2024-05-19

Borderland Voices: Exploring the Educational Journey of Transfronterizx Students, Families, and Educators for Enhanced Engagement and Empowerment

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BORDERLAND VOICES: EXPLORING THE EDUCATIONAL JOURNEY OF TRANSFRONTERIZX STUDENTS, FAMILIES, AND EDUCATORS FOR ENHANCED ENGAGEMENT AND EMPOWERMENT

by

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

May 2024

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ABSTRACT

Transfronterizx students and their families cross the U.S.–Mexico border for academic, economic, social, cultural, and linguistic reasons. Socioeconomic disparities, deportation, and work have propelled some families to live in Mexico and enroll their U.S.-born children in U.S. schools to provide more socioeconomic opportunities in the United States. Educators of transfronterizx students are uniquely tasked to work with these nontraditional students. Moreover, transfronterizx students and their families have distinct needs in U.S. schools; as such, there is a need for further research on the transfronterizx experience in the U.S. K–12 system. This qualitative narrative inquiry study aimed to understand the experiences of transfronterizx public school students, families, and educators of transfronterizx to understand the impact of being transfronterizx on school engagement to uncover strategies that support and foster effective engagement.

Through qualitative analysis, I uncovered the following key findings: district and school policies validate the experiences of people of color; transfronterizx students embody their community cultural wealth, including endurance and sacrifice wealth; and educators demonstrate a commitment to social justice through humanizing practices. Key themes included the following: fear is endemic among transfronterizx, the intersectionality of global north and south shape their experiences and interactions with the educational and sociopolitical systems, and the duality of transfronterizx identity. From these findings, I delineated recommendations for the multilevel systems that impact transfronterizx. Finally, I introduce a new theoretical framework, Transfronterizx Critical Theory (TfxCrt), to provide a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the intersecting dynamics of transfronterizx while advancing critical perspectives.

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to all the children who cross borders to go to school; to all the parents who want a better life for their children; and to the people who support them, love them, and will always advocate for them. Your fortitude, resilience, and endurance are seen.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In the pursuit of knowledge, sacrifices are often made, unseen struggles are endured, and unspoken burdens are carried. I am profoundly grateful for the convergence of my academic journey and personal history, which collectively have shaped my scholarly pursuits.

I am indebted to my professors, whose mentorship, wisdom, and expertise have shaped my academic and intellectual growth. Their dedication to fostering a nurturing and challenging learning environment has empowered me to push boundaries, think critically, and strive for excellence. I am especially thankful for Dr. Reyes Quezada, whose mentorship, guidance, and insight have been invaluable throughout my dissertation research.

To the countless individuals in the field of education whose support and guidance paved the way for me, I extend my deepest appreciation. Your wisdom, mentorship, and belief in my abilities have been the guiding stars in a sky filled with uncertainty.

I extend my deepest gratitude to my mother, Maria, whose resilience, sacrifice, and unwavering support have been the cornerstone of my academic pursuits and have been the embodiment of resilience and determination and whose belief in me has been a constant source of strength and inspiration; and to my father, Roberto, for his unending love and support in all my endeavors. I am profoundly thankful to my parents, both immigrant farm workers, who arrived in California to pursue a better future. Their journeys, fraught with hope and hardship, have illuminated the complexities of immigrant life and the enduring pursuit of opportunity. Their dreams for their daughter were woven into the fabric of their sacrifices; their tireless efforts were fueled by the hope of a “better life” for me, and their sacrifices have been the silent foundation upon which my aspirations were built. To my sister, Doralia, I extend my deepest gratitude. Her support and encouragement sustained me through every twist and turn of this

journey. Her selflessness in offering assistance, whether it was lending an ear or providing practical help, was truly invaluable.

For my four daughters, Valentina, Luciana, Emilia, and Natalia, who inspired me and have shared in the sacrifices and understood the demands placed upon me, I am filled with gratitude and a profound sense of responsibility. To my oldest daughters, your selfless acts of help and encouragement provided a lifeline when the weight of this journey seemed insurmountable, and for that, I am forever thankful. Your love and understanding have been my sources of strength and purpose throughout this journey. My hope is that through witnessing my perseverance and dedication, you will learn the importance of envisioning goals and overcoming obstacles with determination to attain them. Your unwavering support and belief in me have been my greatest motivators, and I aspire to be a model of persistence and fortitude for you. Your presence in my life is a blessing beyond measure, and I am endlessly grateful for you.

To all my family, loved ones, friends, and colleagues, thank you for your unwavering support, understanding, and encouragement. To my partner, Juan Carlos, who walked alongside me on this arduous journey, sharing the triumphs and tribulations of the same PhD program in education, your unwavering support and understanding have been the cornerstone of my perseverance. Together, we navigated the challenges, celebrated the victories, and found solace in each other's unwavering commitment to scholarly pursuit. To my friends, who witnessed my moments of despair and doubt yet never wavered in their belief in me, I am forever indebted. Your encouragement and understanding provided light in moments of darkness, and for that, I am eternally grateful. And finally to myself, who endured the self-doubt, the fear of failure, and the relentless pressure to succeed, I acknowledge the toll it has taken on my well-being. Through

the sleepless nights, the moments of despair, and the sacrifices made, I emerged changed and undeniably stronger.

This dissertation is a testament to the collective influence of those who have shaped my academic and personal pursuits. I am profoundly grateful for the myriad individuals who have contributed to this journey, directly or indirectly. Thank you for your enduring impact and support.

I extend my heartfelt appreciation to my study participants, whose experiences have enriched my understanding of the transfronterizx narrative. Your willingness to share your stories has been instrumental in shaping this research, and I am deeply grateful for your trust and candor. The participants' resilience in the face of adversity has underscored the importance of acknowledging the intersecting dynamics of transnational identities and experiences, and their stories continue to inspire and inform my scholarly endeavors.

As I stand at the culmination of this academic journey in the field of education, I am filled with a profound sense of gratitude.

Las amo, los amo.

Gracias,

Sobeida

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

> *As far as the middle and upper-middle classes dominate capitalist societies, their cultural norms (language, comportment, preferences, dispositions, etc.) are viewed as desirable by the school system.* (Antony-Newman, 2019, p. 148)

Transfronterizx live, work, or attend school in the United States and Mexico; they are imbued in both countries' cultural, social, economic, and political realities. The term *transfronterizo/a* came into academic borderland literature in the mid-1990s and combines the term border and the prefix trans—resulting in a neologism, transborder, which in Spanish is transfronterizo. I use transfronterizx as a term that is more inclusive of gender identity. Iglesias Prieto (2014) and Ojeda (2009) are borderland scholars who defined transfronterizx as individuals who cross the international U.S.–Mexico border on a continual basis; they can hold dual citizenship for both countries and transfronterizo families can have a mixed-status household. Velasco Oritz and Contreras (2014) presented three different ways individuals experience crossing the U.S.–Mexico border: obstacle, opportunity, and uncertainty. This categorization aptly captures the daily encounters of transfronterizx as they cross into the United States and remain connected to both or multiple countries (Iglesias Prieto, 2014; Ojeda, 2009).

Transnationals differ from a transfronterizx in essential ways. Transnational families speak to a larger social phenomenon and a more extended immigration history tied to international globalization (Ojeda, 2009). In the case of transnationals, the individuals might live in the United States for an extended period, their immigration status may be unknown, and they may be far from the international border region. The phenomenon of transfronterizx families and students is regional; it involves families and students with an immigration status that allows them

to cross the border regularly, or, at the very least, the student has the citizenship status to move across the border freely. Transfronterizx cross the border for academic, economic, or social reasons (Ojeda, 2009). This back-and-forth movement between countries along the border region has always existed; however, after the establishment of North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in 1992, a more intense crossing began as the geopolitical structure and neoliberal economies of the two countries began to increase economic inequalities, which brought about an increased aspiration for upward mobility from communities along the border (Velasco Ortiz & Contreras, 2014). The approval of Senate Bill (SB) 257, "School Admissions: Pupil Residency: Pupils of Deported Parents" in 2017 and subsequent addition to California Education Code under Section 48204.4 (a) deemed children whose parents were deported from California or had to leave the state against their will met residency requirements for school attendance. SB 257 prohibits a school district from levying any charges or fees to the student or their parents. SB 257 also allows a parent or guardian of the student to designate an adult to attend school meetings and serve as an emergency contact. More recently, in October 2023, Assembly Bill 91 was signed into law as a 5-year pilot program. Assembly Bill 91 allows low-income Mexican residents who live in 45 miles of the California–Mexico border to be eligible for in-state tuition rates at certain community colleges. These two bills acknowledge the necessity of ensuring accessible educational opportunities for individuals residing in Mexico but seeking education in the United States.

Transfronterizx students attending schools in the United States have unique educational needs that often remain unseen in the school community (Tessman, 2016). Their distinctive experiences as transfronterizx may not be known, officially acknowledged, or monitored in the educational system because the residency addresses they use in the United States do not indicate

their residency in Tijuana, thus concealing their daily cross-border journey to attend school. This dissertation explored the experiences of transfronterizx public school elementary, middle school, and high school students, their families, and the educators of transfronterizx along the U.S.–Mexico border in San Diego to understand their experiences and uncover the critical elements needed for successful implementation of culturally proficient engagement strategies.

Current research on Latinx and immigrant family engagement has suggested effective family engagement strategies for Latinx families should consider the unique cultural experiences and perspectives of Latinx families and the challenges faced by Latinx families in accessing and participating in educational programs (Marchand et al., 2019; Pellecchia et al., 2018; Piper et al., 2021; Quezada, 2014). Further, research by Marchand et al. (2019), Clark-Louque et al. (2019), Piper et al. (2021), and Pellecchia et al. (2018) reported culturally relevant strategies, such as translation, peer–pair, accessibility, and cultural acknowledgment, ameliorated these barriers for underrepresented parents. Additionally, research on culturally proficient parent engagement by Clark-Louque et al. (2019) presented seven effective practices to engage parents: collaboration, communication, caring, culture, community, connectedness, and collective responsibility. However, according to Smith and Murillo (2012), the cultural minority group of transfronterizx Latinx parents' participation in any manner in schools continued to evolve.

Research-based strategies coupled with federal policies, such as Title I, support parent engagement and are available to educators, schools, and districts with diverse populations to leverage to implement programs (California Department of Education, n.d.-b). What is yet to be captured are the factors that support engagement for transfronterizx families, students, and educators who work with transfronterizx students. This dissertation explored the experiences of transfronterizx families, students, and the educators of transfronterizx students to understand the

impact of being transfronterizx on school engagement and to uncover stories and strategies that support and foster effective engagement. The three research questions were:

1. To what extent do educators perceive and acknowledge the experiences of transfronterizx families and students?
2. In what ways do the experiences of transfronterizx families impact their engagement with the school and educators?
3. In what ways is the transfronterizx student experience affected by their families and educators?

Family Engagement

Engagement implies a commitment from both, a two-way street in which families and schools share the responsibility of working in meaningful ways to improve students' overall schooling experiences. The National Family, School, and Community Engagement Working Group (Project H. F. R, 2009) defined parent (or family) engagement in their child(ren)'s education as:

- A shared responsibility in which schools and other community agencies and organizations are committed to reaching out to engage families in meaningful ways and in which families are committed to actively supporting their children's learning and development.
- Continuous across a child's life, spanning from Early Head Start programs to college preparation high schools.
- Carried out everywhere that children learn – at home, in pre-kindergarten programs, in school, in after-school programs in faith-based institutions, and in community programs and activities. (para. 5)

The above strategies need to be taken into consideration in making sure stakeholders (families and schools) engage from a bi-directional perspective to inform and expand on district and school-wide goals.

Transfronterizx Family Engagement

Informed by multiple studies on nondominant parent family engagement barriers (Antony-Newman, 2019; Baqueando-Lopez et al., 2013; Clark-Louque et al., 2019) and transfronterizx (transborder parents; Tessman & Koyama, 2017; Valdés, 1996), my working definition of transfronterizx parent engagement modified the NFSCEWG (2009) definition and added additional points:

- Transfronterizx family engagement is a shared responsibility in which schools and other community agencies and organizations are committed to reaching out to engage families in culturally proficient and meaningful ways and in which transfronterizx families are acknowledged for their commitment in crossing their U.S.–Mexico border daily to support their children's learning and development actively.
- Transfronterizx family engagement is continuous across a child's life and entails enduring commitment, but changing parent roles as children mature into young adulthood.
- Transfronterizx family engagement occurs across borders by incorporating transfronterizx family language, race, class, funds of knowledge (FoK), and community cultural wealth (CCW) into any outreach efforts and socioemotional and academic practices in the school.
- Educators and schools must be aware of critical factors affecting transfronterizx involvement: time poverty, lack of access (parents might not be able to come to the

United States), and lack of awareness (communication strategies may not be effective for transfronterizx).

- Educators of transfronterizx must remain neutral (to be able to sit with information) regarding transfronterizx immigration status.
- Transfronterizx families must be committed to being open to trusting the educator or school with sensitive information and, if needed, sharing pertinent information regarding their child's social-emotional and academic well-being (immigration status, deportation, fear, anxiety, the trauma endured due to transfronterizx experience).

It is a commitment from both parents/families and schools to work together in nontraditional, individual, case-by-case ways to improve the educational experience and outcomes of transfronterizx students.

Importance of Family, School, and Community Engagement

Transfronterizx students and their families have unique needs that may not be addressed during their time in school (Tessman, 2016). Family, school, and community engagement are essential to students' academic and social–emotional success; hence, transfronterizx parent engagement is a factor in students' success. Researchers have found in schools where vulnerable students attended, collaboration and partnership among the educators, school, and family were necessary for student success (Clark-Louque et al., 2019; Epstein et al., 2018; Marchand et al., 2019). Educational institutions have also compelled parents or caregivers to participate in their child(ren)'s or loved ones' education for decades and parent involvement models have undergone various iterations based on the sociopolitical, economic, and religious climate of the time to address the perceived deficits nondominant students have in school in the United States (Hiatt-Michael, 2001; Valdés, 1996). The frameworks that guide how parents participate in

schools have been based largely on White, middle-class values and expectations and on dominant hegemonic ideologies that reinforce structural inequities that further marginalize and disadvantage nondominant youth (Espinoza et al., 2021; Leonardo, 2015). Epstein's six types of parent involvement (Epstein et al., 2018) and Clark-Louque et al.'s (2019) seven Cs framework involve practices meant to replicate and support the classroom's academic and behavioral goals and the school's mission and vision. The purpose, design, and practice of parental involvement policies have been guided by assumptions and deficit perspectives about nondominant families and cultural practices (Baquedano-López et al., 2013; Clark-Louque, 2019). Parents' discipline practices, home, and family life have commonly been a target for intervention to address students' lack of progress or success in U.S. school systems, placing an inordinate amount of blame on parents and, most significantly, mothers because they are viewed as the ones in charge of child-rearing (Baquedano-Lopez et al., 2013; Valdés, 1996). However, decades of research on educational outcomes for students have shown that contributing factors for educational outcomes for Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) were structural, multifaceted, institutional, societal, economic, and racialized (Anyon, 2005, 2017; Espinoza et al., 2021).

Parents or caregivers of nondominant students have continued to be committed to the success of their child(ren), yet barriers (overt and covert/physical and policy-driven) to meaningful participation in schools persist. Educational researchers have conducted studies to understand the barriers parents of vulnerable populations of students may face to involvement in schools; these included racism, microaggressions, and stereotypes in the school community; these barriers created a family burden in managing racism in the school (Brown et al., 2018; Epstein et al., 2018; Marchand et al., 2019; Pellecchia et al., 2018; Piper et al., 2021). For example, Brown et al. (2018) found several sociodemographic characteristics influenced parent

engagement; these characteristics included gender, underrepresented ethnicities, marital status, age of parents, age of children, employment, and socioeconomic status. The research further explained minorities' status may have had an impact because minorities tend to be more challenging to engage—perhaps because the engagement methods were not culturally appropriate (Brown et al., 2018). This sociodemographic characteristic among underrepresented ethnicities and subsequent rationale for lack of engagement due to cultural dissonance was also found to be a factor in studies by Marchand et al. (2019), Piper et al. (2021), and Santiago et al. (2016).

Theoretical Framework

This study critically reviewed literature and research on transfronterizx (transfronterizo/transborder) families framed with Yosso's (2005) CCW. I used this theoretical framework to frame the literature to construct an understanding of the transfronterizx experience—the educational experiences of transfronterizx students and families in the United States—and to justify a need for further study. The research drew from a body of literature in the field of education, family, school, community engagement, social and cultural capital, CCW, FoK, and critical race theory (CRT) in and for education (Antony-Newman, 2019; Brown et al., 2018; Delgado & Stefancic, 2017; Epstein et al., 2018; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 2016; Marchand et al., 2019; Pellecchia et al., 2018; Piper et al., 2021; Santiago et al., 2016; Solórzano, 2019; Solórzano & Yosso, 2001).

CCW

CCW by Yosso (2005) incorporates Bourdieu's (2001) forms of capital yet expands the notion of cultural and social capital converted from economic capital to capital as wealth. This form of wealth includes the assets and resources an individual accumulates and transmits to their

children and families and moves away from the individual economic gain to a community-based model centered on group participation and benefit. The five tenets of CRT (i.e., race is a social construct, Whiteness as property, counter storytelling, interest convergence, and a critique of liberalism) are used as the lens through which wealth is perceived and acknowledged (Lalas & Strikwerda, 2023; Quezada et al., 2024). Yosso (2005) used knowledge from CRT to expand Bourdieu's forms of capital to reframe what counted as wealth to include the forms of wealth nondominant communities have. CCW comprises six forms of wealth: aspirational, familial, social, navigational, resistant, and linguistic capital. These forms enable an individual or household to function and thrive (Yosso, 2005). Transfronterizx students and families carry assets with them as they continuously cross the border to attend school in the United States and live in Mexico (Gonzalez et al., 2006; Ojeda, 2009; Yosso, 2005). I used this theoretical framework to study the phenomena as an asset-based approach to students, families, and educators who work with them, with the acknowledgment that race, language, and class continue to have overarching implications for what has value and what is valid in the context of our racialized society. In Chapter 2, I provide a deeper dive into the theoretical framework of Yosso's CCW by reviewing the social reproduction theory by Bourdieu and CRT.

Problem Statement

Recent studies by Clark-Louque et al. (2019) and Marchand et al. (2019) stipulated that in schools where vulnerable students attended, collaboration and partnership among educators, schools, and families were necessary for student success. Transfronterizx students and their families have unique needs that may not be addressed during school (Tessman, 2016). Epstein et al. (2018) stated that family, school, and community engagement are essential to students' academic and social–emotional success; hence, transfronterizx parent engagement is a factor in

students' success. Educators in the U.S. working with transfronterizx students and families may not perceive their vulnerabilities, their assets, nor the wealth that transfronterizx families have, thereby limiting their ability to engage them effectively. This study examined the experiences of transfronterizx public school students, families and the educators who work with them to understand the impact on transfronterizx families' engagement.

Purpose and Research Questions

> *Rather than maintain silence around issues of difference like immigration status, we call for educational practices and policies that would better prepare educators to recognize and respond to the politicized funds of knowledge around Latina/o students' immigration experiences for increased learning and engagement in school.* (Gallo & Link, 2015, p. 359)

The purpose of this study was to understand the experiences of transfronterizx public school students and families and the educators of transfronterizx students, to understand the impact on school engagement and uncover strategies that foster effective engagement. This objective was accomplished by understanding the experience of transfronterizx students, families, and educators of transfronterizx students, to explicitly answer the overarching research question: In what ways can an understanding of the experiences of transfronterizx families, students, and educators of transfronterizx foster effective engagement?

This study contributes to the field of education by adding to the literature on the understanding of transfronterizx students' and families' experiences; the impact of school engagement; and the ways perceptions, interpretations of CCW, race, class, and language have an impact on the educators of transfronterizx students and families. This research provides information to educators, schools, and districts on effective ways to engage transfronterizx

families living in border communities along the U.S.–Mexico border. The research questions were:

1. To what extent do educators perceive and acknowledge the experiences of transfronterizx families and students?
2. In what ways do the experiences of transfronterizx families impact their engagement with the school and educators?
3. In what ways is the experience of transfronterizx students affected by their families and educators?

The first research question aimed to understand the extent to which educators understood the experiences of transfronterizx parents. I formulated this question to understand what, if anything, educators knew about their students who were transfronterizx. Gaining knowledge in this area provided me with information on the factors that impacted transfronterizx families' engagement and the possible remedies available to the educators. The second question was focused on the families' experiences and the ways these experiences as transfronterizx affected their engagement in their child(ren)'s school. Information regarding the transfronterizx family experience aided me in understanding the dynamic of the relationship between these three groups. The third question helped me understand the ways the transfronterizx student experience was affected by their families and teachers. An understanding of the K–12 transfronterizx student experience provided information on elements that impacted transfronterizx students' engagement in schools and possible strategies educators could use to effectively engage students who were transfronterizx. The research questions were aligned with the research purpose by asking the extent to which there was an understanding, perception, and interpretation of the transfronterizx

family's experience, in what ways these experiences impacted transfronterizx families' engagement, and in what ways students were affected.

The research questions were limited to three questions to pursue three points of inquiry. Bhattacharya (2017) stated if interviews are conducted with adequate depth, the researcher would have rich, layered, nuanced answers to the questions. The interview questions, based on the research questions for the narrative inquiry, were formulated as open-ended questions to elicit conversation. They provided a framework to engage in semistructured conversations and opportunities for me to ask follow-up questions for clarification. This framework provided a space for participants to voice their experiences and elucidate me to the intricacies of the transfronterizx life. It was imperative not to confuse research questions with interview questions. Research questions kept the research focused during the qualitative data collection, analysis, and representation stages (Bhattacharya, 2017).

Significance of the Study

Understanding transfronterizx experiences and the experiences of the educators who teach transfronterizx students is relevant in the current educational climate; as such, this study aimed to understand the experiences of transfronterizx public school students and families and the educators of transfronterizx students and their impact on school engagement to uncover ways that could lead to effective collaborative partnerships. In the current educational climate, for marginalized groups, the heart of the educational issue is for educators to be able to interrogate their own biases and find the community's cultural wealth; the FoK transfronterizx families and students have; and to understand the complex racial, cultural, and linguistic disparities they encounter while crossing the international border daily. Students benefit from a strong family–school–community partnership (Epstein et al., 2018). Thus, transfronterizx students will benefit

from a better understanding between the educators in a school that serves transfronterizx students and families. By gaining a deeper understanding, the family–school–community can benefit the transfronterizx student.

This research has policy, curriculum, and instruction implications. It provides information on effective ways to engage parents and students who are transfronterizx and live in communities along the U.S.–Mexico border. Additionally, the study provides information to policymakers, colleges, schools, community organizations, transfronterizx families, and students on effective ways to interact with educators and schools to increase engagement and parent participation so their voices are heard in spaces where decisions are made and to strengthen the parent and school community partnership for transfronterizx student academic success.

