabron and I will be the only one who will have access to the information from today’s conversation, both for the audio recording and the notes I will be taking. Additionally, I will destroy the audio recording after the notes have been transcribed and the research project is completed. Because of these efforts to provide protections, the informed consent form signed by you today meets the requirements for human subject research for class projects. The form explains that: 1) All information shared during our conversation will be kept confidential; 2) Your participation is completely voluntary, and you may stop at any time without penalty if you feel uncomfortable or embarrassed; and 3) there is no harm intended through this study. It is my plan that this interview should take no longer than 45-60 minutes. During this time, I have several questions
that I would like to ask you. In order to respect your time commitment, I may need to interrupt our conversation if we are running short on time.
Introduction to the Research Project:

You have been selected to talk with me today because of your role as a LatinX student at a university in the Western Region. My research project looks at the ways in which you perceive affirmative action and diversity at this institution. This study is conducted as a case study approach, which seeks to develop an in-depth understanding of these various perceptions. There are no right or wrong answers. I am interested in understanding perspectives affirmative action. I want you to feel comfortable about good things as well as critical things. I am not here to promote a particular way of thinking about affirmative action. Your opinions, experiences, ideas, and participation are very important in this study and may lead to improved practices regarding the transition from high school to the university. This will essentially lead to better outcomes for LatinX students throughout the Western Region. As a follow-up to this interview, I will ask for your comments and feedback during the writing of the report to ensure that your opinion, experiences, ideas are accurately reflected.

Do you have any questions before we begin?

Now I will ask some questions regarding the study. You may ask me questions at any time during this process.
Interview Questions: These questions have been purposefully grouped to reflect the Funds of Knowledge framework.

Phase 1: Warm-up

1. What is your major of study? Why have you chosen to study this field?
2. Are you involved in any extra-curricular activities?
3. Why did you choose to attend higher education?

Phase 2: Affirmative Action

4. Please tell me about your transition from high school to the University of Alma/ University of Flores.
5. Please share what you understand about affirmative action in higher education?
   - Financial aid
   - First generation
   - DACA
6. How, if at all, has affirmative action shaped your decision to attend the University of Alma/ University of Flores?
7. What are your expectations of affirmative action strategies?

Phase 3: Resources and Supports

8. What factors have influenced your choice to attend the University of Alma/ University of Flores?
9. What school resources does the University of Alma/ University of Flores provide to you? Was this a factor in your decision?

Phase 4: Factors

10. In what ways has your family influenced your decision to go to college?
11. Can you share any supports you received during the college planning process from your family and/or community?

12. Please share any monumental figure(s) in your choice to attend higher education?

13. What role did your peer group play in your transition and choice to attend an institution of higher education?

Phase 5: Culture, Race, and Power

14. Has your race/ethnicity, if at all, played a role in your decision to attend a university?

15. How has your culture helped or hindered your academic success thus far?

16. How do you view your own personal power as a university student?

Closing Script: (Thank the individual for participating in this interview. Assure him or her of confidentiality of responses and potential future interviews.)
Preliminary Interview Summary Form

Analysis of perceptions of XYZ.

Participant ID #: ___________  Today’s Date: ______________

Interview Number: _________  Interview Date: ______________

Interview location: __________  Interview time: ______________

Interview Duration: __________

1. Identify main patterns and themes that became apparent during the interview.

2. Environmental observations during interview

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Observation of Initial Themes and Patterns</th>
<th>Environmental observations</th>
<th>Initial thoughts, impressions, emotions</th>
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