Methodological Rationale and Nature of the Study

Narrative research focuses on the study of stories provided by participants about specific events described or a series of events. This type of study can focus on one individual or group, or at times, two, and for the most part, interviews are conducted as the method for collecting data (Creswell & Creswell, 2017; Mertler, 2019); however, document analysis can also be part of the process. This research employed narrative inquiry as a methodological process. The study included multiple data collection methods: individual semistructured interviews, focus groups, and document analysis of district and school policies.

I conducted the semistructured interviews via Zoom and through a WhatsApp phone call due to families living in Mexico, their unknown immigration status, and their varying abilities to cross the international border. I conducted semistructured interviews with two elementary families, one student, and four elementary school teachers who worked with transfronterizx students, two middle school families, one student, two middle school teachers who worked with

transfronterizx students, and three high school families, two students, and two high school teachers who worked with transfronterizx students (see Table 1).

Table 1

Participant In-Depth Semistructured Interviews

School level	Parent	Student	Educator
Elementary	2	1	4
Middle	2	1	2
High	3	2	2
Total Participants (19)	7	4	8

I coded the interviews for categories, subcategories, and emerging themes (Saldaña, 2021). With this study I aimed to achieve the following goals: (a) to understand the extent to which educators perceived and acknowledged the wealth and knowledge transfronterizx students and families had; (b) to understand the experience of transfronterizx families and students and the ways in which they engaged in schools, (c) to understand the impacts their engagement; (d) and to understand the ways the students' experiences were shaped by their families and the educators, to explicitly answer the overarching research question: In what ways can an understanding of the experiences of transfronterizx families, students, and educators of transfronterizx foster effective engagement?

I used purposive sampling, a nonrandom sampling technique; specifically, I used maximum variation sampling. This sampling technique is also called judgment sampling and involved the deliberate choice of participants due to the qualities the participants possessed (Etikan et al., 2016). I used the maximum variation sampling method because I selected participants across the K–12 grade levels, which encompassed a broad spectrum in grade levels. Thus, the participants were able to contribute to a better understanding of the transfronterizx

experience. The participants I selected had experience in living as transfronterizx or were educators of transfronterizx students and were willing to share their experiences and opinions on the matter (Etikan et al., 2016; Mertler, 2019). The stories of elementary, middle, and high public school transfronterizx families, students, and educators were the basic unit of analysis to understand how they experienced transfronterizx education in U.S. schools. This approach was selected to give voice to transfronterizx families and educators and to provide space for them to retell and share their experiences authentically.

Definitions of Terms

In this study, *bilingual individuals* encompassed individuals who can speak both Spanish and English, and *biliterate individuals* described those who could read, write, and think in both Spanish and English. *Bicultural* was defined as effectively navigating day-to-day life in two different social groups (González, 2008).

Community cultural wealth (CCW) was used to encompass the aspirational, linguistic, familial, societal, navigational, and resistance capital students of color had (Yosso, 2005).

Family encompassed biological parents, guardians, stepparents, older siblings, or surrogate parents in charge of the education and well-being of the transfronterizx student (Meriam-Webster, n.d.).

The definition of *family engagement* I used demarcates parents' meaningful and active participation in their child(ren)'s school, whether in person, virtually, or from home, in which parents' FoK were accessed and their voices were heard (National Family, School, and Community Engagement Working Group, 2009).

Funds of knowledge (FoK) was used to refer to individuals' lived experiences and belief systems as accumulated from multiple sources, including family and culture, community, peer

groups, and popular culture, that were drawn upon as informal knowledge in learning and decision-making (Moll et al., 1992).

Jibaros is a word in Spanish that, translated to English, means rancher.

Negociantes is a word in Spanish that, translated to English, means individuals who buy and sell goods.

A *transfronterizx* is an individual who lives immersed in two different countries; they cross the border continually and usually hold dual citizenship for both countries. These transfronterizx students are immigrants themselves or have one or two immigrant parents, and as a family, they remain connected to both their new country of settlement and their country of origin (Rivera, 2020). The group termed *transfronterizx students* are defined as students having citizenship in the United States and possibly Mexico; crossing the U.S.–Mexico border daily or continually to attend school; having family on both sides of the U.S.–Mexico border; and being bilingual, binational, and bicultural. The *transfronterizx families* are not immigrants; they have not moved to the United States. Some have not ever lived in the United States, but others have been deported, and others have made it their own choice to move back to Mexico after living in the United States for some time. Instead, the parents have their children attend school in the United States with the intent of their children having expanded economic opportunities. The definition of transfronterizx families has continued to evolve because they are not easily defined as one group; each family has a unique set of circumstances. In this study, transfronterizx families were used interchangeably with *transfronterizx parents*.

Summary

Parental involvement in schools, parental engagement, and partnership among the family, school, and community may have lasting significant positive outcomes for students' social,

emotional, mental, and physical health (Epstein et al., 2018; Santiago et al., 2016). Current research on culturally proficient parent engagement practices delineated tangible measures educators and schools could use to access parents' cultural and social capital and their FoK to serve students from diverse backgrounds better (Clark-Louque et al., 2019; Quezada, 2014). However, there remains limited research on transfronterizx parent engagement and educators' understanding of this unique population. Such potential outcomes merited additional research in transfronterizx populations along the border region to understand the extent to which the FoK, the social and cultural capital of families and students, and their CCW are perceived and accessed to coordinate and improve transfronterizx student support and to uncover actions that can lead to effective engagement.

Through a qualitative method using the narrative inquiry approach, I provided an understanding of the transfronterizx experience concerning their education along the U.S.–Mexico border. This approach will enhance readers' knowledge with an understanding of the experiences of transfronterizx families and educators through an analysis of this narrative inquiry (storytelling) method to achieve parrhesia. Through this study, I aim to add to the literature on transfronterizx education, transfronterizx family engagement, and public schools and educators working with transfronterizx families and students.

I am considered a transfronteriza and have been an educator and school principal at a public school located along the U.S.–Mexico border that received transfronterizx students. These two realities gave me an impetus to understand the experiences of transfronterizx students and families, the experiences of educators of transfronterizx students, and the impact being transfronterizx had on engagement.

Chapter 2 is a critical literature review that provides an overview of the literature on transfronterizx; family, school, and community engagement; FoK; and CRT in education and elucidates the reader on emerging themes in the literature. Yosso's (2005) CCW forms the theoretical framework applied to the selection of literature.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this literature review, I researched, analyzed, and synthesized current multidisciplinary literature on critical race theory (CRT), funds of knowledge (FoK), forms of capital, Latinx student and family engagement, and transfronterizx. The review of theoretical, empirical, and foundational literature revealed multidimensional factors in Latinx family engagement; however, little information was available on transfronterizx in schools.

My interest in transfronterizx students and families stemmed from my experiences as a student in both Mexico and the United States, a teacher in both Mexico and the United States, and a principal in the United States that served a border community l mile from the U.S.–Mexico border. I am interested in transfronterizx families and students as agents who forge a new educational path that is not limited by borders or language.

Organization of the Chapter

The chapter begins with a review of the background of the problem. Then it continues with the historical and economic context of the region, followed by research parameters, and foundational literature on community cultural wealth (CCW) and the theoretical framework (i.e., CRT, CRT in education, and CRT for teacher education, Latino critical race theory [LatCrit], forms of capital, FoK, and CCW). Then, I provide information about Latinx family, school, and community engagement, and finally, transfronterizx experiences, family engagement, and educators.

Background of the Problem

To be considered a social problem, Thomas and Campbell (2020) stated three conditions that must be met: (a) large numbers of individuals are negatively affected by it; (b) the condition

or phenomenon, in this case, needs to be addressed; and/or (c) individuals are ready to mobilize to eliminate the condition. Transfronterizx students who are U.S. citizens living in Mexico and crossing the international border continually to attend U.S. schools experience social challenges including fear, stress, and anxiety about being exposed by agents in the Department of Homeland Security at the border, educators at school, or members of the community (Nuñez & Urrieta, 2021).

The transfronterizx experience uniquely navigates the imbalanced economic conditions, sociopolitical regulations (overt and covert, known and unknown), and cultural norms between the U.S.–Mexico border. Transfronterizx families who cross the border regularly have strategically positioned themselves to take advantage of the opportunities these inequities have caused to live, work, and attend school in both nations; this necessitates that educators and schools understand their unique experiences and knowledge of the world to access the spheres of assets they carry with them as they navigate between the two nations. Educators are uniquely positioned to interact with newly arrived families of immigrants, refugees, transnationals, transfronterizx, or displaced people (Koyama, 2015; Smith & Murillo, 2012). Educators could enact their forms of capital, CCW, FoK, and "risk-taking" (Koyama, 2015, p. 614) to teach in a way that integrates nondominant students' ways of knowing and learning to build their sense of belonging with dignity, equity, and justice. Educators could also benefit from the transfronterizx students and families by adding to their knowledge base when integrating languages, cultures, and spheres of assets from all groups into their daily classroom instruction (Smith & Murillo, 2012).

Transfronterizx parent engagement at school remains limited; this may have been due in part to the school systems' lack of acknowledgment of cultural capital, linguistic repertoire,

capabilities, cultural wealth, and FoK of transfronterizx students and their families have or lack of effective methods to access this specific group of parents (Smith & Murillo, 2012). Additionally, the current political climate has instilled anxiety and stress in mixed-status households due to harsh immigration rhetoric, fear of deportation, and everyday discrimination, which leads to family members limiting unnecessary trips outside the home, including parent (or family) participation in schools (Cross et al., 2022). Tessman (2016) found transfronterizx students and families were viewed in a deficit perspective by school personnel because of their limited English proficiency, lack of social capital to navigate and understand the U.S. public school system, and unknown legal citizenship status (Tessman, 2016). A negative perception among educators that transfronterizx parents are uninvolved is a harmful myth among educators of transfronterizx students. The persistence of this deficit perception of diverse immigrant parents was partly due to the dominance of the standard for parent engagement modeled on White, middle-class parent engagement (Antony-Newman, 2019; Leonardo, 2015).

Historical and Economic Context

The border region between Mexico and the United States, which stretches for 1,954 miles, had a sui generis social context in which the first world and developing world engage in a confluence of movement between the two nations that impacts the economic, social, and cultural dynamics (Ojeda, 2009). The Tijuana–San Diego border region is home to over 6 million people, making it one of the largest binational metropolitan areas worldwide. The U.S. Census Bureau (n.d.) reported the San Diego County population was 3,338,330 in 2020, and the Tijuana metropolitan area had an estimated population of over 1.8 million in 2020. The border region is one of the most important economic crossroads in the world. It is home to various industries, including high-tech manufacturing, biotech, tourism, and logistics. According to the San Diego

Regional Chamber of Commerce, the region had a combined gross domestic product, which is a measure of the final monetary value of goods and services produced in a country in a given period, of over $230 billion (Canedo Rivas et al., 2022).

History of the Region

The Tijuana–San Diego border was officially established in 1848 as part of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo; at the time, the border was a simple demarcation line between the newly appropriated U.S. territories of California, Nevada, Utah, Arizona, New Mexico, and parts of Colorado, Wyoming, Kansas, and Oklahoma, and the remaining Mexican territories (Secretaría de la Defensa Nacional, 2022). Over the following decades, the border region became increasingly important for trade and commerce, and for migration and settlement. The discovery of gold in California in 1849 led to a rapid influx of immigrants from all over the world, many of whom crossed the border from Mexico in search of work and opportunities. In the early 20th century, the border became the site of significant political and social upheaval, as the Mexican Revolution and the subsequent rise of the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI; Institutional Revolutionary Party) government in Mexico increased cross-border tensions and conflicts. The U.S. government responded by building border fences and walls and increasing border patrol and surveillance operations. During World War II, the border region played a crucial role in the defense and manufacturing efforts of the U.S. government, with many Mexican Americans and Mexican immigrants working in the factories and shipyards that helped support the war effort. The border region grew and evolved postwar, increasing trade and commerce and spurring significant demographic changes. The establishment of the maquiladora industry in the 1960s and 1970s led to an expansion of manufacturing operations on the Mexican side of the border. Additionally, the growth of the U.S. “high-tech” industry in the 1980s and 1990s helped San

Diego become a city of innovation and entrepreneurship (Akkerman, 2023; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2021; Chavez & Partida, 2022).

San Diego and Tijuana Border Context

The Tijuana–San Diego border region is one of the most critical migration corridors in the world. According to a report from the Pew Research Center (Passel, 2023), there were over 11 million unauthorized immigrants in the United States in 2019, including an estimated 1.5 million from Mexico. The San Diego–Tijuana border is one of the busiest land ports of entry in the world, with over 70 million people crossing the border annually. The 2020 San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) report stated more than 130,000 people crossed the border daily for work, school, and other reasons. Although the report did not provide specific data on the number of students, it suggested thousands of individuals commute across the border for educational purposes (Passel, 2023; SANDAG, 2023).

Literacies of surveillance (Nuñez & Urrieta, 2021) are taught to transfronterizx children by their parents to help them physically traverse the international borders and mentally and emotionally navigate immigration inspectors at the border for their daily commutes to and from school. These acquired and conveyed “literacies” are relevant in the context of heightened surveillance and monitoring at the border, given that the border is a site of intense surveillance and control, with various technologies and techniques used to monitor and regulate the movement of people and goods across the border. They can also involve developing a critical awareness of how border surveillance practices are linked to broader complex power relations, structures of power and inequality, xenophobia, racism, and economic exploitation.

Since 2016, children have been removed from their parents and placed in separate holding facilities or makeshift camps as they tried to seek asylum; the inhumane conditions the

children were subjected to under the Trump-era zero tolerance policy were deplorable (*Family separation – a timeline* 2022; Dickerson, 2023). These families remained separated for indefinite amounts of time; in some cases, immigrant children were placed in foster care in the United States as their parents were returned to their native homeland involuntarily without their children (Andersson, 2021; Dickerson, 2023). This policy caused irreparable harm and trauma to immigrant children and their families. A family's decision to come to the United States despite the challenges demonstrates the vast economic disparities and acute crises the countries of origin faced. The racial disparities in the treatment of asylum-seeking refugees along the U.S.–Mexico border was evident during the 2022 war between Ukraine and Russia. Displaced Ukrainians crossed the border by land; however, when the conditions became overcrowded, an additional pedestrian entry point through Pediwest or "El Chaparral" was opened exclusively to allow the Ukrainians to expedite their entry process, and as they crossed into the United States, volunteers welcomed them with hugs; "Every Ukrainian crossing into the United States at the San Ysidro Port of Entry gets a warm welcome and a big hug from a volunteer" (Alvarado, 2022, para. 1). However, many asylum-seeking refugees from Latin American countries, the Caribbean, Middle Eastern countries, and elsewhere received no such conveniences from Immigration and Naturalization Services (INS), nor were welcome by volunteers; in many instances, the INS brutalized them with whips and lashes while riding horses along the Rio Grande along the U.S.–Mexico border (Alvarado, 2022; Sullivan & Kanno-Youngs, 2021).

Quality of Life Along the Border

According to the World Health Organization (WHO, 2023), the life expectancy at birth in Tijuana, Mexico, was 75.1 years as of 2020, significantly lower than in San Diego, California, where the life expectancy was 81.1 years during the same period. This difference in life

expectancy was attributable to various factors, including differences in healthcare access and lifestyle factors. Additionally, Mexico's healthcare system is decentralized and fragmented, with significant disparities in access to healthcare services between urban and rural areas. In contrast, the United States has a highly developed healthcare system comprising public and private providers. However, access to healthcare services could be limited for those without insurance or financial resources. Lifestyle factors, including diet, exercise, and social support, also impacted life expectancy and quality of life. Tijuana, Mexico, had higher rates of obesity and diabetes than San Diego, California, which could contribute to various health problems. Additionally, Tijuana's social and economic conditions, including poverty and violence, impacted the quality of life. These differences were complex and multifaceted and could not be attributed to one factor. However, they highlighted the possible motivating factors for transfronterizx families to willingly face a myriad of physical, mental, and emotional challenges to provide more educational opportunities for their children and a better quality of life (National Population Council, 2023; Tessman, 2016; WHO, 2023).

Research Parameters

The rationale for selecting research parameters and inclusion and exclusion criteria, with relevant information, provided clarity, transparency, and trust in the procedural process (Alexander, 2020). I began the literature search using the electronic databases from the University of San Diego Library, San Diego State Library, Google Scholar, Nexis Uni, ProQuest, and Semantic Scholar. I selected the search terms because they directly related to the study; however, I expanded them due to the topic's newness. The term transfronterizx is relatively new; initially, I found a handful of readings that pertained to my research topic: transfronterizx students and families. As I expanded my search to more databases, I simultaneously used

alternative terms for the word transfronterizx, such as transborder, transnational, Latin, Latino/a, and Latinx, for my inquiry. This change yielded more research that pertained to the study. Search terms were "transfronterizx or transborder or transnational students, Latinx and Hispanic" and "Latino or transborder or transnational parent engagement in schools." I initially selected articles available in full text, peer-reviewed, available online, and written in English or Spanish as part of the compendium of documents. I reviewed abstracts and included the articles if they met the following criteria: (a) the study was on transfronterizx or transborder students; (b) the study included strategies used to engage Latinx or transfronterizx or transborder families; (c) the study addressed parent-involvement strategies; (d) the study referenced transfronterizx, transborder school communities; (e) the study was conducted on school-age (K–12) Latinx or transfronterizx students and families; (f) the study was peer-reviewed. I undertook three actions to maximize the corpus of documents and extend search results: referential backtracking, researcher checking, and journal scouring (Alexander, 2020); these actions resulted in the inclusion of gray literature and literature in Spanish as part of the literature review.

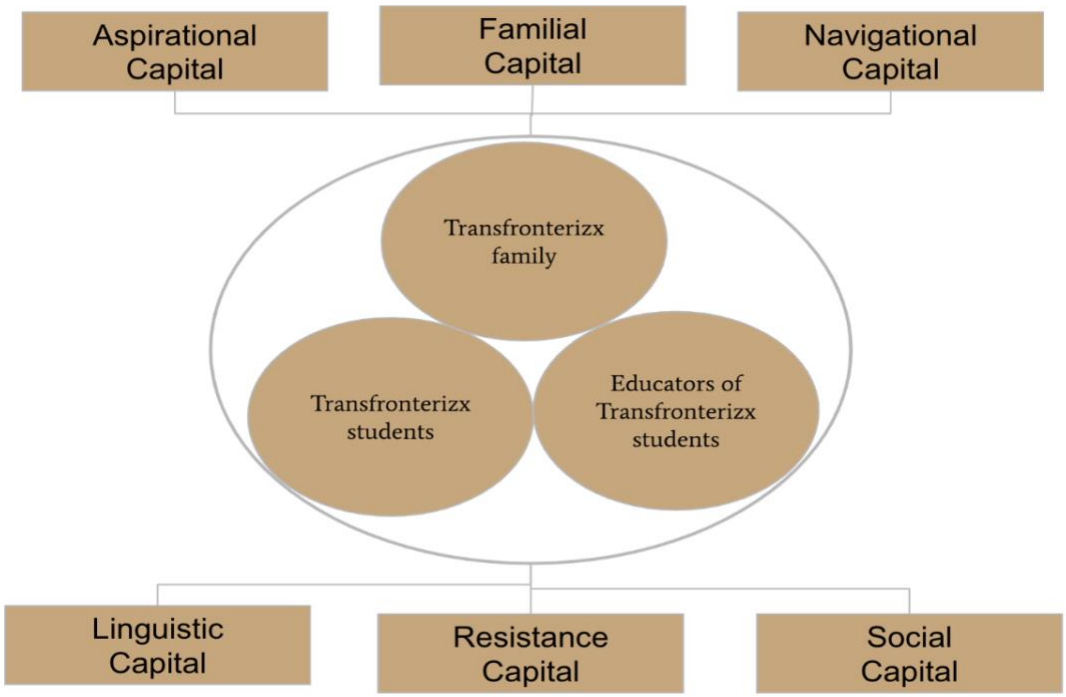
Theoretical Framework

I constructed the theoretical framework for this study using Yosso's (2005) CCW. Built from social reproduction theory in Bourdieu's (2011) forms of capital and CRT in education (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 2016; Solórzano, 2019; Solórzano & Yosso, 2001). Yosso's CCW extracts the "knowledge, skills, abilities, and contacts communities of color possess and use to survive and resist racism and other forms of oppression" (Yosso, 2005, p. 154). The six forms of cultural capital that make up Yosso's CCW are (a) aspirational, (b) linguistic, (c) familial, (d) social, (e) navigational, and (f) resistance (see Figure 1). In these connected converging concepts, there is an overarching understanding of the ways in which race, class, and language

are factors; thus, CCW informs and guides the analysis of the study. Following is research into the foundational aspects of CCW.

Figure 1

Spheres of Assets



This review of literature comprises three topics: (a) the foundational aspects of CCW, which include CRT, LatCrit, CRT in education, CRT for teacher education, forms of capital, and FoK, which informed my theoretical framework; (b) current research on transfronterizx (transborder) communities (because the use of transfronterizx is a term that has recently come into use, the literature search was limited; hence, I also used the term transborder), and (c) current research into culturally proficient parent engagement strategies for Latinx family–school–community engagement.

Critical Race Theory

CRT was initiated in the legal field and grounded on the eminent legal work of critical legal scholars such as Derick Bell, Richard Delgado, Jean Stefancic, Angela Harris, Kimberlé Crenshaw, and Mari Matsuda to challenge racist practices in the legal field that have been systemically institutionalized (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). Distilled from several principles of race and racism, CRT legal scholars agree on five basic tenets of CRT: (a) racism is endemic, pervasive, widespread, and ingrained in society; (b) interest convergence and race are a social construct; (c) Whiteness as property; (d) the importance of counter-storytelling; and (e) a critique of meritocracy. CRT confronts the notion of race as a fixed biological category, instead positing it as a socially constructed concept embedded in historical and institutional contexts. CRT also underscores the importance of counter-narratives as tools for understanding lived experiences and challenging dominant narratives. CRT seeks to uncover and dismantle the underlying power dynamics that advance racist ideologies and advocate for transformative change in historically oppressive societal structures, such as law, education, healthcare, and policy (Bell, 1995; Delgado & Stefancic, 2017).

In education, a historically oppressive structure was residential segregation. Rooted in racial discrimination and compounded by the economic impact of systematic institutionalized racism, residential segregation perpetuated disparities in school funding, leaving ethnically diverse districts underfunded with inadequate resources for modern facilities, qualified educators versed in critical pedagogy, and culturally relevant curricula. Consequently, White middle-class students often had access to high quality teachers and well-resourced schools in affluent neighborhoods (Anyon, 2017; Lareau, 2011). The CCW of this community emerged to support and sustain its members to build resilience and foster success (Yosso, 2005).

Latino Critical Race Theory

LatCrit emerged as a distinct theoretical framework in the broader field of CRT in the 1990s. The moniker LatCrit was initially used in 1996 during the Hispanic National Bar Association annual meeting, and the first LatCrit conference took place in San Diego the following year. Scholars and activists sought to understand and address the challenges faced by Latinas/os, Hispanics, and Chicano/as in the United States, which encompass a multiracial, multiethnic, multilingual, and multicultural population, ranging from 21 countries in Latin America to the displaced original people of the southwest states that were annexed to the United States in the Treaty of Guadalupe of 1848 and have inhabited the area for generations. LatCrit tenets are similar to those of CRT, yet LatCrit scholars are also guided by 10 commitments: (a) intergroup justice, (b) antisubordination, (c) antiessentialism, (d) multidimensionality, (e) praxis/solidarity, (f) community-building, (g) critical/self-critical, (h) ethical, (i) transnational, and (j) interdisciplinary. Quezada et al. (2024) contextualized LatCrit by addressing the degree to which proximity to Whiteness and the degree to which a Latina/os', Hispanics', or Chicana/os' English was academic enough determined their experience of life in the United States. Additionally, Quezada et al. (2004) described the ways in which labels of language and race "advance monolithic" (p. 63) programs for students that perpetuated linguistic racism and serve as gatekeepers to exclude students whose dominant language was other than English (Leonardo, 2004; Quezada et al., 2024).

Critical Race Theory in Education

CRT scholars (Anyon, 2017; Bell, 1980, 1995; Freire, 1970; Giroux, 2011; Ladson-Billings 1995, 2021; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 2016; Trueba, 2002) have posited that the school

setting was where children were socialized into their roles according to their race, class, language, and gender, thereby limiting their equitable access to education. According to those scholars, the U.S. education system has replicated the oppression, discrimination, marginalization, and racism in the larger society with educational policies based on race, class, and language that privileged students who were part of the White-dominant culture in the United States (e.g., zero tolerance discipline policies, English-only policies, curriculum choices, and standardized testing). Students of color were often disciplined more harshly than White students for the same behaviors. This led to higher rates of suspension, expulsion, and involvement in the juvenile justice system. Standardized tests are often biased against students from low-income backgrounds, students with disabilities, and students whose first language is not English. These tests have been used to make high-stakes decisions, such as college admissions or school funding, which perpetuated inequities (Annamma et al., 2013). White middle-class students were more likely to have access to advanced coursework (e.g., AP classes, gifted programs, and honors courses), thus providing an advantage when applying to college and limiting opportunities for students of color and low-income students. Curriculum materials contained cultural biases that privileged the experiences and history of White students and excluded the experiences and perspectives of Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) students. This contributed to a sense of alienation and disengagement among students of color (Annamma et al., 2013; Anyon, 2017; Lareau, 2011).

Education has been littered with historical amnesia (Giroux, 2011) that reduces history to the experience of the dominant culture and focuses on the positive aspects of the U.S. past, which negates the history and accomplishments of BIPOC while also ignoring the decades of atrocities committed by the White dominant classes on BIPOC. Knowledge has been withheld

from students, transformed, and shaped to suit the needs of the dominant culture, leaving nondominant students with an inculcation into the U.S. way of life and a reproach for other cultures, including their own (Anzaldúa, 2004). This problem has been exacerbated by the disproportionate number of White teachers teaching BIPOC students; from 1987 to 2018, close to 80% of teachers were White, according to the National Center for Education Statistics (n.d.-a).

Ladson-Billings and Tate (2016) and Solórzano (1998; 2019) put forth CRT in education as a framework to advance research and theory where issues of race in education were concerned. In a 1998 article titled, "Critical Race Theory, Race, and Gender Microaggressions, and the Experience of Chicana and Chicano Scholars," Solórzano provided a framework for CRT in education with five themes: (a) The centrality and intersectionality of race and racism, which is endemic and permanent; (b) The challenge to the dominant ideology—a critique of meritocracy, objectivity, color, gender blindness, race, gender neutrality, and equal opportunity; the traditional claims are a camouflage for self-interest to maintain power and privilege; (c) The commitment to social justice, and elimination of racism, ending other forms of subordination; (d) The centrality of experiential knowledge, knowledge of women and people of color (and transfronterizx) is legitimate, appropriate, and critical to understanding, analyzing, and teaching about subordination, in the field of education; and (e) The interdisciplinary perspective, which challenges ahistoricism and acontextualism and expands the boundaries with interdisciplinary methods to place them in a historical context.

Milner (2007) elaborated on three central tenets in CRT in education: (a) the ingrained nature of race and racism in society and thus in education and education research; (b) the importance of narrative, counter-narrative, and the naming of one's own reality in education; and

(c) the centrality of interest convergence in education (Milner, 2007). In 2019, Solórzano developed, adapted, and applied five tenets for CRT for teacher education (CRTTE). These are:

- Tenet 1: Intersectionality; "CRTTE foregrounds race and racism and challenges separate discourses on race, gender, and class by demonstrating how racism intersects with other forms of subordination and how they impact Students of Color."
- Tenet 2: Critique of meritocracy; "CRTTE challenges traditional research paradigms and theories, thereby exposing deficit notions about Students of Color and educational policies and practices that assume 'neutrality', 'meritocracy', and 'objectivity'."
- Tenet 3: Counternarrative, truth-telling, asset-based, first-person research; "CRTTE focuses research, curriculum, pedagogy, and practice on the lived experiences of Students of Color and regards these experiences as assets and sources of strength."
- Tenet 4: Praxis (theory → practice, scholarship→ teaching, academy → community); "CRTTE offers a transformative solution to racial, gender, and class discrimination by linking theory with practice, scholarship with teaching, and the academy with the community."
- Tenet 5: Interdisciplinary; "CRTTE challenges ahistoricism and acontextualism and insists on expanding the boundaries of the analysis of race and racism and education by using contextual, historical, and interdisciplinary perspectives to inform praxis."

CRT in education scholars, such as Daniel Solórzano, Tara Yosso, Zeus Leonardo, Gloria Ladson-Billings, and William Tate, have explained how cultural perceptions of race have further marginalized and victimized people of color by elevating the White middle-class experience as the standard. Through this process, minorities have been victimized in society, and this

victimization has been reproduced in U.S. school systems (Anyon, 2005; Brathwaite, 2017; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 2016). CRT scholars in education have attempted to confront practices that persist and perpetuate racism in society and in schools (Crenshaw et al., 1995; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 2016; Leonardo, 2015; Solórzano, 1998).

Forms of Capital

In forms of capital, Bourdieu (2011) articulated cultural capital in three forms: embodied state, which is the character of an individual; an objectified state, which is tangible goods; and the institutionalized state, which is an academic credential or professional status. Together, these form cultural capital, which can be used as a type of currency to access increased opportunities in the social world. Social capital is the aggregate of networks or relationships that provide a credential to exert influence or locate resources to improve your position and replicate the social order that benefits the dominant classes. Bourdieu posited that these forms of capital formed a theoretical hypothesis that can explain the unequal scholastic achievement between students from different social classes (Bourdieu, 2011). This is not because one class was inherently endowed with natural advantages, but because the dominant powers who socially constructed the value system privileged Whiteness and all its forms of capital over others; therefore, forms of capital from different groups were undervalued and/or unacknowledged (Bourdieu, 2011).

Funds of Knowledge

Moll et al. (1992) posited that household and social networks and economic and productive activities among individuals and families of a local region comprise the FoK individuals carry with them. FoK is not to be confused or confabulated as culture because FoK is the wherewithal developed in working-class families (Rios-Aguilar et al., 2011), developed as needed and in specific familial circumstances. The term “funds” was initially used by Wolf in

1966 when studying peasants and, more specifically, peasants' household economies, Wolf's terminology denoted the bartering potential of knowledge and its use as currency for exchanges (Rios-Aguilar et al., 2011). The FoK of marginalized BIPOC students should be accessed by educators and embraced by the dominant educational setting as valid knowledge so the totality of their experiences could be integrated into the school setting in "participatory pedagogy" (Moll et al., 1992, p. 139). It has been established in research that educational settings are reproducers of dominant class values, beliefs, and oppressive structures (Anyon, 2005; Brathwaite, 2017; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 2016); thus, an educator's role is essential in engaging in participatory (Moll et al., 1992), critical, and emancipatory (Freire, 1970) pedagogies that critically engaged learners to become concientizados (to have critical consciousness) (Freire, 1970) was to perceive and acknowledge the value of FoK from nondominant families (Boyd et al., 2022). Transfronterizx students and families bring FoK specific to the border region and the daily activity of crossing international borders; Gallo and Link (2015) coined these as politicized FoK. Politicized FoK is specific to transfronterizx because this group crosses the international border continually and becomes keenly aware of the geopolitical shifts that happen at the state levels and reverberate at the international border crossing. In using politicized FoK, Transfronterizx are also aware of the behavior they must display (e.g., body composure, looking officials in the eyes, only speaking when spoken to, and following exact orders if given by officials at the border when crossing) to fit the notions the border patrol agents have of how individuals must act when they cross the borders both into the United States and into Mexico (Gallo & Link, 2015).

Community Cultural Wealth

Yosso (2005) found the forms of capital posited by Bourdieu limiting in their scope and reinstated the privileging of White middle-class values as an explanation of unequal academic

achievement between students from different social classes (Bourdieu, 2011; Yosso, 2005). Her critical analysis of diverse minority experiences expanded the theory of forms of capital. It broadened it to include the community wealth of communities of color as capital that helps them succeed in society. The term wealth is used in the sense of an individual's accumulated assets and resources; Yosso's CCW drew on the work of CRT and Vélez-Ibáñez and Greenberg's (1992) work on forms of knowledge and skills that families in marginalized Mexican households in the United States possessed; this new knowledge shifted the center from values of White middle-class ethos to the cultures of communities of color (Yosso, 2005). Yosso's (2005) CCW encompasses forms of capital drawn from communities of color's ranges of knowledge, abilities, skills, and connections to "survive and resist macro and micro-forms of oppression" (Yosso, 2005, p. 77). CCW consists of six forms of capital: aspirational, familial, social, navigational, resistant, and linguistic. As with Bourdieu's forms of capital, CCW can also be used by individuals to access resources and convert them into economic wealth to improve their condition. Bourdieu, Moll et al., and Yosso all articulated concepts that expounded on the importance of the role of social and cultural connections, abilities, experiences, and assets among diverse communities from a racialized perspective.

The selection of CCW as the theoretical framework for this study was apt because transfronterizx families and their children possess community cultural wealth as they continuously navigate the U.S.–Mexico border. The endurance labor and drive of transfronterizx families, as a community of color, helped them continue to persist in achieving their goals in the United States (Nuñez & Urrieta, 2021; Smith & Murillo, 2012; Tessman, 2016; Yosso, 2005).

Family, School, and Community Engagement

Title I, Part A, from the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), passed in 1965 and reauthorized in 2016 under Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), requires school districts to conduct outreach to all parents and family members and to implement programs activities, and procedures for the involvement of parents and family members (CA Dept of Education, n.d.-b). Under Title I, Part A, schools created workshops, meetings, and training that addressed the needs of the students and families (CA Dept of Education, n.d.-b). Title I, part A, requires parent involvement in schools, and the definition of such has evolved.

The characterization of the family, school, and community collaboration model has progressed over the past decades from involvement to engagement to partnership. Parents' involvement in schools referred to participation in schools as a mode to reinforce school expectations that were superficial and privileged what the schools valued (Antony-Newman, 2019). Involvement was a direct, school-centric model that supported attendance at school-sanctioned activities: parent-teacher conferences, school-site council meetings, English Learner Advisory Committee meetings, PTA meetings, schoolwide events, fundraisers, and more. Indirect involvement meant supporting learning at home, reading, homework completion, and participating in White middle-class education approaches, such as cultivating children's skills and talents in sports, arts, and music (Antony-Newman, 2019; Lareau, 2011). In this model of parent, school, and community, parents were asked to be assistants in implementing the directives of the school, avoiding issues that could challenge those in power, and passively complying with educators and school requests or invitations (Antony-Newman, 2019; Washington, 2019), thereby participating in the reproduction of hierarchical social constructs that privilege the White middle-class form of parenting over any other. Family engagement

transitioned to include reaching and recruiting parents from diverse backgrounds (Quezada, 2014) for sustained and successful engagement. Family, school, and community partnerships provided a more inclusive, asset-based approach to parents engaging in a cooperative relationship with shared power, shared responsibility, and mutual benefits (Quezada, 2014).

Latinx Family, School, Community Engagement

Pellecchia et al.'s (2018) study on parent involvement from underrepresented families yielded various effective engagement strategies. Pellecchia et al. (2018) interviewed parents from traditionally underrepresented families to investigate strategies to increase participation in parent engagement. Pellecchia et al. (2018) reported that seven approaches could increase parent participation; these included:

- Accessibility promotion, such as appointment reminders, childcare, free attendance to events, flexibility with location and time, transportation, and offering food during sessions.
- Translation and cultural acknowledgment, such as translation of materials or services in participants' primary language and strategies used to acknowledge parents' culture, economic status, or education level.
- Peer pairing, which included pairing with others to allow reciprocal learning and skills practice.
- A support network that included formal helpers (e.g., relatives, friends, neighbors, faith community members) in service planning and delivery.
- Collaboration, and relationship/rapport building, such as providing a sense of shared power and responsibility between parents and presenter.
- Goal setting, assessment and problem-solving.

- Therapist monitoring and therapist praise rewards were found to be among the most effective strategies to engage parents that are underrepresented. (Pellecchia et al., 2018; Santiago et al., 2016; Strolin-Goltzman et al., 2018)

Santiago et al. (2016) found participants reported high parent satisfaction while participating in the culturally relevant family component of school behavioral interventions. The study noted significant benefits, such as improved communication, problem-solving, relaxation, praise, and consistency. Students whose parents participated in the study also noted positive communication and stress management outcomes. Parental involvement in schools, including parental engagement during interventions, had lasting significant positive outcomes for students' social, emotional, mental, and physical health (Greenberg et al., 2017; Hoover, 2019; Santiago et al., 2016).

Additionally, research on culturally proficient parent engagement by Clark-Louque et al. (2019) presented seven effective practices to engage parents: collaboration, communication, caring, culture, community, connectedness, and collective responsibility. This framework is aligned with the needs of parents from diverse backgrounds to foster effective and productive partnerships. Educators and school administrators who practice these essentials have the potential to strengthen and improve collaboration with parents from diverse backgrounds.

Underrepresented families are often of a minority race or ethnicity or live in poverty or all three. Most recently, Tessman (2016) found that transfronterizx were viewed in a deficit frame by school personnel because of their limited English proficiency and lack of social capital to navigate and understand the U.S. school system (Tessman, 2016). Valencia's (2002) research presented a negative perception among educators that Latinx parents were uninvolved; this harmful myth persists among educators of transnational students.

Research-based strategies coupled with federal policies that support parent engagement are available to educators, schools, and districts with diverse populations. The extent to which these resources were being used to engage transfronterizx families was unknown. There is limited research on transfronterizx parent engagement. The gap in the literature indicates this group's unique needs; thus, further research would help decision makers within the pre-k - college educational system educators better understand this experience.

Transfronterizx Experience

Transfronterizx students and families live, work, and go to school in the United States and Mexico at the same time; they cross the international border continuously, if not daily, to engage in these activities. Transfronterizx shared goals in common with immigrants, most notably seeking better living standards in the United States through improved social services, such as education and healthcare, and a higher income than they could earn in Mexico (Orraca et al., 2017). Unlike immigrants, who stay in their host country for extended periods, transfronterizx were not migrants; they cross the border on a daily or weekly basis while living in Mexico. Trueba (1999, 2002) posited that immigrants hold multiple identities as part of the adaptive process of immigration to effectively function in both their home country and their host country (Trueba, 1999, 2002); yet unlike transfronterizx who travel back and forth daily between the United States and Mexico, immigrants remain in the United States for more extensive periods and go back to their home country for a span of time. That is, they do not go back to their homeland daily. Another term, transborder, is defined by Merriam dictionary as crossing a border or extending across a border (Merriam-Webster, n.d.), whether a state, international, or several international borders. Transfronterizx are individuals who cross the border daily and are both mainstream U.S. citizens participating in the United States ways of life and full citizens in

Mexico participating actively in the Mexican ways of life. Transfronterizx are an inimitable group in the United States that have what Yosso (2005) described as CCW, what Moll et al. (1992) described as FoK, and what Bourdieu (2011) explained as cultural and social capital, to achieve success despite the ethnocentrism of school curriculum and an education system that is challenged to meet the needs of diverse students. According to Orraca et al. (2017), being a transfronterizx student was positively associated with household income, having someone in the home who crosses into the United States to work, having previously lived in the United States, and age. The decision to become a transfronterizx student is initially made by the parents when they decide to have their children be born in the United States, thus increasing the likelihood of their children benefiting from the forms of wealth their children can acquire through the social contacts made in their schooling. These social contacts could facilitate access to resources that lead to economic opportunities in their future labor market (Orraca et al., 2017).

Barriers to Participation Faced by Transfronterizx

Marchand et al. (2019) and Antony-Newman (2019) found that traditional forms of parent-school involvement were based on the White middle to upper-class parents' engagement, attendance at parent–teacher conferences, joining parent–teacher associations, and participation in other voluntary school decision-making groups (Antony-Newman, 2019; Marchand et al., 2019). These traditional forms of parent involvement privileged practices of White parental involvement while causing minority parents to be perceived as uninvolved, uncaring, and even confrontational. Marchand et al.'s (2019) research found Black parent involvement could be emancipatory and engaged in meaningful school reform; however, this advocacy could be perceived by teachers and school administration as angry, aggressive, and agitative (Marchand et al., 2019). Therefore, when the dominant classes standardize parent engagement based on the

White middle class, there is a subsequent resistance to diversity and inclusion of the community cultural wealth, forms of capital, and FoK from Latinx transfronterizx, possibly because it is foreign, unknown, and unacknowledged as parent involvement. This is because the experiences of Latinx transfronterizx historically have been left out of the meaning-making and validation processes in the United States, thus making them nonstandard for the United States.

According to Jefferson (2015), physical and bureaucratic barriers to parental involvement in school were a limiting factor (Jefferson, 2015). Parental involvement in school relies upon the educational institutions to set conditions for when and how the involvement will happen. Schools set the time, date, and location of parent meetings, workshops, and training. They also determine the topic and language. These conditions can limit the involvement of parents who cannot meet the participation guidelines. Time constraints, work, childcare schedules, communication, and language barriers all limited parental involvement (Brown et al., 2018). Marchand et al. (2019) and Piper et al. (2021) found that for those parents who attended parent classes, microaggressions and stereotypes by the school community were upsetting and branding for parents and limited their participation in school (Marchand et al., 2019; Piper et al., 2021). Microaggressions, stereotypes, and the use of stigmatizing language further marginalized parents and unintentionally disengaged them from participation, which affected the sustainability of the intervention for the student (Marchand et al., 2019; Piper et al., 2021; Santiago et al., 2016). Among transfronterizx, any type of school participation is further constrained by unknown immigration status, which might make crossing into the United States challenging or simply impossible. Transfronterizx families' statuses, coupled with the known barriers, are limiting factors for their involvement in their child(ren)'s school. However, no peer-reviewed, academic

studies exists on the parent participation, engagement, collaboration, or lack thereof of transfronterizx parents.

Working with families remains fundamentally a process of constructing relationships with an equitable partnership between family, school, and community. However, barriers to participation persisted among diverse populations of parents in the partnership of the family, school, and community triumvirate for student success (Antony-Newman, 2019; Epstein, 2010; Jeynes, 2007).

Systemic Discrimination in the Education of Latinx and Transfronterizx

The ways in which transfronterizx parents were engaged or were not engaged in the U.S. school systems were closely linked to race, racism, and the ways in which knowledge is constructed and privileged by the White dominant classes (Jefferson, 2015; Marchand et al., 2019; Yosso, 2005). Knowledge is constructed by those who have power (Foucault, 1980; Guess, 2006; Stoddard, 2007); hence, women, people of color, and people in the minority have been left out of knowledge-making while unconsciously submitting to those in power. Critical theorists were concerned with a critique of modernity, including the exploitation of human and material resources, social emancipation, and perceived pathologies of society. CRT, LatCrit, critical feminist theory, critical disabilities studies, postcolonial studies, and queer theory are all critically concerned with knowledge creation, analysis, and rectification.

Systemic racism and discrimination continue and have been made evident during discrepancies in health, education, employment, and job security during the COVID-19 global pandemic. In healthcare, the number of deaths disproportionately affected minorities; in education, there was unequal access to remote or distance learning by our students; and the increase in job losses was felt mainly by minorities, thereby increasing houselessness and

destitution (Ladson-Billings, 2021). As Leonardo (2015) explained, the race contract, or more specifically the epistemological subcontract, has its hold in education, and teachers, specifically White teachers, consent to the contract through silence and complicity to reproduce the racial contract in schools. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), almost 80% of teachers in the United States were White women; as such, they are the nearest potential demographic group to dissent from the racial contract (National Center for Education Statistics. (n.d.-b). Through a pedagogy of liberation and challenging the narrative through CRT, educators could break their loyalty to Whiteness. Yet, they would put themselves at risk as race traitors or, as Leonardo (2015) described, epistemological traitors. White teachers who used liberatory pedagogy and CRT would break the race contract and challenge their institution (Leonardo, 2015). However, White teachers are injured injurers, and Latinx teachers are injured injurers, their practices have consequences for students that are "grave and consistent" (Leonardo, 2015, p. 98).

Race

Race maintained a stronghold as a gatekeeper to what is considered valid knowledge and what has value in the classroom and school context (Antony-Newman, 2019). Forms of capital, CCW, and FoK transfronterizx students bring, such as financial literacy, border literacies of surveillance, immigration literacy, religious literacy, biliteracy, and familial literacy, remained, at best, unacknowledged and untapped as a potential, and at worst, were discarded (Nuñez & Urrieta, 2021; Smith & Murillo, 2012). Race still matters, and our current education system reproduces the social inequities it purported to tear down in the reproduction of hierarchies that privilege a White middle-class ideology (Antony-Newman, 2019; Leonardo, 2015). Critical race theorists believed that, unlike traditional systems of thought, knowledge is based on a social and

political construct; it is based on the dominant classes that drive the narrative (Stoddart, 2007). Hence, what knowledge is valid and how knowledge is constructed was driven by those who had power; consequently, people of color, women, and other minorities have been excluded from knowledge construction and validation (Leonardo, 2015; Stoddart, 2007).

Language

The United States has had a complex history of language policies that have evolved over time. Educational policies that overtly obstruct the use and teaching of the native language to students further marginalize nondominant students. Language policies shift according to the time's political landscape and economic outlook. During the colonial era, English was established as the official language, and Native American languages and African languages were suppressed. Native American children often were forced to attend English-only schools that stripped them of their language, culture, and identity. In the United States' early years, some states passed laws making English the official language. During the 19th century, there was a wave of immigration to the United States, and many immigrants spoke languages other than English. Immigrant communities established informal schools where their native languages were taught in addition to teaching English (Gándara & Escamilla, 2017). Some states passed laws requiring that schools teach in English only. However, other states, such as Louisiana, continued to allow French to be spoken in schools. During World War I, there was a strong anti-German sentiment in the United States, and many schools stopped teaching German. Some states passed laws requiring that all schools teach in English only (Harber, 2014; Horsford et al., 2018; Lomawaima, 1995; Miguel & Valencia,1998). By the mid-20th century, there was a wave of immigration from Latin America, and many of these immigrants spoke Spanish.

Bilingual education in the United States in the early 20th century was emerging due to an increase in the influx of immigrants; however, programs for Mexican immigrants along the southern border were notably inferior. Communities along the southern border were mostly Mexican Spanish-speaking farm laborers, whose children were placed in "Mexican schools" or "Mexican classrooms" without adequate language instruction. Students in these schools rarely graduated high school (Gándara & Escamilla, 2017). The 1960's Civil Rights era brought about a new understanding of the need to provide more support for students whose primary language was not English, and in 1968 the Bilingual Education Act provided some funding to support limited English proficient (LEP) students.

Legislation regarding funding for bilingual education programs in the United States lacked clarity regarding whether the funds were intended for primary language maintenance programs or transition programs aimed at transitioning students to English instruction as quickly as possible. In 1974, the Supreme Court ruling in Lau vs. Nichols paved the way for language instruction that was appropriate for language learners by declaring that denying students access to English language instruction was a violation of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Immediately after the 1974 Supreme Court ruling, Congress passed the Equal Educational Opportunities Act (EEOA), which prohibits discrimination against students and requires appropriate steps to overcome language barriers for students whose primary language is not English. In the same year the Bilingual Education Act of 1974 expanded support by creating a federal law to provide support for bilingual education programs. The purpose was to improve the quality of instruction for LEP students and promote their academic success. The Castañeda vs. Pickard case of 1981 clarified appropriate action in the EEOA to mean schools must have a program based on

recognized theory, implement the program faithfully with all materials required, and demonstrate effectiveness over time (Gándara & Escamilla, 2017).

Bilingual education in the United States reflects the political landscape and has been shaped by the changing demographics of immigrant populations. In California, Proposition 227, which sought to eliminate bilingual education entirely, passed in 1998. However, there began a growing recognition of the importance of bilingual education, and in 2016, Proposition 58 repealed the bilingual education restrictions established by Proposition 227. Proposition 58 required schools to provide bilingual education to students who spoke languages other than English. Four states continue to have restrictive language policies related to language instruction, and about 30 states have laws or constitutional amendments establishing English as the official language. Policymakers' attempts to limit language use and instruction for nondominant immigrant students have furthered raciolinguistic ideologies and framed racialized students as linguistically deficient and in need of remediation (Flores, 2017, Flores & McAuliffe 2020; Gándara & Escamilla, 2017). When the standard English language has been prioritized in schools, the schools reproduced linguistic hierarchies; they commodified the language and weaponized it as a gatekeeper for students whose dominant language was not English (Bourdieu, 1991; Quezada et al., 2024). Language is closely linked to culture and identity; thus, discrimination and denigration of a student's language is also an attack on their identity and culture. Imperialistic educational policies created to "Americanize" immigrants and negate their language, history, culture, and race are part of the transfronterizx overarching schema.

Class

Class, as Anyon (2017) explained, is not only one's occupation and income level; it is also one's relationship with three aspects of production: one's "relationship to the system of

ownership, to other people (at work and in society) and to the content and process of one's productive activity" (p. 68). The degree to which one has power in the relationship relates to class. Hence, for a student, the class to which the student is perceived to belong is dependent on their parents' occupation, income level, and level of power in the three aspects of relationships. Schools and classrooms replicate and reinforce students' class levels through their hidden curricula. Classroom pedagogical practices were different depending on the perceived class the students came from (Anyon, 2017). Divisions based on class led to teachers' perceptions that lower-level classes of students were to be taught to do, rather than to think. In math and history, information is given to students, and the expectation is that students simply copy the information and memorize what is needed. As the students' class gets higher, pedagogical practices shift toward having students critically think and question subjects taught in the classroom. This replicates what executives in large industries need to do in their work environments. The perception that the immigrant population, students from nondominant backgrounds, are from a lower-level class leads teachers and schools to practice pedagogies that reinforce class structures and limit nondominant students' critical thinking and development of critical consciousness. This creates a system of schools and teachers who are divided in their approach to teaching. The perception of immigrants who do not speak English and who are also of low economic status is created by the racialized systems of the current political structure that are replicated in the schools. Transfronterizx students encounter all three racialized ideologies of deficit. Thus, an overarching understanding of how race, language, and class impact transfronterizx students as they move between the United States and Mexico for school and daily life is paramount.

Transfronterizx Border Identities

The current literature on transfronterizx (transborder) studies converges on three points. First, assimilation into the United States was not always the goal of all transfronterizx, nor was it even possible based on race, phenotype, culture, and language (O'Donnell, 2023; Orraca et al., 2017; Rivera, 2020). The identification of transfronterizx individuals with Mexico and the associated labels reflecting Mexican identity in the United States must be contextualized in the historical narrative of Mexican descent communities in the Southwest. The term "Mexican" primarily denotes national origin, yet it intertwines with intricate notions of race, ethnicity, language, and nationality, particularly in the Southwest. Different labels such as Mexican American, Chicano/a, pocho, and cholo carry distinct historical and cultural implications. For instance, Chicano/a symbolizes a militant identity stemming from the Chicano movement of the 1960s. At the same time, pocho refers to acculturated Mexican descent individuals from California, and cholo has evolved to encompass those associated with gangs or lowrider culture.

The identity negotiation transfronterizx navigate is dynamic and reflects their cultural and social influences. These labels reflected the complex and multifaceted nature of a Mexican/Mexican American identity in the United States (Relaño Pastor, 2007). Additionally, a recent study on transfronterizo by Rivera (2020) indicated that although transfronterizo has become more prevalent as an identity term in academic spaces, media, and transportation, participants in her study who would have identified in the theoretical framing of transfronterizo did not identify as such. I found similar results in my research when I asked participants about their identity; they used terms like "Mexican American," "Mexican," "American," or "Dual national." Their identity was predominantly modeled by the two countries' legislation on citizenship as they construct their legal consciousness (Rivera, 2020). Recent studies have

demonstrated that assimilation into another's culture can harm an immigrant's overall health and well-being; this was partly due to the individual's rejection of their own identity. Immigrants were especially vulnerable to the dominant cultures' call to assimilate and leave behind their cultural roots (Schwartz et al., 2010).

Transfronterizx Forms of Capital

Literature on cultural and social capital has been constructed by seminal authors, including Bourdieu (2011), Coleman (1988), Ojeda (2009), Putnam (2001), and Portés (1998). Together, these authors defined cultural and social capital as the ability of individuals to secure potential benefits through formal and informal structures founded on memberships to formal associations and familial and extra-familial networks that support and foment the achievement of group members through shared values, norms, and trust. In some instances, these forms of capital have been detrimental to group members when individual freedom was restricted, excessive demands were placed on group members, or delinquent behavior was in the group norm (Portés, 1998). Lastly, the differential access to cultural and social capital by White and non-White individuals in a society cannot be ignored.

In Bourdieu's (2011) forms of capital, cultural capital is transmitted through the individual's familial and community surroundings. It is in three states: the embodied state, in the form of the individual's cultivation and inculcation; the objectified state, or material things; and the institutionalized state, in the form of educational degrees or certificates. Social capital is defined as access to actual or potential resources in a durable network of recognition, composed of familial and community networks, that provides its members with credit and access to capital that can be mobilized for services. An individual's social and cultural capital is cultivated and curated by the families and communities in which the individual develops and grows.

Coleman (1998) introduced social capital in three forms: obligations and expectations, the information-flow capability of the social structure, and norms accompanied by sanctions. He paralleled the construction of social capital to that of physical capital, which is tangible, and human capital, which is embodied in skills and knowledge. According to Coleman (1998), social capital had to be developed and harnessed through networks and relations among community members and was dependent on trust. Transfronterizx families' use of forms of capital in their experience in the border region of the United States and Mexico was defined best by Ojeda (2005) as a social network composed of familial and nonfamilial members referred to as "compadres" used to obtain educational capital (Ojeda, 2005). This form of social capital, or "compadrazgo," assisted new immigrants with integrating into the United States, which included access to housing, food, work, schools, and available social services (Valdes, 1996). Transfronterizx families use the networks to take advantage of opportunities in both the United States and Mexico. The use of social capital was geared toward maximizing their opportunities for upward social mobility as they entered the foreign country and was an integral part of the transfronterizx success and adaptation (Ojeda, 2005; Valdés, 1996).

A more recent study used data from the nationally representative Intercensal Survey to analyze Mexico's cross-border student population and identify key variables associated with being a transfronterizo. In 2015, the cross-border student population was estimated to be 39,599, and attending school in the United States was shown to enhance the students' U.S.-specific human capital and increase their likelihood of securing well-paid employment in the United States (Orraca et al., 2017). The U.S.–Mexico border region shaped transfronterizx social and cultural capital, as transfronterizx continually navigated the two countries' values, norms, customs, language, laws, and beliefs. In Coleman's (1998) work on social capital, transfronterizx

families built their social capital through obligations and expectations of the transfronterizx social networks and structures to be able to navigate the geopolitical region.

Transfronterizx CCW

Bourdieu's (2011) forms of capital have been critiqued due to their limited scope, which includes only individuals from dominant upper and middle classes with knowledge of the capital needed to advance. Yosso (2005) offered a critique of Bourdieu, arguing the knowledge held by middle and upper-class families was capital that was valuable in a stratified society. If someone was not born into a middle or upper-class family (i.e., with cultural or economic capital), they could still access these forms of capital through school (Yosso, 2005, p. 70). Bourdieu advanced the notion that some people (including the working class or people of color) did not have the capital needed to succeed in society. Yosso (2005) argued against this notion and highlighted six forms of wealth that communities of color possess: aspirational, linguistic, familial, social, navigational, and resistant.

Yosso (2005) used counter-storytelling from CRT to give voice to Latinx communities, which are historically marginalized populations. The accumulated experiences and assets of the Latinx communities in the United States that Yosso elucidated in her CCW theory are inclusive in adding to Bourdieu's social and cultural forms of capital, Coleman's (1998) social capital's understanding of the three forms of obligations to the social network, and Ojeda's (2005) notion of compadrazgo for accessing social networks when starting in a new foreign community. Yosso's (2005) CCW identifies six forms of capital, aspirational, familial, social, navigational, resistant, and linguistic capital, as assets families have in their knowledge, skills, and abilities that are forged in the home and brought to school. In the study by Nuñez and Urrieta (2021), transfronterizx families used their navigational, resistant, familial, and linguistic capital to

navigate the daily border crossing in which intimidating practices by the border patrols at the border could be dehumanizing and disempowering (Nuñez & Urrieta, 2021). The study further elucidated the political knowledge (i.e., politicized FoK) transfronterizx families had acquired in the border region that adding to their wealth assets and helped them navigate the educational and sociopolitical systems in the United States. Transfronterizx ability to effectively engage one or all six forms of the community cultural wealth (Yosso, 2005) helped families engage in the U.S. school system by using wealth, accessing resources, and participating in schools to the best of their ability.

Yosso's (2005) community cultural wealth was evident in Tessman and Koyama's (2017) work, in which parents exercised "parentocracy." This is done when Mexican parents use their navigational, aspirational, and resistant capital to cross the border to have children in the United States, thereby providing them with U.S. citizenship and mitigating the socioeconomic disparities between the two countries. U.S. citizenship also provides capital, both social and cultural, by granting them access to resources in the United States, including free schooling, healthcare, and other services. Transfronterizx parents then use their aspirational capital as they cross the border daily for their children to attend school. At times, parents have had to relinquish their parental rights to a guardian who resides in the school district the students attend. This level of parental engagement and dedication to their children by transfronterizx in the U.S. schools has gone unnoticed or unacknowledged as the aspirational, resistant, familial capital it represented (Tessman & Koyama, 2017; Tessman 2019; Yosso, 2005).

Educators in the United States who work with transfronterizx should maximize the capital transfronterizx bring by engaging parents. This can be accomplished by acknowledging transfronterizx families' aspirations for a better future for their child(ren) and the steps parents

have taken to provide a better life in the United States, which, according to the United Nations (UN) human development index (HDI) included a higher life expectancy, years of schooling, and standard of living than their children would have experienced in Mexico (Baumann, 2021). Educators can also use the wealth of information transfronterizx have to support their transition to U.S. schooling and take actionable steps to increase the likelihood their transfronterizx students will succeed in the U.S. school system.

As transfronterizx families and students use their CCW and forms of capital, they also have knowledge embedded in their understanding of the world. This knowledge may go unnoticed or undervalued as knowledge by the White dominant culture in the United States; this knowledge is what Vélez-Ibáñez and Greenberg (1992) defined as FoK. Moll et al. (1992) further expanded on this concept, which is explicated in the next section.

Transfronterizx FoK

FoK, as a term, was initially used by anthropologists Vélez-Ibáñez and Greenberg (1992) in ethnographic studies in nonmarket exchange systems almost exclusively in Mexican communities in Arizona. The study described the accumulation of knowledge, abilities, assets, cultural ways of interacting among and in the family structures, skills and knowledge used to navigate their social contexts, and world views forged by sociopolitical influences.

The study by Moll et al. (1992) exposed the limited or thin relationship between the teacher and student who comes from a diverse background when the educator does not perceive the student's FoK as valid or legitimate knowledge that can be integrated with the instruction in the classroom. In their study, Moll et al. (1992) emphasized the development of methods through which teachers can access and use the FoK of families from diverse backgrounds. The purpose of the research study was to understand and use everyday home and community knowledge to

develop innovative teaching practices that connected students' and families' unique experiences to the education in the school.

In the study by Gonzalez et al. (2006), the educational implications for FoK were solidified. Teachers as coresearchers created pedagogical practices that improved their teaching practices by learning from their students' home lives and experiences. These educators enhanced their teaching practices by implementing the following strategies that used the students' FoK: accessing students' experiences, legitimizing their knowledge as valid in classroom practices, and acknowledging and implementing practices familiar to students in subjects taught (Smith & Murillo, 2012).

The use of FoK is an asset-based approach to the inclusion of diverse forms of knowledge in the classroom. It challenged the deficit-oriented thinking dominated by the White middle-class model of conventional knowledge (Moll, 2019). FoK was a contestation to the pervasiveness of attributing underachievement to the differences among ethnic minority students and White students regarding culture (Moll et al., 1992).

Although FoK has been used in the classrooms by educators to impact student learning by integrating their accumulated bodies of knowledge and skills, in Hogg's (2011) review of literature, she found that there were disagreements as to what components contribute to an individual's FoK and how they are understood and applied. Of the 50 various texts she analyzed, the term "areas of knowledge" referred to the traditional understanding of FoK, to include cultural knowledge and skills from households or the communities' under-represented student populations. The term "source of knowledge" referred to the areas from which FoK came, including popular cultures and peer groups (Hogg, 2011).

Transfronterizx have developed FoK that are closely associated with the border crossing experiential knowledge they have acquired. Politicized FoK were related to the varying experiences transfronterizx had with border crossings, border patrol agents, and police, navigating different immigration standings family members hold (i.e., immigrant, migrant, citizen, dual citizen, illegal in the United States, repatriated to Mexico, and various other mixed family statuses; Gallo & Link, 2015). These FoK are not always used in the classroom to engage and enhance student learning; they are not viewed as a resource.

Educators

Educators bring to the classroom various perspectives and beliefs that have been formulated in their family and community knowledge. This inevitably influences their practice in the classroom, their decision making, their beliefs, and perspectives, which has been shown to shape and influence the instruction in the classroom regardless of the curriculum (Banks, 1993). In the literature review, I found a few studies on educators of transfronterizx students. In the border town of Denning, New Mexico, which enrolls students who live in Mexico, educators and administrators found innovative ways to reach out to parents who live in Las Palomas, Chihuahua, Mexico; they had an online parent meeting for those who could not cross the border. If there were Internet connectivity issues, the school issued hotspots to families. Educators made phone calls to relatives to contact parents, and the school hosted a YouTube channel with events that happened at school, from awards presentations to sporting events at the high school level. Educators, administrators, and parents formed a “close-knit community” (Kew & Fellus, 2022, p. 427) that capitalized on their different forms of cultural wealth to provide access to education students who lived in Las Palomas, Mexico (Kew & Fellus, 2022).

Demographic data on teachers in the San Diego border region revealed that teachers did not resemble the race and ethnicity of the students they served. According to the data from Ed-Data (n.d.-a), on census day, in 3 of the 4 school districts closest to the U.S.–Mexico border over half the teachers self-identified as White, but over half the students were Hispanic/Latinx. The exception was the San Ysidro School District. According to data from the 2018–2019 school year, San Ysidro School District had over 74% Hispanic/Latino teachers, 15% White teachers, and 4% Asian teachers. These numbers more closely mirrored the demographics of the students they served; according to Ed-Data, 90% of the student population in San Ysidro was Hispanic/Latinx (Ed-Data, n.d.-b). Although no database exists with exact numbers of the transfronterizx student population in San Ysidro, some of the 90% of Hispanic/Latinx students were also transfronterizx students.

The California Department of Education provided teacher demographic data for the 2018–2019 school year (Ed-Data, n.d.-b.; see Table 2).

Table 2

Educator Demographics Along the San Diego/Tijuana Border

Demographics	San Ysidro School District	Imperial Beach Elementary School District	Chula Vista Elementary School District	Sweetwater Union High School District	National City School District
Total teachers	369	128	1,537	2,055	251
Female	69.4%	75.8%	72.4%	60.9%	75.3%
Male	30.6%	24.2%	27.6%	39.1%	24.7%
Hispanic/Latino	51.2%	49.2%	50.6%	48.3%	75.3%
White	34.7%	38.3%	32.6%	31.9%	15.1%
Asian	5.7%	6.3%	7.8%	11.7%	4.4%
Filipino	4.3%	3.1%	4.9%	4.6%	1.6%
Black/African American	1.1%	.8%	1.2%	.7%	.8%

Demographics	San Ysidro School District	Imperial Beach Elementary School District	Chula Vista Elementary School District	Sweetwater Union High School District	National City School District
Two or more races	.5%	1.6%	2.2%	2.2%	2.4%
Pacific Islander	.3%	.8%	.5%	.5%	.4%
American Indian/Alaska Native	.3%	0%	.1%	.1%	0%

The data on teacher demographics at the southern border between the United States and Mexico likely impacted the experiences of transfronterizx students, families, and educators who work with them. Zeus Leonardo (2015) explicated the ways in which most White teachers sought to maintain their dominance as a race, whether explicitly or implicitly, by complicitly replicating the larger societal discriminatory structures in the classroom setting. (Anyon, 2005; Leonardo, 2015). White teachers who used liberatory pedagogy and CRT to reject the belief of White supremacy were targeted as race or epistemological traitors (Leonardo, 2015). Hence, breaking from teaching practices that socialize students into their roles based on the White dominant cultural norms is uncommon. Therefore, for Hispanic/Latinx students who are transfronterizx to receive instruction that acknowledges their assets while having maintained their sense of dignity, belonging, justice, and equity is understudied, unchartered territory.

Forms of capital, CCW, and FoK are assets that have been developed to enable an individual or household to function in each culture (Bourdieu, 2011; Gonzalez et al., 2006; Yosso, 2005). Transfronterizx carry their identities with them as they cross the border to attend school in the United States. When these assets are acknowledged and used in the classroom, students from diverse backgrounds are engaged and are able to connect new learning to their own assets.

Summary

Although a component of success for a student is effective engagement with the school, the literature also highlighted the importance of maintaining a critical focus on challenging the dominant ideologies of meritocracy, color blindness, objectivity, equal opportunity systemic oppression, and White supremacy in education and its stronghold on maintaining the status quo, namely, perpetuating educational practices that discriminate based on race, class, gender, and language (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 2016; Solórzano, 1998; Solórzano & Yosso, 2001). Educational research of the last few decades has attempted to shift the focus toward social justice, decolonizing curriculum, liberatory pedagogy, and asset-based humanistic approach to learning and teaching, using FoK and the CCW individuals have (Freire, 1970, Moll et al., 1992, Yosso, 2005). Yet, systemic racism is pervasive; it continued to be expressed in society and reflected in schools (Ladson-Billings, 2021; Marchand et al., 2019; Pager & Shepherd, 2008) and continues to be a contributing factor in barriers to parental involvement among communities with transfronterizx populations. Effective research-based practices that are culturally proficient and include the wealth of knowledge transfronterizx families bring can positively impact transfronterizx students, families, and educators (Clark-Louque et al., 2019; Quezada, 2014).

Although each of these studies on Latinx, transfronterizx, CRT, and community, school, and parent engagement provided an important piece of the building literature on transfronterizx students' (K–12) and families' lived experiences crossing the border to attend school in the United States, the explicit experiences of K–12 transfronterizx students, their families, specifically the parents, and the educators who work with them, is not central in the literature. This study attempted to overcome this problem by focusing specifically on the ways in which these experiences of transfronterizx, students, families, and educators who worked with them

played a part in the student's education and parent engagement. Hence, this literature review supports the need to understand the experiences of transfronterizx students and families and the educators of transfronterizx students and their impact on transfronterizx students' and transfronterizx families' school engagement to uncover ways that can lead to effective engagement. Through my research questions, I sought to understand the extent to which educators perceived and acknowledged the experiences of transfronterizx families and students, the ways the experiences of transfronterizx families impacted their engagement with the school and educators, and the ways the transfronterizx student experience was impacted by family and their educators.

Educators in the United States working with transfronterizx may not understand or acknowledge the forms of capital and FoK families bring, which limits their ability to engage these students and families effectively. When schools and educators develop their plans, policies, and practices to help all students succeed without considering the perspectives of transnational families, consequences may occur. The FoK and cultural and social capital of transfronterizx students and families must be acknowledged during planning. In schools where vulnerable students attend, collaboration and partnership among the educators, school, and family were necessary for student success (Clark-Louque et al., 2019; Marchand et al., 2019). The academic success of all students, including transfronterizx students along the U.S.–Mexico border, continues to be a focus for schools and educators. Epstein et al. (2018) stated that family and community engagement was essential to students' academic and social–emotional success; hence, transfronterizx parent engagement is a component of students' success.

Transfronterizx students and their families have unique needs that may not be addressed during school. Tessman (2016) stated a need for further research on transfronterizx parent

engagement to understand the unique needs of this group and to meet those needs to increase student success. There is limited research on transfronterizx students' and families' effective collaboration in U.S. schools to coordinate and improve transfronterizx student support. This gap in the literature indicates this group's unique needs; thus, further research would expound upon the experience of transfronterizx.

The narrative inquiry and descriptive research in this study engaged me, as a social justice researcher, in *parrhesia* or truth-telling (Kuntz, 2016) by centering participants' voices and experiences as they lived out the transfronterizx phenomena. Kuntz (2016) pressed researchers to assume the risks and responsibilities of social justice research, which allows the researcher to shift from studying students, families, and educators to working with them to solve the problem under study (Kuntz, 2016). The literature reviewed for this study supported answering parts of the research questions, which further assisted me in focusing the research design and methodology to answer the research questions:

1. To what extent do educators perceive and acknowledge the experiences of transfronterizx families and students?
2. In what ways do the experiences of transfronterizx families impact their engagement with the school and educators?
3. In what ways is the transfronterizx student experience impacted by family and educators?

Narrative inquiry is a storytelling methodology used to understand and construct participants' recounting of their experiences with phenomena; the story is the basic unit of analysis (Bhattacharya, 2017; Mertler, 2019). This study focused on the stories of public elementary school, middle school, and high school transfronterizx families, students, and

educators who worked with them to understand how they experienced the phenomena of transfronterizx education in U.S. schools. The qualitative methodological approach of narrative inquiry allowed me to explore, discover, and understand the stories of participants based on their narratives, lived experiences, and perceptions (Bhattacharya, 2017; Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2009; Mertler, 2019).

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

> *As educators, we must critically analyze the source, rationale, and impact on the people doing the stereotyping and on those being stereotyped. The discussion of race, racism, and racial stereotypes must be a continuing part of our teacher education discourse. In our classrooms, we must seek out popular, professional, and artistic images that depict People of Color in multiple contexts. As educators, we need to identify the resources and strengths of Students of Color and place them at the center of our research, curriculum, and teaching.* (Solórzano, 1997, p. 15)

Narrative inquiry is a storytelling methodology. Etymologically, narrative means narrate (to tell in Latin) and gnārum (to know in Latin); together, these mean to tell and to know; hence narrative inquire provides a snapshot into the life experience of the participants. According to Bhattacharya (2017), researchers used a narrative inquiry framework to understand and construct participants' recounting of their experiences with phenomena. This framework focuses on the story as the basic unit of analysis. In this study, the stories of elementary school, middle school, and high school transfronterizx families, students, and educators were the basic unit of analysis to understand how they experienced the phenomena of transfronterizx education in U.S. schools.

The methodological approach of this study consisted of narrative inquiry. This methodological approach allowed me to explore, discover, and understand the lived experiences of participants based on their personal accounts as shared through interviews (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; Creswell & Creswell, 2017; Mertler, 2019). As a responsible methodologist and social justice researcher, I oriented the inquiry toward parrhesia, or truth-telling (Kuntz, 2016), the purpose of which was for the participant's voices to be heard while acknowledging how I

engaged with and was changed by the research itself. Additionally, researchers described the risk and responsibility of a social justice researcher as seeking effective social change to address the problem being studied; a shift from studying students, families, and educators to working with them to solve the problem is an example of research centered on social justice principles (Bhattacharya, 2017; Kuntz, 2016; Mertler, 2019). Hence, the narrative inquiry methodological approach was well suited to accomplish this study's purpose, which was to understand the experiences of transfronterizx public school students and families, the experiences of the educators of transfronterizx students and their impact on school engagement, and interventions or activities that can lead to effective engagement.

Study Design and Methodological Approach

This chapter provides a detailed description of the methodology used to explore the research topic and the research questions:

1. To what extent do educators perceive and acknowledge the experiences of transfronterizx families and students?
2. In what ways do the experiences of transfronterizx families impact their engagement with the school and educators?
3. In what ways is the transfronterizx student experience impacted by family and educators?

The purpose of engaging in this qualitative study with narrative inquiry was to explore factors that affected transfronterizx family engagement, to understand the impact on school engagement, and to uncover strategies that supported effective engagement. I accomplished this by examining the extent to which educators perceived and acknowledged transfronterizx families, the experiences of transfronterizx families and students, and the impact on transfronterizx students.

Research Design

The centrality of the research purpose and the questions derived from that purpose dictated the selection of research methods (Newman et al., 2003; Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007). This study aimed to obtain insights into the transfronterizx experience to maximize understanding of the transfronterizx lives. Traditionally, the purpose of understanding complex phenomena has been linked to qualitative research, which is a holistic and inductive study of people and culture (Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007). Narrative research design, as outlined by Connelly and Clandinin (1990), was created to explore perceptions and personal stories, to examine how stories are told, and to understand how people perceive and make sense of their experience (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; Newman et al., 2003).

In searching for opportunities to move beyond traditional approaches, I selected a qualitative method with a narrative inquiry approach, which incorporated data collection using semistructured interviews; focus groups; and document analysis of district, school, and classroom policies to gain a rich, detailed understanding of the transfronterizx experience (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2009). Using this approach allowed me to triangulate the data to further validate the methodology being employed.

Qualitative Research

A qualitative research design is most suited to understanding people's experiences of a phenomenon or issue. A key characteristic of this approach was the study of the ways in which members of a group or community interpret themselves, the world, and life around them. According to Creswell and Creswell (2017), qualitative research explores and understands the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. Qualitative approaches differ from traditional quantitative approaches in their respective data collection, analysis, and

interpretation techniques. In qualitative research, purposeful sampling, open-ended data collection, analysis of text or pictures, representation of information in figures and tables, and personal interpretation of the findings all inform the qualitative process (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Creswell and Creswell (2017) stated qualitative methods were best suited to explore the true feelings and opinions of the selected participants to gain a rich description of the phenomena. This study intended to understand and describe the transfronterizx experience from the participants' point of view.

Rationale for the Research Approach

Based on the research goal, objective, purpose, and research questions (Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007), the rationale for using narrative inquiry, composed of interviews, focus groups, and document analysis, rests in the purpose of the study, which was to gain deep and rich understanding of the experiences of transfronterizx (Clandinin, 2006), and to uncover strategies that would lead to effective engagement.

Credibility (Validity) and Dependability (Reliability)

In qualitative research, the question of whether a researcher can authentically represent the lived experiences of a group or individual is questioned (Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007). In response to concerns about the validity of narrative inquiry research, Conle (2000) stated the construction of narrative accounts and experiences was the perfect medium to learn about the participant's personal knowledge, which by default is valid and validating of the experiences of individuals whose voices have been marginalized by the very experience of living transfronterizx lives (Conle, 2000). The purpose of this study was to understand the experiences of transfronterizx public school students and families and the educators of transfronterizx students, to understand the impact on school engagement and uncover strategies that foster effective

engagement. Validity consists of the ability of the researcher to draw meaningful inferences from the data collected (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). The authenticity and validity were achieved through legitimately and authentically conveying the perceptions, views, and experiences of transfronterizx families, students, and the U.S. educators who worked with them.

Positionality

> *Anyone can learn anything if they are offered the conditions to do so, and this is an unavoidable dimension of the political task of education: to offer the conditions so that everyone can learn what they are equally capable of learning.*
>
> —Kohan, *Why Paulo Freire More Than Ever*

Bhattacharya (2017) described the way a researcher could oscillate between both emic and etic perspectives, even when the researcher was a cultural insider, as studies themselves require a position that implies a study on a group of people, which automatically would set the outsider position. Thus, an examination of my emic and etic status transparently elucidated how my positionality in conducting the research influenced data collection, analysis, and interpretation. Maintaining epoché was paramount to the study while acknowledging Kuntz's (2016), Bhattacharya's (2017), and Toldson's (2019) recognition of qualitative researchers as subjective analysts because of the insider status and how the research transforms the researcher as interviews and data collection unfolds.

As a transnational and daughter of transnationals, I examined the life experiences of transfronterizx students and families. As such, I had to analyze my own experiences as they related to my perspective as both an insider into the immigrant transborder, transnational, bi-national, transfronterizx experience and my identity as a transfronteriza and my status as an outsider to the life experiences of the study participants. I am the daughter of Maria Moncerrat

Valdez Hernandez, a Mexicana, and Robert Velazquez Nieves, a Puertorriqueño. On my mother's side, I am the granddaughter of negociantes who lived in the Sierra Madre and traveled throughout northern Mexico selling goods to provide for their 13 children. On my father's side, I am the granddaughter of jibaros who cut cane and lived in what is referred to as la altura in Puerto Rico. I am the daughter of immigrant farm workers who arrived in California in the late 1950s, hoping for a better future for themselves and their future generations. My mother, the oldest of 13 siblings, was brought to Watsonville, California, as a young teen because her father and other family members joined the Bracero program. My father arrived in Watsonville in the 1960s from Puerto Rico as an older teen to work on the farms across the Central Valley. They were both immigrants to the United States, and although my father, being Puerto Rican, was a U.S. citizen, they remained foreigners in this new country. As such, they struggled, not only with the overt and blatant discrimination, racism, and oppression Latinx farmworkers faced at the time, but also with the dehumanizing conditions in farm labor work and dawn-to-dusk labor jornadas for unlivable wages.

Despite these obstacles, my parents joined the labor movement begun by Philp Vera Cruz, a Filipino labor organizer who helped found the Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee, eventually leading to the United Farm Workers (UFW) led by Cesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta (Ortiz, 2021). My parents eventually left farm work. With the help of UFW recruiters in the field, my mother learned English despite having only completed a few years in elementary school in Mexico; she attended Cabrillo College in Santa Cruz and the University of California at Santa Cruz (UCSC) and graduated in 1982 with honors. She completed her master's degree in 1987. She became an activist in her community and helped farm workers leave the fields to attend school to learn other skills, although her main roles were mother, wife, and

caretaker for her grandparents. My father participated in job skills training and began work as a mechanic. He later completed his GED and continued advancing his skills. My sister and I entered school with parents who did not have the social or cultural capital to understand the school system. We had community cultural wealth (CCW) and funds of knowledge (FoK). However, according to the recounting of my parents', these were not accessed by the teacher or school, nor were we seen with an asset-based perspective; on the contrary, we were labeled as "beaners" and "wetbacks" by other students in the school. We moved to Tijuana, Baja California Norte (BCN), Mexico, when I was in elementary school. Living in Mexico allowed me to live as part of the majority population and as a privileged citizen because I was born in the United States, held dual citizenship, had light skin and green eyes, and had parents who worked in the United States and spent dollars. I attended private school and enjoyed the privilege and status.

I have worked and lived in communities of color. With these experiences, I have witnessed the effects of inequitable policies and practices endured by children and families that hoped to achieve the illusive American dream. Unbeknownst to newly arrived immigrants, the American dream is not achieved by all, and many times, this dream turns into despair. With their children and themselves enduring discrimination, racism, and classism at school and in their daily lives, many immigrant descendants join subcultures that can lead to risky behaviors.

I continually question what my own worldview is, as defined by Creswell and Creswell (2017). A broad worldview and an understanding of the fundamental principles that underpin research, how it was shaped, by whom, and how different worldviews affect the research was critical as I embarked on this study. I continued my reflection and realized that all reality is subjective and, as Mack discusses, there is "no absolute truth" (Mack, 2010). Yet, in a racialized society, universal theory was based on western educated, industrialized, rich, democratic

(WEIRD) people, who reflected only 12% of the world population (Henrich et al., 2010). Hence, I must be critical and continually question my position, intent, and biases and understand that I am also reading and interpreting someone's position, intent, and biases.

Research Participants

The participants who were the focus of the study were transfronterizx students, families, and educators who worked with transfronterizx students and families in elementary, middle, and high school. Participants were selected from elementary, middle school, and high school level. The research took place with students attending San Diego schools along the U.S.–Mexico border in California. Some transfronterizx families living in Mexico were unable to cross into the United States due to their unknown immigration status and were interviewed via Zoom in Mexico.

Participant Selection

The nature and focus of the research study narrowed the participant pool to the limited population of individuals self-identifying as being Latinx, being a transfronterizx family with child(ren) who currently attended school in the United States in San Diego County or being an educator who worked with Latinx transfronterizx students in the San Diego region. The rationale for selection of Latinx transfronterizx families with child(ren) who currently attended school in the United States and educators who worked with students who were transfronterizx as criteria was to inform and develop an understanding of the transfronterizx family and student (K–12) experiences (Orta, 2021; Tessman, 2016). First, previous research on the broader domain of transnational and transborder experiences has focused on the experiences of migrants or immigrants who have moved from their homeland to cities across the United States (Antony-Newman, 2019; Sánchez & Machado-Casas, 2009). Second, studies on the specific

transfronterizx experience have focused on transfronterizx students in higher education (Orta, 2021) and educators' pedagogical practices on both sides of the U.S.–Mexico border (De la Piedra et al., 2018; Ojeda, 2005, 2009). Studies on the experiences of transfronterizx families with a child(ren) attending school in the United States and of the educators of these transfronterizx students was an area of research that was underdeveloped (Kew & Fellus, 2022; Tessman, 2016, 2019; Tessman & Koyama, 2017).

Participant Sampling

In this qualitative study using a narrative inquiry approach, the "lived experiences using text in general and words and numbers in particular" (Onwuegbuzie & Johnson, 2006, p. 52) were achieved through representation. Corrigan and Onwuegbuzie (2020) presented the term representation to encompass the importance of sampling in qualitative studies, as it relates to sufficient data collection to enhance the rigor of the research study (Corrigan & Onwuegbuzie, 2020; Onwuegbuzie & Johnson, 2006). The appropriate sampling boundary (Collins, 2010) for qualitative studies differed according to the research design model (Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007). According to Onwuegbuzie and Collins (2007), the minimum sample size recommendation when using the interview as the data collection procedure should be 12 interviews. This narrative inquiry study included 19 participants: 15 adult participants and 4 school-aged students. The small sample size allowed me to take a deep case-oriented analysis (Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007). This study's objective was to understand the transfronterizx experience through personal interviews of transfronterizx families, students, and educators who worked with transfronterizx students; hence, saturation in data collection (i.e., sample size of interviews) in support of representation remained in the limit of the sample size because documenting the lived experience was critical to the study.

I used purposive sampling, a nonprobability sampling based on the characteristics of the population and the objective of the study, to identify appropriate participants who had experienced life as a transfronterizx (Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007). I followed the initial sampling with a snowball sampling method for participant selection; it was a more effective method of finding participants because I asked participants to identify other participants with similar characteristics based on the study's objective (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

I used thoughtful representation in sampling to achieve rigor, and I achieved methodological rigor in the narrative inquiry design by engaging in deep analysis focused on patterns and themes, values, interpretations, and perceptions of the data collection (Corrigan & Onwuegbuzie, 2020; Thomas & Campbell, 2020).

Participant Recruitment

The dissertation research objective was to understand the transfronterizx experience; hence, the objective for participants was to provide information through interviews about their experiences as transfronterizx families and educators who worked with this group in the classroom. The careful recruitment of parents remained word-of-mouth because, as previously mentioned, the practice of coming to school in the United States while living in Mexico and not paying tuition is illegal; thus, it was a sensitive and delicate situation that I had to take into consideration during the recruitment phase of the study. Additionally, participants who decided to participate in the study were willing and open to sharing their experiences. Fear and apprehension from recruits that they might be "caught" by school officials and reprimanded for attending school in the United States and living in Mexico were evident in three transfronterizx family and student recruits who declined to participate in the study after having previously agreed. With participants, I established trust by engaging in honest and open conversations and

providing space for participants and their families to share any concerns they had, including their rights as participants (see Appendices A & B). Before beginning the interview, I was clear and transparent about the study's intent, their safety as anonymous participants, and their right to end their participation at any time during the study. I defined the study parameters early in the study, and I remained open to possible changes or alterations in the setting and questions of the conversation to provide the participants further assurances of their safety and security. As part of the recruitment, I used nontraditional communication methods (i.e., word-of-mouth, WhatsApp) to reach potential participants and maintain communication once their participation was established.

Participant Profile

All interview participants represented transfronterizx students, families, and educators who worked with transfronterizx students (see Tables 3, 4, and 5).

Table 3

Participating Educators Who Worked With Transfronterizx Students

Characteristic	Number of participants
Geographic location	
San Ysidro	4
Chula Vista	2
San Diego	1
Grade level	
Elementary	3
Middle school	3
High school	2
School type	
Charter	2
Public	6
Private	0
Years of experience	
Novice (0–5 years)	1
Experienced (5–10 years)	1
Seasoned (10+ years)	6

Table 4

Participating Transfronterizx Families

Characteristic	Number of participants
Geographic location (home)	
Tijuana	5
San Diego	0
Both sides of border	2
Parental age	
20–30 years	0
30–40 years	1
40+ years	6
Parental education level	
High school	2
Some college	3
Master's degree	2
Doctoral degree	0

Table 5

Participating Transfronterizx Students Attending U.S. Schools

Characteristic	Number of participants
Geographic location (school)	
San Ysidro	0
Chula Vista	4
San Diego	0
School type	
Charter	2
Public	2
Private	0
Student grade level	
Elementary	1
Middle school	1
High school	2

Instrumentation

I conducted semistructured interviews with two transfronterizx families and one student from elementary school, two from middle school and one student, and three parents from high school and one student. I also conducted interviews with educators of transfronterizx students: four educators from elementary, two from middle, and three from high school. I selected the educators to participate based on established criteria (see Appendix C).

Interviews were conducted during Spring and Fall 2023. There were 10 interview questions for educators of transfronterizx students. To gain a deep and rich understanding (Clandinin, 2006) of the transfronterizx family experience, I selected 15 interview questions for that group after a prioritizing process of several questions during the pilot phase. These questions were divided into three main themes: motivation (life history), validation (why), and empowerment (future). I divided the 13 questions (along with several probing questions to be used if needed) for transfronterizx students into the following categories: motivation, dignity, respect, belonging, justice, and empowerment.

I conducted focus groups with the educators of transfronterizx students during Spring 2024. This population was the most accessible. Given that transfronterizx family participants lived in Tijuana and worked different hours of the day, finding a set date and time to hold a focus group was not feasible for that sector of participants. Transfronterizx students at various grade levels had different time commitments and constraints given their after-school activities and the necessity to cross the international border at the end of the day. Educators' schedules were slightly more predictable, so a focus group was attainable.

The tools I used to collect data included interview questions, focus groups, and document analysis of school district policies, school policies, and classroom policies. Selected participants

participated in semistructured interviews with open-ended questions, in which they shared their experiences as a transfronterizx student, family, or teacher who worked with transfronterizx (see Appendices D, E, and F for the semistructured interview protocol).

Procedures of Data Collection

Over 15 months (i.e., November 2022 to February 2024), I collected data from multiple sources, including interviews, documents, and focus groups. The primary data sources were the in-depth interviews of 19 participants, children to adults, on their lived experiences as transfronterizx or educators of transfronterizx.

Individual Interviews

Seidman's (2006) interview approach consists of three parts: life history, details of the experience, and reflection on the meaning. Although I did not use this three-interview structure due to the feasibility of the study and the availability of participants, I did use a structure that included Part 1: Life history, and Part 2: Details of an experience. These components were well suited for this study because they incorporated an understanding of the participants' motivation and validation for why they chose to be transfronterizx or educators in the border region that served transfronterizx. Participants shared detailed experiences, which elucidated their lived experiences of being a transfronterizx and provided rich and detailed descriptions that broadened the understanding of the transfronterizx experience. I conducted 45–70-minute semistructured interviews using guiding questions with 19 participants aged 11–55. The rationale for creating this framework for interviews was to gather in-depth experiential information from transfronterizx participants on their life histories, experiences, and interactions with the U.S. school and educators, and their experiences with their daily border crossing.

The setting for the one-on-one interviews was via Zoom (audio only). The interview protocol included information on the research, consent (see Appendix G) and assent forms (see Appendices H & I), and Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval. I kept the participant information and data gathered in a passcode-protected folder on my passcode-protected computer with pseudonyms used in place of names to maintain confidentiality.

Focus Group Interviews

Upon completing individual interviews, I conducted focus group interviews with three transfronteriza educators who worked along the U.S.–Mexico border. The purpose was to facilitate semistructured conversations with participants to see how the responses differed between the individual interviews and the groups and to ascertain a deeper understanding of issues surrounding the transfronterizx experience and perspectives related to the research topic. Knowledge is socially constructed and allows participants to have deeper conversations with each other on the subject; my hope was to gain a deeper understanding. When individuals engage in conversations about a particular topic, they bring their perspectives, interpretations, and understandings based on their experiences and social and cultural backgrounds. Participants approached the conversation with curiosity and openness to different viewpoints during the focus group interview. They shared their unique experiences with transfronterizx families and students, and with the schools' systems that oscillated between supportive and punitive for transfronterizx. Educators provided insight into their experience as transfronterizx and how this deep understanding extended to families and students who were transfronterizx. Collectively, they constructed a deeper understanding of the identity of a transfronterizx, their assets, and their challenges. In addition, they challenged existing policies for all students, English learners, and

low socioeconomic students, some of which applied to the transfronterizx student experience, as ineffective and based on norms that do not fit the population they served in their district.

I conducted the focus group interview for the educators of the transfronterizx in person and in both Spanish and English; educators were translanguaging. I recorded the interview via Otter AI and later transcribed it to a Word document. Then, I refined the transcription to capture both English and Spanish responses from teachers as they shared their experiences.

Document Analysis

I used data provided in the publicly available database of board policies on transfronterizx (if any) from the districts close to the Tijuana–San Diego border: San Ysidro, South Bay, Chula Vista, National City, Sweetwater, and San Diego. Additionally, I searched publicly available school policies for the school where the transfronterizx students were most likely to attend due to the proximity to the border. I also reviewed classroom policies made available by educators of transfronterizx students for any information about the transfronterizx experience.

I used the following items for data collection:

- Valid open-ended interview questions with follow-up questions,
- Classroom policies from educators, and
- Publicly available school and district policies at districts near the Tijuana–San Diego border.

Pilot Study

I conducted a pilot study during Fall 2022 with a sample of the target population to test the validity and reliability of the instruments in the qualitative narrative inquiry interview questions. I used the interview questions, shaped by the research purpose, in the pilot study to

evaluate their appropriateness in this dissertation study, which is concerned with understanding the transfronterizx phenomena (Onwuegbuzie & Johnson, 2006). I analyzed the results of the interviews by coding: initial, open coding; focused coding; category development; axial/thematic coding; and theme development. Subsequently, I modified the interview questions to include more open-ended questions that elicited more recall of experiences that defined important moments for the participants (see Appendix D).

Data Analysis

> *Education must foster a critical pluralism, one that challenges power, allows for inward critiques of our practices & sustains valued ways.*
>
> —Django Paris, *What Are We Seeking to Sustain Through Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy? A Loving Critique Forward*

The data analysis was a multilayered process that allowed me to think deeply about the data. The data were collected over 1 year via one-on-one interviews via Zoom (audio only) or phone call, focus groups, and document analysis. As I collected data, I kept a journal with notes and memos. I read, reread, listened, and relistened, and analyzed the interview transcript data as they were being conducted over the course of 12 months; once I had refined all interview transcripts, I sent them to the interviewees as a member check to confirm the interview transcripts were true and correct. Only a few interviewees responded with feedback, additions, or corrections. These modifications to the interview data set consisted of changes in chronological timelines and providing more information about specific experiences they shared. This was an iterative process; each coding cycle allowed me to dive deeper and to move from analysis to findings. I conducted data analysis for the interviews in English using the computer software

NVivo to code the interviews using a codebook, to create categories, and, finally, to determine themes.

Coding

I conducted the interview data analysis using several coding cycles that included use of both manual coding and software used for coding. The first cycle consisted of systematic line-by-line coding using attribute coding to analyze the demographics, and then moving on to in vivo coding, in which codes "derive from the actual language of the participants" (Saldaña, 2021, p. 95), thereby, honoring the language in which the interview was conducted and the colloquial nuances of the regional Spanish participants used, which were not easily translatable to the English language. Saldaña (2021) explains that when coding, researchers should cluster data according to similar patterns, which could then be used to develop categories based on the patterns that emerged from the data. As I listened to recorded interviews and read, reread, sorted, and coded data, I connected emerging ideas to relevant literature on critical race theory (CRT) in education, culturally proficient family–school community engagement, and theoretical perspectives on CCW in their various forms of wealth. I began with initial transfronterizx codes like "para un mejor futuro" (for a better future), "survival," and "barriers to overcome." With educator participants initial codes were "challenges" and "support." Themes such as "aspiration" emerged from coded data, revealing shared experiences by parent participants on the journey they selected for their children, and "commitment to social justice" by educator participants as they choose to humanize their students and challenge dominant ideology. I categorized codes into themes aligned to the forms of wealth from CCW and the tenets of CRT in education. This allowed me to explore how these forms of wealth shaped transfronterizx experiences, how CRT in education shaped the educational landscape for educators of transfronterizx, and in what ways

these impacted school engagement while uncovering strategies that supported and fostered effective engagement. Subcodes later revealed distinct commonalities among parents, educators, and students, all of whom had experiences with the transfronterizx life.

I used the qualitative software product NVivo with the interviews conducted in English to identify different themes, patterns, and keywords. This revealed frequent data consistency and supported the study's dependability.

Ethical Considerations

I addressed the ethical issues of my research methodology by following the IRB guidelines outlined for ethical research with human subjects. Additionally, I addressed confidentiality by using pseudonyms instead of participants' names in my dissertation; I obtained consent via written format before beginning any steps in the research process (Creswell & Creswell, 2017; Mertler, 2019).

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

In this study, I used data from 19 participants who were familiar with the transfronterizx experience, focus group interview data, and document analysis (board documents, school policies, and classroom policies for transfronterizx students) from five school districts near the border of San Diego and Tijuana; hence this research does not include neighboring border communities.

I conducted this study with the following assumptions: the interviewees answered questions accurately; the situations or events experienced were depicted truthfully and honestly; and the participants were forthright about their current living situation, accommodations, country of work, and residence. Additionally, I assumed that the sample was representative of the population being studied.

I have identified several limitations of the research. First, through snowball sampling, I contacted potential participants; however, they were reluctant to participate or let their children participate in the study due to the politicized nature of their status as transfronterizx. Parents of transfronterizx students were fearful of their status being made known to the school and any repercussions they could potentially face. An additional limitation was my perspective and positionality as the researcher, which could have produced a potential bias and could have influenced the analysis of the artifacts and results of the findings. I continuously monitored this potential limiting bias via memo writing. Another study limitation was time; I conducted the research from November 2022 to the February 2024, and I did not collect any other outside of these time limits. These limitations impacted the generalizability of the study. However, the study provided information on the transfronterizx experience of students, parents, and educators.

The delimitation of the study includes a sample of a total of 19 participants who were interviewed. The families were of Mexican or Latinx origin or descent and were living in Mexico or the United States or in both the United States and Mexico with proximity to the border. The educators in the selected sample selected worked with transfronterizx students. The location of the study was the border region between Tijuana, Baja California Norte, Mexico, and San Diego, California, United States of America. I selected these delimitations to focus the study on the population that was the basis for the research, transfronterizx living on one or both sides of the border, and educators who worked with these transfronterizx students and families. The inclusion of only this demographic of participants and the exclusion of other groups was directly related to the research questions the study sought to answer.

Trustworthiness of Data

I established the trustworthiness of the data for this study through careful attention to credibility. I discuss each aspect of trustworthiness in detail in this section. The usefulness of a research study is supported by its trustworthiness (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). To ensure the trustworthiness of the data, I established participants' personal experiences and vested interest in being honest during the study. Additionally, I assured participants of confidentiality and anonymity, an important assurance given the unknown immigration status of parents and the known illegality of living in Tijuana, Mexico, while attending public schools in San Diego without paying tuition. I achieved trustworthiness in this study by interviewing transfronterizx families and students, educators of transfronterizx students, and participants directly involved in the transfronterizx experience in public schools.

I established credibility through triangulation and member checks. Triangulation in this study involved multiple participants and various sources of data collection: interviews, focus group, and document analysis. I recruited educators of transfronterizx students, transfronterizx parents, and transfronterizx students to participate in an interview for the study. During the recorded interview, I created a transcript and later reviewed and analyzed it. I conducted member checking by providing each participant with a final copy of his/her statement to review and modify is needed.

I established dependability by verifying the research findings were consistent and repeatable. My objective was to determine whether the results confirm the raw data collected. This ensured similar findings, such as data, conclusions, and interpretations, were found if another researcher examined the data. After the study was approved by the University of San Diego IRB, I made immediate preparations to collect data. I began gathering data by

interviewing participants. I used Otter.ai to record and transcribe the interviews in the English language, and Word docx set to the Spanish language with the dictation setting enabled, along with a cell phone recording app, to capture the interviews in Spanish. I wrote notes in a separate notebook including memos of thoughts, connections, and follow-up questions related to the responses participants were sharing. I asked these questions as a follow-up to encourage a deeper response to the experiences or thoughts participants were sharing. I refined the English transcript and examined the transcript for patterns, themes, and repetitive terms in the answers. For the Spanish language transcript, I refined the transcript in Spanish, translated it to English using Google Translate, and then refined it again for accuracy; however, I later abandoned this practice, as it did not adequately capture the nuances of the experiences shared in Spanish. I explain this further in the next chapter.

I established conformability in this study by understanding the participants' experiences as transfronterizx students and parents and the experiences of transfronterizx educators along the U.S.–Mexico border. I included an audit trail of ongoing reflection with memos, interview audio recordings, transcripts, and the eventual coding of transcripts to create the data's validity. Although I, being a former transfronterizx, teacher, and administrator, acknowledged the importance of a better understanding of the transfronterizx experience on behalf of the educators and a more forthright approach to transfronterizx families regarding their situations with educators, I did not share personal beliefs with participants. When analyzing the data, I used transcripts, document analysis, and data to interpret the information. This study used a qualitative narrative inquiry methodology because in narrative inquiry methodology, "the focus is the on the study of the experience" (Conle, 2010, p. 153). Thus, it was particularly effective in exploring the lived experiences of transfronterizx families and educators who worked with them.

Additionally, this method allowed me to obtain rich descriptions that gave me a deep understanding of the phenomena. Habermas warned of the "three fictions:" the autonomy of the actors, the independence of culture, and the transparency of communication (Conle, 2010). Through critical reflection and triangulation of the data, it is my hope that the lived experiences of the participants in this study were accurately conveyed and conceptualized through the theoretical framework of Yosso's CCW.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to understand the experiences of transfronterizx public school students and families and the educators of transfronterizx students, to understand the impact on school engagement and uncover strategies that foster effective engagement. This qualitative study consisted of conducting one in-depth semistructured interview and focus group with a total of 15 adult transfronterizx participants and four transfronterizx student participants, for a total of 19 participants. Additionally, I conducted member checks after the semistructured interviews were completed and coding had begun. I conducted document analysis with publicly available archives of district and school board policies, school policies, and classroom policies to understand if and how transfronterizx were addressed.

This chapter described the research design and methodology used to collect data from participants along the U.S.–Mexico border to conduct the study. I used multiple data points for the data collection process: semistructured interviews, focus groups, and document analysis. I exercised every effort to conduct an ethical study and establish trustworthiness through effective means of credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability in the research findings and data analysis.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS

"Knowing' is painful because after it happens, I can't stay in the same place and be comfortable. I am no longer the same person I was before."

— Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera*

The purpose of this qualitative narrative inquiry study was to understand the experiences of transfronterizx students and families and the educators of transfronterizx students, to understand the impact on school engagement, and uncover strategies that supported and fostered effective engagement.

This study illustrates how Yosso's (2005) community cultural wealth (CCW) and critical race theory (CRT) in education are integral to the transfronterizx student, family, and educator's experience. Chapter 1 introduced the historical and economic context of transfronterizx' the problem statement, purpose, and rationale for the study of transfronterizx family, school, and community engagement, and the research questions. The review of literature in Chapter 2 served to identify gaps in previous studies and provided evidence for this study's significance and theoretical framework. Chapter 3 outlined the methodology and rationale and detailed data collection methods and measures to ensure validity and reliability. Chapter 4 presents the findings of the study. These are organized into three sections: document search, focus group, and participant interviews. Participant interview findings are further organized by research question 1, 2, and 3. Each section begins with a brief discussion and data analysis, a more in-depth data analysis and discussion is presented in Chapter 5. The research questions are as follows:

1. To what extent do educators of transfronterizx students perceive and acknowledge the experiences of transfronterizx families and students?

2. In what ways do the experiences of transfronterizx families impact their engagement with the school and educators?
3. In what ways is the transfronterizx student experience affected by their families and educators?

Document Search and Research Participants

The following is a summary and rationale for analyzing data for the document search and participants' interviews. First, I present the data analysis of the document search that includes demographic information on the school districts and schools, followed by a summary and rationale. Next, I present the findings of the document analysis, followed by the data analysis of focus groups and participant interviews, beginning with the demographic data of participants. I close with a summary of and rationale for the analysis of interviews and the interview findings.

Document Analysis Summary and Rationale

The school district document search consisted of searching through archives of five school districts near the Tijuana–San Diego border region: San Ysidro School District, South Bay Union School District, Chula Vista Elementary School District, National City School District, and Sweetwater Union High School District. I selected these school districts because of their proximity to the San Diego–Tijuana border, because they had demographics like the ones educators worked at, and because students reported these were the schools they attended. To maintain confidentiality, the actual names of the schools are not used or disclosed in this study.

I sought to find any written information or policies that addressed students who lived in Tijuana or Mexico and policies related to parent engagement at the school district level. I sought publicly available documents for the schools for any information on students who lived in Mexico and any information on parents' policies, and, finally, I asked individual classroom

educators I interviewed for their classroom rules or policies to see if there were any policies/rules related to students who cross the border daily or parents' participation in or out of school activities.

School Districts

I used the Google search platform to find school district websites. I navigated the website to find the school district policies and the school board documents tab that housed all meeting information, minutes, and agendas. The school board documents for the five districts revealed the school district had a current board policy related to transfronterizx students and families; Education Code section 48204.4 was amended when California Senate Bill 257: School Admissions Policy: Pupils of Deported Parents, was approved on October 5, 2017, which stated that a pupil whose parent or parents moved outside of California who was previously a resident of the state and has departed California against their will (by deportation or other), could retain residency in a school district, regardless of the student's current residency. Additionally, all school districts had a parent involvement policy, which was required by Title I, Part A, of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as reauthorized by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), which required local educational agencies (LEAs) to conduct outreach to all parents and family members and to implement programs that involved parents and family members, and that these be planned with meaningful consultation with parents.

Additionally, all school districts had policies stating they would not request or inquire into students' and families' immigration status for residency verification or enrollment, which adhered to the California Education Code.

Schools

I used a Google search again to find schools mentioned by participants; once the data search revealed their demographics and data, I searched for similar schools in the district to conduct a document search. School websites had tabs related to parents, but information such as minutes and agendas on parent meetings were only readily available on some school websites. Also, schools did not have specific information on students who lived in Mexico, but they all had information on residency and residency verification. None had information specific to California SB 257, which allowed students to attend the school if their parents departed the state against their will if they were previously residents of California.

School Classrooms

Some of the educator participants sent me documents related to classroom policies, rules and regulations, and procedures. These documents provided students with discipline policies, attendance, and homework information. None had information related to students or parents who lived in Tijuana.

Findings of Document Analysis

Key findings of document analysis are consistent by including state and federal policies in all publicly available documents that support student success. A tenet in CRT and a key finding in the document analysis is the validation of the experiences of people of color. Culturally responsive parent engagement policies align with the centrality of experiential knowledge. CRT also emphasizes the importance of recognizing systemic inequalities and the ways in which laws and policies can perpetuate or challenge these inequalities. In this case, California SB 257 acknowledged the challenges faced by mixed-status families stemming from broader sociopolitical issues such as immigration; hence, this policy adoption aligns with CRT's

challenge to the dominant ideology through an analysis of race and power dynamics. When applying the CCW framework to document analysis regarding policies aimed at enhancing parental engagement, it's crucial to acknowledge the different resources that communities from various backgrounds possess. These include cultural and social capital, as well as linguistic and familial connections. Additionally, it's important to recognize that navigational, aspirational, and resistant capital are significant for many families, especially immigrant and transfronterizx families, as these forms of capital are more universally applicable. The policies on parental involvement and transfronterizx residency acknowledge the importance of leveraging these forms of CCW and the CRT tenets to support students' educational success.

Focus Group Analysis Summary and Rationale

The focus group interview was conducted in person during Winter 2024 with three transfronterizx educators. The interviews allowed for further exploration of the multifaceted phenomena of transfronterizx students in San Diego. Educators were able to openly express their opinions on a variety of topics that related to students, parents, administration, and policies. I selected this methodological approach to triangulate the data gathered and to increase validity of the findings from participant interviews and the document search and analysis.

Findings of Focus Group Interviews

I organized the focus group findings into the following theme: commitment to social justice through humanizing practices. As I examined the data on educators' actions findings such as communication and advocacy for students and parents aimed at fostering equity in the classroom emerged and the theme of commitment to social justice was distilled. Educators expressed the importance of effective, open, and continuous communication with parents;

poignantly, they shared that parental lack of awareness of the detrimental impact that some school policies have on their children was discouraging. One educator shared the following:

> Unfortunately, there aren't many parents because many of them are working, that is, they are in Tijuana and the parents can't be, that is, they don't understand the system [for English learners to reclassify], so it's not like they can come in.

As the educators expressed their commitment to social justice and advocacy for transfronterizx, one of the educators shared that there were many students in the middle school who were on probation due to crossing illegal substances. These young students were either coerced or framed for a crime that would follow them for the rest of their lives. Educators voiced their concerns about the detrimental effect on the students, the labels they carry, and their fears the students would be "lost" to the system.

Participant Interview Analysis Summary and Rationale

This section summarizes the data analysis of participant interviews and a rationale for how the data were analyzed. I present the demographic data of research participants followed by interview analysis and key findings.

Demographics

In this section, I explore data from 19 participants: transfronterizx students, families, and educators who worked with transfronterizx. The demographics support the participant characteristics in each of the research questions.

All educator participants (n = 8) identified as Mexican as their cultural background. All identified Spanish as their first language (n = 8). Demographics of educator participants indicate that most were first-generation college students (n = 5). Although I did not ask for their citizenship status, a few educator participants in the study disclosed that they were

undocumented students who navigated Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) policies (n = 2). All educator participants had earned a baccalaureate degree from a public or private university. Most educators of transfronterizx participants were highly educated, with two participants completing master's degrees and one completing a PhD.

I organized the participant interview findings by the research questions, which address the three different groups interviewed:

1. To what extent do educators of transfronterizx students perceive and acknowledge the experiences of transfronterizx families and students?
2. In what ways do the experiences of transfronterizx families impact their engagement with the school and educators?
3. In what ways is the transfronterizx student experience affected by their families and educators?

One research question addressed the experiences of educators of transfronterizx students, one addressed transfronterizx families' experiences, and one addressed the transfronterizx students' experiences.

Findings of Educators of Transfronterizx Interviews

Research Question 1 asked: To what extent do educators of transfronterizx students perceive and acknowledge the experiences of transfronterizx families and students? This question investigated the extent to which these educators recognized and engaged with this unique experience. Through in-depth interviews with eight educators connected to the transfronterizo life, this question unveiled critical insights into their visibility and understanding of themselves as educators and of the transfronterizx community. Findings resonate with core tenants of CRTE and CCW. The following section is organized by subheadings that describe the

educators' personal and professional experiences, educators' experiences as transfronterizx, educators' perceptions of students, and educators' perceptions of parents. Finally, the findings are supported by quotes that align with the previously stated Research Question 1.

Educators' Personal and Professional Experiences

The educators themselves and the extent to which they perceived or acknowledged their transfronterizx students and families were deeply influenced by their life experience with the international border and the level of invisibility of transfronterizx students and families. All (n = 8) of the educators I interviewed had been or were transfronterizx themselves or had close relatives who lived the transfronterizx life; this gave them detailed insight into the experiences of their students and families. I analyzed educators' interview data by developing in vivo codes, followed by categories and themes. The findings fell into several themes that aligned with Tenets 2, 3, and 4 of CRTE (Solórzano, 1998). The findings revealed that,

- Tenet 2 challenges the dominant ideology, which includes a critique of meritocracy; objectivity; color, gender, and "transfronterizx*"* blindness; race; gender neutrality; and equal opportunity. According to this tenet, the traditional claims are a camouflage for self-interest to maintain power and privilege. Thus, educators questioned the idea that everyone is provided with the same support and an equal opportunity to succeed. They reflected on how these beliefs could perpetuate existing power structures and privileges for the dominant classes. Educators advocated for creation of sociopolitical systems in education to address underlying inequalities and injustices marginalized students, specifically transfronterizx students, faced.
- Tenet 3 involves commitment to social justice, which includes ending subordination through a humanization of the students and families. In essence, educators strove to

end systems of subordination by humanizing students and their families. This entailed acknowledging and valuing the lived experiences, identities, and cultural backgrounds of transfronterizx students and families. By prioritizing social justice, educators worked to emphasize the importance of advocating for equitable opportunities, resources, and treatment regardless of the students' backgrounds or circumstances.

- Tenet 4 notes the centrality of experiential knowledge, which means the knowledge of women, POC, and *"*transfronterizx*"* is legitimate, appropriate, and critical to understanding people's lived experiences. Educators of transfronterizx students understood that knowledge is not only derived from academic sources, but it is also derived through personal experiences and cultural wisdom. They validated and legitimized experiential knowledge, thereby creating a more inclusive and holistic classroom ecosystem.

Finally, the data also revealed educators' community cultural wealth (Yosso, 2005) in the areas of:

- Resistance capital (barriers to overcome). Educators' experiences with the international border and their own connection to transfronterizx life provided them with a unique form of resistance capital. Their firsthand knowledge and intimate understanding of the challenges faced by transfronterizx students and families gave them a powerful perspective for challenging and overcoming barriers to in the education system.
- Navigational capital (remedies to challenges in unsupportive and hostile environments). This navigational capital refers to the knowledge, strategies, and

> resources that individuals used to navigate and overcome challenges in unsupportive and hostile environments. By drawing on their firsthand understanding of transfronterizx experiences, these educators possessed valuable insights into the specific obstacles faced by their students and families in educational systems that may not fully acknowledge or support their needs. As agents of change, these educators leveraged their personal experiences and their understanding of the education system to advocate more effectively for the needs and rights of transfronterizx individuals.

The following section describes the educators' own experiences. These findings are supported by quotes that align with Research Question 1.

Educators' Experiences as a Transfronterizx Teacher

When asked about their experience as transfronterizx educators, all educators acknowledged both that the barriers to overcome are tangible, thereby supporting the theme of *resistance capital*, and that holistic remedies to these challenges should be in place to demonstrate the students' *navigational capital*. The teachers believed these remedies needed to be in place to address unsupportive school practices, programs, and policies; however, the reality that many teachers simply do not know students are transfronterizx is an obstacle to providing any kind of support. An educator reflected on this point, saying:

> Some teachers are sympathetic to them being from Tijuana and stuff, but I think you're definitely invisible if nobody really knows if someone hasn't walked that mile in your shoes . . . and they can see you, but they won't understand you at that deeper level.

When discussing school policies and possible remedies, one educator shared the following: "We know they are coming from TJ, and that's why they are late; just give them the

breakfast; don't make it harder for them." Another educator expressed a need to create programs that suit the needs of all students. The elementary educator stated:

> We have an after-school program, but these kids need to get to the border after school; they can't stay; what we need is a before-school program, so they are not waiting outside our school in the rain and cold early in the morning.

Some additional barriers educators mentioned were the invisibility of students due to the fear of being found out as illegally residing outside the school residency boundaries, and parents of transfronterizx students coaching their children on what to say or not say about their residency. One educator recalled:

> So when I was at the high [school], it was . . . you never mentioned that you lived in TJ. It was it was just like, oh yeah, I use my aunt's address, but you still never said it. Your parents coached you to not say that you cross the border. Right. So there was no place where it could be talked about, like what it was to be crossing the border.

In the theme of a *commitment to social justice*, the humanizing of the transfronterizx student experience was evident in this teacher's recounting of her students' daily morning routine:

> [They] see military with rifles every morning at five in the morning. Like that's, that's what you do. Every morning. You see these military people like, and then you have to converse with a border patrol agent who might be in a bad mood every single day and then, you know, and then one day they catch you in a bad mood, and they make it . . . they attacked you for being in a bad mood like there's all these little micro situations that happen . . . before 8 a.m. before first period . . . all of these things already happened . . . . And their first-period of teacher wants them to be focused, and that's me, right? Like I

> have a student in my first period class. And I've literally seen him in the car at the border making line, and I already noticed his dad; he makes line at like 1 a.m. he parks the car, he sleeps there. And then the mom with her three sons come later in the morning. There's this kind of a way to get out of one car. They switch cars. Now the mom gets in line, so if they only have to make maybe 20 minutes, I see them; it's like wow, I . . . I knew this happened, but I never thought I'd get to see my student actually do this. It really stood out to me because then I had him first period, I was just thinking this . . . this is a 13-year-old student who had to do this in his morning and then get to class. And I . . . I see he has anger issues and sort of resentment. Not quite accepting that she has to do this every day . . . um . . . . And so I, you know, I tried to connect with him on the fact that I do this and that I also cross you know how was the border yesterday, right? If I asked him questions about it, to just kind of humanize it and not make it this this bad thing that we do or that it's, you know, what we shouldn't talk about or that we can't or that it's [their experience] not real.

Educators of transfronterizx students elucidated the theme of *navigational capital* by acknowledging a holistic approach to support requires additional training for educators who work with this specific group of students. Additionally, they felt that by having had the opportunity to work with them, they had become educators who had a deeper commitment to social justice with compassion and understanding for the plight of transfronterizx and had become educators who validated students' experiences. They also reflected on the importance of getting to know students; humanizing them, their families, and their experiences brings an understanding of the myriad of challenges they faced as they came to and from school every day across the international border.

> And they stay here with somebody . . . who doesn't necessarily I think a lot of people think that it's usually with a family member, but sometimes it's with some conocido, though, you know, from the family. And so, I, the very first time that I that I found out that some of the students were doing that. I was like, "Wow, like, how could you even do that?" Some of them will wake up really, really early in the morning and, and so I started questioning some of those lives because they would be falling asleep in us and I started having a conversation like, "hey, you know you're falling asleep in class, or you're not getting enough sleep," and so that's where they would open up and say, "Oh, it's you know, we had to wake up at three in the morning to catch the bus and catch another bus and make line and eventually make it all the way over here."

Of the educators of transfronterizx interviewed, over half had first-hand experience with the transfronterizx life that provided a deeper understanding of their students' experiences. One teacher lived in Tijuana and crossed the border daily to come to work. They said:

> Other students that are crossing the borders are doing this completely by themselves. And some are pretty young. I've seen middle school students or a middle school student with an older sibling that's in high school and I know of a student that is in our elementary where that's the situation . . . I've literally been on the same trolley with her and all the way to Mexico . . . and so, for those students, I really do see first it's I see a lot of different emotions within those students, and I really try to understand and humanize their experience because when I'm crossing the border, it's, it's challenging. When I think of how young they are, and how maybe their family is telling them to go and pushing them to cross the border to go to school. And I imagine that the conversations that are happening on why they should be crossing the border at 3 or 4 or 5 a.m. in the

> morning. It must be difficult to have a conversation with a 14- or 15- or 16-year-old, but they do it. They do it every single day. So at a certain point either they're doing it because they're being forced to do it, or they've accepted or they've taken on the challenge. And they've really taken ownership of what it is, that their goal is in the United States . . . um so, it it really is a spectrum. And you know from my personal experience, you know speaking to them I kind of get to see that spectrum. You know, especially if it's had a student at Bonita Vista Middle School. He was middle school students seventh grade, crossing the border by himself, barely spoke English, and his attitude was kind of anger, it was . . . trying to get over that anger so he could be comfortable, as well. So I have seen a spectrum of, of emotions from students on how they're making sense of their reality.

Many educator participants challenged the dominant ideology of neutrality and equal opportunity for the transfronterizx students; many shared their concerns about fellow teachers who did not know or acknowledge their students, where they came from, where they lived, and how they lived. The participant teachers shared that fellow teachers did not validate students' lives when they knew they live across the border. Therefore, their reasons for tardiness, absences, lack of homework completion, and lack of parental involvement because they live in Tijuana were simply not considered. As one high school educator put it: "Other teachers judge." Other educator participants challenged this ideology of transfronterizx "blindness" by acknowledging the students came from Tijuana and might not have fully developed English skills themselves and might have parents with limited English. One teacher stated,

> A few students that I think are I've heard that come from Tijuana with those math problems that are fully worded English riddles . . . . But just even translating that for him

> or providing those scaffolds and even for one of my students this last week, just providing the math problem as images [then] I was like esta caja tiene 128 lápices hay cuatro maestros para que cada maestro tenga una cantidad de lapices justo como le vas hacer? . . . and he he was able to solve the word problem that way . . . making worksheets for transfronterizo that can help them at their house instead of just sending home these very monotone English packets.

Additionally, this same teacher challenged where and when parent conferences for transfronterizx can take place saying, "Why not meet em' in Plaza Rio like, like, why not just meet at the Starbucks there?" Another said, "I just call them? I use my personal phone, yes, to call, okay. I don't mind, I really don't mind the parents have my phone, but that's a personal choice." Another educator shared about transfronterizx student tardiness, "If a kid was late to school, and it was during advisory, they wouldn't even give them a late pass. They just go to your classroom and your mark as present as if you were here the whole time."

Educators' Perceptions of Transfronterizx Students

Educators expressed their perceptions of students from Tijuana as being in two categories; "rain or shine" students and "added challenges" students. The "rain or shine" students will be at school early and "take advantage of every opportunity," as one educator said. The educators added that this group of students "tend to have a mom or someone that is at home and helps out with homework and anything else, the student comes prepared and ready, and they're not late or absent or anything." The other group, "added challenges" students, misses many school days, arrives late, and does minimal work; in the educator's own words, "There's just always an excuse, something always going on." These educators experienced the duality of challenging the dominant ideology while holding a "bootstrap" meritocratic mentality. This was

evident among some educators in how they perceived their experience as a transfronterizx in relation to that of their students. One educator stated:

> But if they don't take advantage of them, like they're not like the ones who want to are gonna take it into one's you because you can't force anybody. You know, you can't force the kids to have that drive.

Despite individual work ethic by students, wealth disparity and limited class mobility due to class, race, and gender discrimination remains prevalent. Solórzano and Yosso (2001) wrote that "schools operate in contradictory ways with their potential to oppress and marginalize co-existing with their potential to emancipate and empower" (p. 3). So, in the classroom, teachers can operate with a dual intent to educate and emancipate while tracing behaviors to cultural determinants, thereby upholding a dominant ideology that supports deficit notions of Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC). Zeus Leonardo (2015) spoke about the injured injurer when referencing White teachers who have also been victims of oppression going into classrooms. I extend this notion to encompass Latinx teachers. In my study, the eight educators of transfronterizx students I interviewed were Mexican and were transfronterizx themselves; they had endured either daily crossings as a young person; a single crossing as a child with illegal status, thereby becoming undocumented in the United States; or daily crossings as an adult. This similar transfronterizx experience brought forth an understanding of their transfronterizx students' experience and a desire to support their educational pathways; coexisting with this objective was the notion that students who were struggling as transfronterizx were struggling because of cultural family values that were not focused on education. Although these cultural demarcations were not along race lines, they were along class lines. In this duality, educators expressed a belief that students whose parents were uneducated had values that did not hold

education in high regard (e.g., irresponsibility, tardiness, inattentiveness) while simultaneously acknowledging the daily challenges students and families faced in attending school in the US on time. The bootstrap or meritocratic mentality was pervasive among teachers who were transfronterizx themselves as young people; they simultaneously acknowledged and understood that obstacles transfronterizx students have a myriad of variations, and that some of the obstacles were easily overcome, if they applied themselves or tried harder.

Educators' Perceptions of Transfronterizx Parents

Educators' perceptions fell into two categories: involved parents and unknowing parents. Based on the educator participants, family caregivers who were involved typically had one parent who did not work outside the home; hence, they could be more aware of what was happening in school. Additionally, the involved parents might also hold an immigration status that facilitated their ability to be in the United States without fear, which allowed them to be involved in school. The school's openness and the welcoming nature of the school culture was also a factor in the level of parental involvement:

> When he started [as a principal] at school, I personally felt like he made a really good connection with the parents. And there was a little bit more parent involvement. In the past few years since he left, I really haven't seen that many parents, even at our school, because we used to have parents that would come in and volunteer and make copies for teachers. You know, obviously, especially with the COVID obviously, that change to that we don't have parents coming into the school anymore, but there was, you know, I'm not going to say a lot more parent involvement, but it was more than what we have that. If there are like any parent meetings or any they used to have, like in the mornings, they

used to have coffee with the principal, and they don't, I haven't heard of that anymore. I'm really not sure if they still happen.

Educators also shared their concern for the rights of "unknowing" parents, with one participant noting:

> I know that it's not that the parents don't care. It's just that they don't even know the system. They don't even know what, what classes they need to be taking. Say, for example, like something that happened this year was last year, there were 39 students that were, were recommended for a bilingual class, bilingual integrated math III. Something happened, you know, somebody decided to that they wanted this one teacher back, but that means you couldn't teach bilingual, so they decided to disappear a bilingual class . . . so all the students that were in a bilingual class, they were put in regular English only classes. So, where the parents are notified, I have no idea if the parents were notified. Were the parents even aware that that even happened that their child was placed in a bilingual class and, and also now they're in an English class. So, they don't even know the system. So, to even go into the school and say, hey, why don't you put my students in an all English when they're supposed to be in bilingual? So, a lot of the even decisions that are made at a lot of our schools that are from the border, they know that the parents are not even aware of what's going on. So, they do whatever. They do whatever to these students, have placed them wherever they want, even though legally, I mean illegally, these students shouldn't have been placed in a nonbilingual class. So just going back, going back to, you know, the parents not knowing, not being aware.

Educators' perceptions of transfronterizx students and families were deeply shaped by their experiences with the U.S.–Mexico border. Interviews with eight educators, all familiar with

transfronterizx life, revealed several themes: challenging dominant ideologies, commitment to social justice, and centering experiential knowledge. Additionally, the study highlighted educators' possession of CCW, including resistance and navigational capital, which are essential in overcoming barriers and addressing challenges in unsupportive environments. These findings underscore the significance of educators' personal backgrounds and cultural capitals in supporting transfronterizx students academically. Although educators' experiences provided invaluable insights, it is essential to acknowledge that not all educators have such backgrounds. This discrepancy underscores the need for comprehensive training and professional development programs that equip educators with the knowledge and skills to effectively support transfronterizx students.

Findings of Transfronterizx Parent Interviews

Research Question 2 asked: In what ways do the experiences of transfronterizx families impact their engagement with the school and educators? Through this research question, I sought to understand the impact of transfronterizx families' experiences in their interactions with schools and educators. Through comprehensive interviews with transfronterizx parents, the research illuminates the nuanced dynamics shaping their engagement with educational settings. The findings to Research Question 2 are organized by three subheadings: parent experiences, parents' perceptions of their children, and parents' perceptions of educators. Finally, the findings are supported by quotes that align with the previously stated Research Question 2.

Parents' Experiences

Transfronterizx families' physical engagement in schools was directly impacted by their residing in another country and, for some, their inability to cross the international border into the United States for various reasons (e.g., immigration status, deportation status, work, and familial

circumstances). However, their level of engagement in school is reigned directly by their desire to have their children attend school in the United States for better opportunities, including their commitment to going to school in the United States, giving up parental rights for their children to attend, or engaging in transborder parentocracy (Rivera, 2020) in which parents give birth to their children in the United States as they aim to secure a pathway to ensure lifelong opportunities in the Tijuana–San Diego border region. I analyzed parents' interview data by developing in vivo codes, followed by categories and themes. The data findings fell into several themes based on CCW capital from Yosso (2005): (a) aspirational capital (including hope for a better life and transborder parentocracy), (b) familial capital, (c) navigational capital, and (d) resistant capital. My findings in this study suggest *sacrifice* and *endurance* as additional forms of capital.

The theme of aspirational capital was expressed in one parent's decision to have their children attend school in San Diego with a unifying desire for them to learn English and have more opportunities open to them in the United States for when they grow up and their view of this sacrifice as part of the process of attaining their goals and dreams for their children. One parent shared,

> Well, look, we're not really and, and, and, and they know it, we've talked a lot with them, both my dad and my mom, my children, we're not rich, we're not millionaires, we're not going to inherit them a mansion, we're not going to inherit cars, so the only thing, what we are going to inherit, is their studies.

I found navigational and familial capital themes in the statements by parent participants describing as necessary the daily hours at the border and years of commitment to have their

children attend U.S. school from K–12. Parents' extensive networks for navigating the border extended beyond familial ties to include friends. One parent recalled:

> I had friends, and you know . . . these moms that make the line . . . And we have friends who we will call each other and you're like, "Where are you?" "Here at the roundabout" Okay, "cut in front of me, quick" because she [was late and] had to take her kids to school . . . we would help each other" and with family "before we went to the [afterschool] sport we went to my mom's house, where I did homework and I fed them and then we went to that sports and then after the sport we would go home [in Tijuana], then we would shower and then go to sleep and then they day will start back over again.

A finding among the parents was sacrifice. *Sacrifice capital* was defined by Enriquez (2017) as giving up comfort, money, energy, and time for the betterment of somebody else (Enriquez, 2017); one parent recounted, as translated by me:

> For example, they remember a lot of the sacrifice it was to wake up at that hour, and yes, I mean . . . it weighed on them quite a bit, I mean, poor things, I mean, they also obviously suffered.

Another parent shared:

> She has to cross every day. Because of the very early hours . . .she has to get up early . . . there are many sacrifices that I know that in the long run they are going to . . . they are going to be good for her, but well, these moments are sometimes even harder because, because she does struggle, I mean right now she's already tired, there are . . . there are days when she has told me crying "Mommy, I'm already tired, I don't want to go there anymore." She says "I'm tired, I want to rest," but, well, I tell my daughter, "Everything we do is a sacrifice that sooner or later you will benefit you."

A parent of four children who attend school in San Diego provided: *"*Let them go ahead with their studies [in the U.S.], let's see when the youngest is done . . . we can't cross and learn . . . they can . . . and they can make a life there . . . mhm . . . much better than here."

Parents' Perceptions of Their Children

Parents' perceptions of their children include their admiration for their children's inner strength and resilience in their ability and fortitude to wake up early, wait in line for hours to cross into the United States, attend school, participate in afterschool activities, wait in line again to cross into Mexico and arrive back home in the evening, do homework, sleep, and do it all over again.

A parent of three children, two of whom had a disability, shared, "It is hard for them, my poor babies, they suffer a lot with early wake up times and the border crossing every day." They also expressed compassion and understanding for their children's daily trajectory while expressing their aspirations and hope for a better life with more opportunities.

An additional theme among all parents (n = 7) was fear as endemic. Parents shared their fears as they leave their child at the border, sometimes as early as 4:00 a.m.; one parent noted:

> On one occasion, she sent me a video . . . of her standing in line and people like how they are rude telling the students like girls "give me a kiss" you need to offend them because they get in, they get in line, well to cross.

Other parent participants commented on the fear for their children if they were to be directly asked by immigration officials where they are headed, as noted in this experience:

> I would tell my child that if they [immigration officers at the border] ask to try avoid answering the question so he wouldn't get in trouble; I would rather they ask me, but I also told him not to lie, just avoid answering.

All parents (n = 7) shared their fears about if their child was asked at their school by their teacher or school staff where they lived, what the child would respond, and if the school might find out that they were living in Tijuana.

Parents' Perceptions of Educators

Parental perceptions of educators in the United States varied due to their immigration status and familial and work obligations. Parents with restricted access due to their immigration status had no direct involvement with activities on school premises and no meaningful interaction with their children's educators. Consequently, their absence from school-sponsored events such as carnivals, festivals, assemblies, field trips, and parent-teacher conferences was poignant. This group of noncrossing parents relied upon older siblings, extended family members, legally appointed tutors, or guardians, and "comadres/compadres" to obtain pertinent updates regarding their children's academic progress and disciplinary matters.

One parent who could not attend the parent conference, described having an older sibling step in and take on the responsibility of communicating with a younger sibling's teachers:

> My oldest daughter, that's what she did, she was going to talk to the teachers . . . I mean, it just started this year . . . because my oldest daughter, I told her to go . . . because she was going to talk to the teachers at the conferences and that . . . when I could no longer.

In cases where parental rights were delegated to tutors, a significant level of trust was conferred to the parents' substitutes and a belief educators would act in the best interests of the children. In some cases, legal guardians assumed the responsibility for attending individualized education program (IEP) meetings. In this framework, parental perceptions of educators were significantly shaped by the experiences relayed by their children who attended school, by the older siblings who were used as proxies, and by comadres or legal guardians who acted on the

parents' behalf. Among parents able to cross the U.S. border, immigration status ceased to be a constraining factor, but these parents were placed in two principal groups: those whose work-related responsibilities limited active participation in school affairs and those whose professional responsibilities allowed greater engagement in educational matters. Despite these divergent circumstances, the overarching perception among parents remained consistent: educators were perceived as dedicated to the academic well-being of their children. One parent had this to say about their children's teachers: "All the teachers have loved my son a lot, that is, they have treated him very well. J is a little more problematic, so there it changes, but it's for other reasons . . . he's getting attention for being autistic." Another parent stated, "The teachers who have what she told me because they are flexible, they have approached her to tell her that if she does not fully understand something ask him again." Finally, another parent shared, "When they have to arrive late [to class] . . . they tell them 'I know that you live in Mexico,' it's like sometimes they [the teachers] understand the situation they are in."

Any involvement of transfronterizx parents in school activities was intricately entwined with their immigration status. Additionally, their level of engagement was influenced, albeit to a lesser degree, by the demands of their work and familial responsibilities. Transfronterizx individuals possessing an immigration status permitting them to cross the border into the United States for school-related engagements may demonstrate hesitancy to engage fully. This reluctance stems from concerns about potentially exposing their transfronterizx identity, which could jeopardize the illicit residency status and consequently hinder their ability to keep their children enrolled in U.S. schools.

Findings From Transfronterizx Student Interviews

Research Question 3 asked: In what ways is the transfronterizx student experience affected by their families and educators? The findings from examining the perspectives of transfronterizx students themselves revealed the intricate connections between familial and educational influences on their lived experiences and the duality they experience daily. The findings to Research Question 3 are organized by three subheadings: students personal and educational experiences, students' perceptions of educators, and students' perceptions of their parents. Finally, the findings are supported by quotes that align with the previously stated Research Question 3.

Students' Personal and Educational Experiences

Transfronterizx students are aware of their situation and understand their U.S. citizenship affords them the opportunity to attend school in the United States; they also are aware of the privileges that come with U.S. citizenship and see the impact it has on their life and future. This finding highlights the CCW's *aspirational*, *familial*, *navigational*, and *resistant* wealth students carry. Students in this study understood the importance of taking advantage of opportunities available to them. One student shared:

> With my family, I know some of them don't have that much support from the parents like I do, so I'm very grateful that I can go to school, can have education, when I know that my cousins are struggling.

A sixth grader retold his daily routine, "So wake up like around three in the morning, get ready. And then go to the border and then do the line for 3 hours and then get to school."

Fear as endemic was a theme that was also distilled from the from the findings. Students shared their fears from being found out they live in Tijuana and the ways this would impact their

future education and their family's hopes for them. One student participant shared: "I think there's still some teachers or some students that have a certain view of people that cross every day. And, like, they want to tell on us."

Students' Perceptions of Educators

In the realm of transfronterizx student participation experiences, educators could be typified into two primary categories based on their awareness of the student's actual residency status: *cognizant* and *unaware*. Among the *cognizant educators*, a further subdivision surfaced. Educators cognizant of students' residency were either:

- Compassionate educators: This subset comprised teachers who, once made aware of the transfronterizx status of students, exhibited empathy and compassion toward the unique challenges faced by these individuals. Additionally, they provided support in different ways to accommodate the student's individual circumstances, integrated the students' funds of knowledge (FoK; Moll et al., 1992) in their pedagogical approaches, and offered additional support; or
- Unaltered expectation educators: Contrary to compassionate educators, this subgroup upheld consistent academic expectations for transfronterizx students, irrespective of their awareness of the daily struggles inherent to their situation. This category encompassed educators who, although aware of the students' status, maintained uniform standards without adjusting for potential impediments.

Educators falling in the *unaware category* could be further classified as follows:

- Disinterested educators: In this classification, educators exhibited a lack of interest in familiarizing themselves with the transfronterizx status of students and, consequently, failed to acknowledge or address the unique challenges these students encountered.

Their lack of engagement manifests as a disregard for the potential impact of transfronterizx status on academic performance and well-being.

- Uninformed educators: This subset encompasses educators who, due to a lack of communication or information, remained unaware of the transfronterizx status of students. Although not intentionally neglectful, these educators may benefit from increased awareness and education regarding the diverse backgrounds and circumstances of their students to provide more inclusive and supportive learning environments.

Student participants said that some teachers could be rude, with one sharing:

> Hablaba casi, casi, todo español . . . estábamos hablando de recreo y "hey! English" y luego cuando le pregunté ¿por qué? . . . es que no sé si están hablando de mal o no sé qué hablando de cosas en español.

Students' Perceptions of their Parents

Transfronterizx students are aware of the sacrifices their parents are making to improve their quality of life. These sacrifices often entail navigating the U.S.–Mexico international border daily, uprooting and moving countries in pursuit of better opportunities for their children, and giving up parental rights. The determination and resilience exhibited by transfronterizx parents resonates deeply with their children, instilling in them a profound sense of gratitude and obligation.

To transfronterizx parents, having their children attend school in the United States symbolized a significant achievement independent of academic performance. However, parents also underscored the importance of doing well in school. Students felt their parents had immense pride in them for being able to navigate the daily challenges to attend school in the United States

and learn English, instilling in them the importance of recognizing the opportunities it could afford them and taking advantage of what the school offered them.

Transfronterizx Students' Duality

The disparity in perception between the students' feelings of invisibility in the educational system and the profound validation and recognition they received from their families defines the essence of the transfronterizx student experience by encompassing their education and familial dynamics. There is a duality in the students' feelings of invisibility in the educational system, indicating possible marginalization or lack of acknowledgment in the institutional framework and the profound pride and recognition these same students receive from their families. The sense of invisibility, shame, and fear can stem from various factors such as immigration and residency status, socioeconomic circumstance, cultural/ethnic background, language barriers, or nonconformity to White-middle-class expectations and norms. Conversely, familial pride, validation, and recognition serve as a testament to the students' abilities, achievements, and potential, often transcending the boundaries of formal education. In familial contexts, these students are celebrated for their uniqueness, resilience, and efforts, fostering a deep sense of belonging and validation. In the social-political context of their neighborhoods in Tijuana, a city with fraught with economic disparities and limited access to educational resources, these students feel their daily border crossings to attend school provide an advantage over their peers. This provided an impetus to endure the daily border crossing to take advantage of the sacrifices and opportunities their parents offer, heightening their duality of privileged in Mexico and *un*privileged (or less privileged) in the United States; being a part of the majority population in Mexico and minorities in the United States, and validation and pride in Mexico and invisibility and fear in the United States.

The theme of duality in the transfronterizx student experience reveals a complex interplay of U.S. White-middle-class centric educational expectations and transfronterizx family value systems. Although the educational system may fall short in adequately recognizing and nurturing its students' diverse talents and identities, familial support provides a vital counterbalance, affirming the intrinsic worth and wealth students have as assets. This community's cultural wealth encompasses primary language, familial networks, resilience, aspirational, navigational, and cultural capital, shaping their sense of identity and belonging amid the challenges of navigating academic and familial expectations. Students possess deep-rooted cultural traditions, multilingualism, and problem-solving skills honed through lived experiences in their U.S.–Mexico border communities. These assets are often unseen, undervalued or overlooked in mainstream U.S. educational frameworks, but are crucial for transfronterizx students.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I used CCW and CRT in education frameworks to analyze data sourced from documents, focus groups, and interviews aimed at addressing the overarching research question: "In what ways can an understanding of transfronterizx families, students, and educators of transfronterizx foster effective engagement?" The document analysis findings highlighted insights into existing family engagement policies in districts and schools, highlighting the presence of information pertinent to transfronterizx individuals and policies related to parent involvement. However, there was a notable lack of policies directly addressing the unique experiences of transfronterizx individuals and strategies for engaging their parents.

Focus groups findings illuminated a commitment to social justice through humanizing practices among teachers, particularly those who identified as transfronterizx, and showcased their experiential knowledge. However, there was the duality of a meritocracy with a bootstrap

mentality among some these educators. Findings of participant interviews involving educators, parents, and students revealed how each of these groups leveraged their CCW: aspirational, familial, linguistic, navigational, resistant, and social wealth (Yosso, 2005) including endurance and sacrifice wealth. Educators expressed a commitment to the tenets of CRTE (Solórzano, 1998): challenging the dominant ideology, commitment to social justice, and the centrality of experiential knowledge, to enhance educational opportunities for transfronterizx public school students in the United States. Underlining these findings was the theme of fear as endemic. This theme is related to CRT's tenet that racism is endemic, pervasive, widespread, and ingrained in society. CRT explores how fear permeates various aspects of life for marginalized communities, negatively impacting their experiences and interactions with the broader society.

Transfronterizx students mitigate and manage their fear while they embody their assets with them as they navigate daily border crossing and participate in schools, parents of these students leverage their CCW to support their children, and educators enact CRT in education to provide scaffolds for both families and students. Engagement and empowerment came from all three entities working in unison to achieve a common goal with an understanding of the experiences of the other. In essence, transfronterizx mitigate their fear, carry their assets, and acquire more as they moved up the educational ladder.

CHAPTER FIVE

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Do the best you can until you know better. Then when you know better, do better.

- Maya Angelou

The term transfronterizx combines the term border and the prefix trans, resulting in a neologism, transborder, which in Spanish is transfronterizo. These individuals unremittingly cross the international U.S.–Mexico border; they live, work, and attend school in either country. Transfronterizx are imbued in both countries' cultural, social, economic, linguistic, and political realities. Transfronterizx can hold dual citizenship. Families of transfronterizx students might be immigrants or have unknown legal status in the United States and Mexico, yet they remain connected to both countries.

Transfronterizx continuously crossed the international border multiple times daily and weekly to engage in daily activities (Iglesias Prieto, 2014; Ojeda, 2009). Trueba (1999, 2002) posited that immigrants held multiple identities as part of the adaptive immigration process to function effectively in both their home and host countries. Transfronterizx are both mainstream U.S. citizens participating in the U.S. ways of knowing and citizens of Mexico participating actively in the Mexican ways of life.

Throughout the past decades, economic disparities coupled with deportations have propelled families to live in Mexico and enroll their children in U.S. schools to provide opportunities for U.S.-born children and, in some cases of deportation, to maintain the family together (Ojeda, 2009; Orta, 2021; Rivera, 2020; Tessman, 2016; Velasco Ortiz & Contreras, 2014). Educators of transfronterizx hold a unique position working with nontraditional students and families who unrelentingly cross the international Tijuana, México–San Diego, U.S. borders.

This group has unique needs in U.S. schools; thus, there continues to be a need for further research on the transfronterizx experience in the K–12 public school and private school system (Orta, 2021; Tessman, 2016).

This qualitative narrative inquiry study aimed to understand the experiences of transfronterizx students and families and the educators of transfronterizx to understand the impact on school engagement, and to uncover strategies that support and foster effective engagement from students', the families', and the educators' perspectives. The following section provides a summary of the research study, data analysis, and discussion.

Overview of the Problem

The transfronterizx experience uniquely navigates the imbalanced economic conditions, sociopolitical regulations (overt and covert, known and unknown), and cultural norms between the U.S.–Mexico border. Transfronterizx families who cross the border regularly have strategically positioned themselves to take advantage of the opportunities these inequities have caused to live, work, and attend school in both nations (Iglesias Prieto, 2014). Educators and schools must be aware and acknowledge the unique experiences and understanding of the world transfronterizx access and the spheres of assets they carry with them as they navigate between the two nations. Educators were uniquely positioned to interact with newly arrived families as immigrants, refugees, transnationals, transfronterizx, or displaced people (Koyama, 2015; Smith & Murillo, 2012). Educators are also able to use students' forms of capital, community cultural wealth (CCW), funds of knowledge (FoK), and "risk-taking" (Koyama, 2015, p. 614) to teach in a way that integrates nondominant students.

Marchand et al. (2019) stipulated in schools where vulnerable students attend, collaboration and partnership among the educators, school, and family are necessary for student

success. Transfronterizx students and their families have unique needs that may not be addressed during school (Tessman, 2016). Epstein et al. (2018) stated family, school, and community engagement are essential to students' academic and social-emotional success; hence, transfronterizx parent engagement is a factor in students' success.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study was to understand the experiences of transfronterizx public school students and families and the educators of transfronterizx students, to understand the impact on school engagement and uncover strategies that foster effective engagement.

This study used semistructured interviews, focus groups, and document analysis. The semistructured interviews were conducted from the United States via Zoom or phone calls due to families living in Mexico and their unknown immigration status. Participants consisted of two elementary families and one student, four elementary school teachers who worked with transfronterizx students, two middle school families and one students, two middle school teachers who worked with transfronterizx students, three high school families and two students, and two high school teachers who worked with transfronterizx students. The focus group consisted of three educators of transfronterizx students who worked near the U.S.–Mexico border in San Diego.

Research Questions

I designed the research questions to elicit the experiences of transfronterizx families, students, and educators of transfronterizx students. The following were the research questions:

1. To what extent do educators perceive and acknowledge the experiences of transfronterizx families and students?

2. In what ways do the experiences of transfronterizx families impact their engagement with the school and educators?
3. In what ways is the transfronterizx student experience affected by their families and educators?

Methodology

Bhattacharya (2017) highlighted using narrative inquiry to delve into participants' experiences. This study focused on understanding the perspectives of transfronterizx families, students, and educators regarding transfronterizx education in U.S. public schools. The chosen methodological approach, narrative inquiry, enabled exploration, discovery, and comprehension of lived experiences through interviews (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; Creswell & Creswell, 2017; Mertler, 2019). Aligning with the principles of social justice research, the inquiry prioritized truth-telling and participants' voices while acknowledging my role as the researcher in the process (Kuntz, 2016). The narrative inquiry method suited the study's goal of uncovering the impact of transfronterizx experiences on school engagement and identifying supportive strategies (Bhattacharya, 2017; Kuntz, 2016; Mertler, 2019). Following Connelly and Clandinin's (1990) narrative research design, I explored personal stories and perceptions, examining how individuals constructed and interpreted their experiences. I collected data through semistructured interviews, focus groups, and document analysis of district, school, and classroom policies. Unlike quantitative methods, qualitative approaches emphasize purposeful sampling, open-ended data collection, and personal interpretation of findings (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). In this study, I used qualitative methods to capture participants' genuine sentiments and to provide detailed descriptions of the transfronterizx experience.

Overview of the Sample

In this qualitative study using a narrative inquiry approach, I documented the "lived experiences using text in general and words and numbers in particular" (Onwuegbuzie & Johnson, 2006, p. 52) by having representation. Corrigan and Onwuegbuzie (2020) used the term representation to encompass the importance of sampling in qualitative studies as it related to sufficient data collection to enhance the rigor of the research study (Onwuegbuzie & Johnson, 2006). The appropriate sampling boundary (Collins, 2010) for qualitative studies differs according to the research design model (Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007). According to Onwuegbuzie and Collins (2007), the minimum sample size recommended for interview data collection procedures should be 12 interviews. This narrative inquiry study had 19 participants, 15 adult participants and four school-aged students, to provide deep case-oriented analysis (Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007).

Data Collection

I interviewed transfronterizx participants individually in sessions lasting approximately 45–70 minutes. During the interviews, I followed a protocol of a research-created interview questions that included valid open-ended questions and follow-up questions. I interviewed educators of transfronterizx students once in English using open-ended questions during each session. I conducted the interviews in a one-on-one setting via Zoom (audio only) for approximately 60 minutes. I asked participants questions about their life experiences and interactions with transfronterizx individuals as educators. I conducted interviews with transfronterizx families via Zoom or phone for approximately 50–60 minutes; they were conducted in English or Spanish, as needed. I used open-ended interview questions about their life experiences, current transfronterizx experiences, and experiences with U.S. schools. I

interviewed transfronterizx students via phone call or Zoom (audio only), based on the availability of technology and participant comfort level, for approximately 20–45 minutes. I created this interview framework to gather in-depth information on their experiences and interactions with transfronterizx. I collected field notes and memos written during the interviews and documents collection as part of the data collection process.

I collected policies and procedures for districts, schools, and classrooms as part of the data collection. School materials, including school policies, were readily available on the school websites. I requested classroom policies from educators, but only some of the requests were fulfilled. I conducted the focus group with educator participants in person for 75 minutes using interview and follow-up questions. Parent and student participants were reluctant to participate in a focus group due to time constraints and demands on their school and afterschool schedules. In addition to this verbal reasoning provided to me by the parents, I also understand the essence of group participation would inevitably unveil their status to other participants, therefore jeopardizing residency status and their children's ability to attend school. As this notion became more apparent, I no longer asked transfronterizx participants to participate in focus groups. Participant information and subsequent data gathered were stored in a passcode-protected folder on my passcode-protected computer, with pseudonyms used in place of names to maintain confidentiality.

Data Analysis

Interview transcripts, documents, analytic memos, and my reflective journal were part of the analytic process. I analyzed these artifacts comprehensively and continuously to identify themes related to transfronterizx education in the United States. I conducted preliminary data analysis for the interviews using inductive coding. Saldaña (2021) stated, "Coding inductively as

entering the analytic enterprise with as open a mind as possible" (p. 41). Additionally, because inductive and deductive coding are dialectical, I used deductive coding following completion of the initial coding and codebook using inductive coding. In this first coding cycle, I used structural and in vivo coding, subsequent and continual coding, subcoding, categories, and the surfacing of emerging themes. I used NVivo software to analyze interviews conducted in English.

For interviews conducted in Spanish, I first coded the interviews in the same language as the data. Saldaña (2021) explained that nuances in the language and specific syntax are maintained when coding is done in the original language because it creates a more trustworthy analysis. Although I initially began to translate every interview conducted in Spanish to English, this process did not add to the richness of the experience and, in fact, subtracted because finding exact words to convey the meaning in English could not be fully achieved. Additionally, I coded and recoded by both reading the transcripts and listening to the recorded interviews several times, thereby making the English translations null. Finally, I used document analysis to provide information regarding the transfronterizx experience. Documents included school board policies, school policies, and classroom teacher policies, which sometimes included school and/or student handbooks. The purpose of this study was to understand the experiences of transfronterizx public school students and families and the educators of transfronterizx students, to understand the impact on school engagement and uncover strategies that foster effective engagement.

Discussion

In this section, I connect participant narratives to the key themes that emerged related to Yosso's (2005) six forms of CCW, in addition to themes related to critical race theory (CRT) in education, to explicitly answer the overarching research question: In what ways can an

understanding of the experiences of transfronterizx families, students, and educators of transfronterizx foster effective engagement? For this, I used CRT in education and CCW with an additional form of wealth, endurance capital, and then I reorganized them into two subsets: foundational forms of capital and driving forms of capital (Villareal, 2022). Aspirational, familial, and linguistic wealth form the subset foundational forms of capital, and navigational, social, resistance, and endurance wealth form the subset driving forms of capital. In this second subset, I added an additional wealth transfronterizx families and students have, "endurance wealth." These forms of capital frame the experiences of transfronterizx students and family participants. Elements of CRT in education more aptly frame the experiences and perceptions of educators of transfronterizx.

The transfronterizx experience of families or caregivers had commonalities: parents' foresight to have their children be born in the United States, transborder parentocracy (Rivera, 2020), daily endurance of long border waits times over a span of many years, and a commitment to provide their children with more opportunities; this leads me to the finding of an endurance capital that has yet to be added to Yosso's (2005) CCW.

Merriam Webster's (n.d.) dictionary defines endurance as the ability to withstand hardship or adversity, especially the ability to sustain a prolonged stressful effort or activity, the act or an instance of enduring pain or suffering, permanence, and duration. I define endurance capital as a deep fortitude in everyone to maintain their course over hours, days, weeks, months, and years to complete their education in "en el otro lado" (on the other side of the border, in San Diego). The transfronterizx endurance capital is founded upon the belief that they will succeed, and they will complete their goal; it is forged in the daily activity of 4 a.m. wake up times, crossing, attending school, participating in any extracurricular activities, completing homework,

crossing back home, and doing it all over again the next day. Hence, endurance capital refers to the resilience, perseverance, flexibility, and adaptability that individuals develop in response to the sustained, prolonged, and stressful challenging circumstances over time.

Transfronterizx students often exhibit endurance capital. For transfronterizx students who have crossed the U.S.–Mexico border daily, often spending years navigating the complexities of a militarized border with a mixed-status family and varied immigration experiences, endurance capital becomes a significant asset. The daily journey across can be exhausting and fraught with numerous challenges. These students develop a profound resilience and fortitude that shape their identities and experiences. They learn to adapt to new environments, overcome obstacles, and persevere in the face of adversity. It is important to recognize constant border crossing, adaptation to changes, and resilience-building can take a significant emotional and psychological toll on students, impacting their mental health and well-being. Additionally, the systemic barriers and inequities they face in the educational system can exacerbate these challenges, further underscoring the importance of creating supportive and inclusive learning environments.

Endurance capital becomes a valuable asset that not only contributes to transfronterizx personal growth, but also equips them with essential skills for navigating the challenges of academic and social life on both sides of the border. Incorporating an understanding of endurance capital into educational practices involves acknowledging and valuing the resilience and tenacity of transfronterizx students. It means creating spaces that recognize and affirm their experiences, provide tailored support services, and foster a sense of belonging and community. By embracing and leveraging the endurance capital of students, educators can help them succeed academically and empower them to thrive and contribute meaningfully to society despite the obstacles they have overcome.

Transfronterizx CCW

Educators of transfronterizx can use this wealth to foster effective engagement by first creating a safe environment for transfronterizx to disclose their residency status if they so choose. Then, educators should ask in what ways the experience can be made more supportive and richer for the transfronterizx. Educators must create communication pathways with families that are reliable, consistent, supportive, and failsafe, and that will be used to support the learners in ways they need. Educators must integrate transfronterizx endurance capital and normalize it as "participation and engagement" for transfronterizx families. Additionally, they must integrate transfronterizx FoK, especially their politicized FoK, as legitimate knowledge in the classroom curriculum. Finally, educators must maintain high standards for all students, but they also must make accommodations and modifications as necessary to make the content accessible for transfronterizx and other marginalized populations.

Those from western educated, industrialized, rich, democratic societies tend to admire when people in other areas walk miles to get to school, cover treacherous paths, and even use dangerous zip lines, funiculars, or cableways to get there. Yet, at the mention of students who live in Tijuana enduring this crossing back and forth daily, the majority do not see the fortitude and endurance it takes, focusing instead on the illegality of it. For something to be legal or illegal, a person needs to say it is so; it is not a universal truth, but a legislative decision. Although, under most circumstances, it is illegal in California to live in Tijuana and come to school in San Diego without paying tuition, it is not in other border states. Hence, the legality of any law can change, as it did in October 2023 when a new California law, Assembly Bill (AB) 91, began to allow low-income students in Mexico who lived 45 miles or less from the U.S. border to attend college in the United States and pay in-state tuition (for 150 students per eligible

college). Although this example is for college students, is evidence that changes can be made to regulations on school tuition if a legislative groundswell erupts in support of such a change.

The CCW themes and subthemes of this study are outlined in Figure 2. The themes/subthemes overlap and are not mutually exclusive. They answer the study's Research Questions 2 and 3 by providing examples of K–12 individuals and resources that supported students as they related to the six capitals.

Figure 2

Community Cultural Wealth Subthemes

Foundational Forms of Capital		
ASPIRATIONAL aspiration for more, aspirations of ancestors, lo que te voy a dejar de herencia	FAMILIAL consejos, apoyo, herencia	LINGUISTIC two languages, two worlds, language of the border, of the school
Driving Forms of Capital		
NAVIGATIONAL understanding of school systems, daily border crossing	SOCIAL Transfronterizx community as support, allies (at schools, border, work)	RESISTANCE keep going! "Just do it." purpose-driven
Transcendent Forms of Capital		
ENDURANCE daily routine for years or decades years of school in the United States from pregnancy to college		

Educators' perspectives and levels of understanding of the social constructs which operate at different levels in schools (particularly subtractive schooling, hidden curriculum, assessment, and accountability) and their personal experiences as transfronterizx relate to perceptions of the transfronterizx students and families and their interrogation of the current political and educational systems in place—systems that do not necessarily serve transfronterizx.

Unexpected Findings

An unexpected finding among a few transfronterizx parents was the joy they expressed in the morning routine of waiting in line for hours in the car; for some of them, this was the time to bond with their children, catch up on their activities and friendships, talk about their goals, and help them study. As one parent stated:

> But one of the best things that I can tell you about crossing was we had spent so much time in the car that those times, those hours in the car, were like bonding moments because we had no choice, you know, so it was if you want to take a look at like a pro that it was that the talking. Those were the memories I had, like the crossing, how much we spoke, how much time we spent together. I can say that was one of the positive things.

Another parent mentioned how they would play songs in the car once the children woke up to help the children learn the alphabet, numbers, and colors in English and how much music they enjoyed. Another unexpected finding was the level of marital stress in transfronterizx families. The drive to have their children educated in the United States was not always a mutual decision by both parents; in some cases, their drive was influenced by their child with special needs, whom one parent felt would be better served educationally in the United States. A parent described the situation in her family as follows:

> It was for my daughter aha because anyway they can go to school in Tijuana but I didn't, I didn't want my daughter to stay in school in Tijuana, yes because she is the one, she has needs, special needs. I mean I investigated schools when she started she started kindergarten in San Diego, but before kindergarten she did preschool. She did 2 years of preschool in Tijuana, and she started her therapy in Tijuana. I started everything in Tijuana, and in preschool the truth is, it was very good. She arrived very prepared for kindergarten for her, for her, the level of her, of her of autism that she has, she arrived very well, but when it was time for primary, I went to see the schools in Tijuana . . . well there very few that have special education, and the ones that there are, it's very sad, I mean very sad . . . no. I said no, no there is no, no, no, no there's no way. I said there's no way. She's leaving because she's leaving, and that's where my husband told me, "No, it's not that bad . . . there are children here who have autism" and lalala. I told him, "I don't care about the other children." I told him she has the possibility to go to school in the U.S. She's a citizen, and [me la lleveo porque me la llevo] I'll take her because I'll take her.

Conclusion

Transfronterizx individuals constitute a unique community along the Mexico–U.S. border. Educators who work with them shoulder the critical dual responsibility of addressing their diverse and often unseen or concealed needs and supporting them academically as they move forward in their academic journey while using standard methods of parental engagement. In this study, several key findings echo the scholarly research of Iglesias Prieto, Ojeda, Trueba, Koyama, Tessman, Yosso, Solórzano, Moll, Epstein, and Quezada. These findings corroborate existing research and findings on transfronterizx, educators of Latinx students, and the critical

importance of the family–school community. However, my research also brings to light a critical finding: a need to have a framework to understand the transfronterizx experience and the vital role of educators, encompassing teachers and school administrators, in understanding them and cultivating meaningful relationships with this frequently invisible community. It's important to note that this unseen group, at times, intentionally avoids visibility, akin to the experiences of deferred action for childhood arrivals (DACA) students and undocumented families living in the United States; they fear legal repercussions if their status is known. This expanded understanding emphasized the necessity for sustained and intentional support from educational institutions for transfronterizx students and families who exhibit remarkable endurance capital as they navigate the complexities of K–12 education for extended periods—days, months, and even years—while residing in Mexico.

Overall, understanding the transfronterizx family, student, and educator experiences will foster effective engagement by promoting cultural competence, tailored support, inclusive curriculum, family and community involvement, and advocacy for policy change. By centering the voices and experiences of the students they serve, educators can create more inclusive and equitable environments in educational settings that support the success of every student.

In the following chapter I focus on recommendations for multiple stakeholders where transfronterizx students' lives are impacted by their decisions and provide recommendations for future research that can be considered. Finally, I conclude with a new theoretical framework: Transfronterizx Critical Theory (TfxCrt).

CHAPTER SIX

RECOMMENDATIONS

"*While we wait in silence for that final luxury of fearlessness, the weight of that silence will choke us."* - Audre Lorde, Sister Outside

The recommendations outlined in the following section are drawn from the findings uncovered through in-depth research and comprehensive analysis conducted in this dissertation. The actionable recommendations address critical gaps in all areas of the education system, from policymakers and colleges of education to transfronterizx families and students, to address identified issues and foster positive outcomes for transfronterizx. Guided by the voices of participants and grounded in anecdotal and empirical evidence, I propose the recommendations in the next section to enact meaningful change to bring in a new era of visibility and accountability for transfronterizx students and their families.

Recognizing the multifaceted nature of engagement or collaboration is crucial in defining its significance for transfronterizx communities. Such expanded understanding can be recentered on the purpose of parent engagement: to foster a supportive environment conducive to holistic student development. By adopting this broader perspective, I transcended surface-level considerations, such as tardiness, immigration status, or residency. Instead, I acknowledged the dynamics of each family, including the endurance, dedication, and sacrifices that are particularly evident in their daily border crossings. In this way, educators may remove biases and implement a more comprehensive approach to fostering the ways in which transfronterizx families and students engage with their education. This perspective highlights their challenges and recognizes their unique community cultural wealth (CCW; Yosso, 2005) and contributions in their community, thereby enriching the concept of parental engagement with an additive lens.

Identifying and tracking students who are transfronterizx is a critical step in providing tailored support services to families and students and monitoring their academic progress and social–emotional well-being. Rejecting transfronterizx "invisibility" entails acknowledging students and making them feel known, understood, and supported. Once this critical step is achieved, families will feel welcomed, and the inherent fear in their situations might diminish, allowing them to participate in or engage in their children's public school without the apprehension of legal repercussions.

Recommendations for Policymakers

Policymakers amended the national educational leadership preparation (NELP) standards in 2018 to specify what novice educational leaders and program graduates are expected to do in their schools (NPBEA, 2018). With this revision, NELP called for educational leaders to be equitable and culturally proficient. NELP also expects leaders to engage community and external leadership. Standard 3 reads:

> Equity, Inclusiveness, and Cultural Responsiveness—Candidates who successfully complete a building-level educational leadership preparation program understand and demonstrate the capacity to promote the current and future success and well-being of each student and adult by applying the knowledge, skills, and commitments necessary to develop and maintain a supportive, equitable, culturally responsive, and inclusive school culture. (NPBEA, 2018, p. 54)

On family engagement, Standard 5 states:

> Candidates who successfully complete a building-level educational leadership preparation program understand and demonstrate the capacity to promote the current and future success and well-being of each student and adult by applying the knowledge,

> skills, and commitments necessary to engage families, community, and school personnel to strengthen student learning, support school improvement, and advocate for the needs of their school and community. (p. 61)

Educators can foster meaningful partnerships and collaboration by recognizing the central role of families and communities in the educational journey of transfronterizx students. Educators can create a supportive network that enhances student success by actively involving families in decision-making processes, seeking their input, and leveraging community resources.

These amendments to the requirements for educational leaders to complete their leadership preparation signaled an understanding of the need for educators who are attuned to the needs of diverse communities; yet families who are transfronterizx at the border of the United States and México (i.e., U.S. citizens attending U.S. schools but living in another country) have remained unaddressed as a group. Educational proponents knowledgeable about the challenges faced by transfronterizx families and students can advocate for policy change in educational institutions and broader systems, including making the transfronterizx student population visible without repercussions to their education in the United States.

Creating a dedicated line for students to cross into the United States from Mexico would benefit all as a measure to shorten wait times and prevent the types of crime, abuse, and harassment children endure during border wait times when they use the pedestrian lane. Educators can effect systemic change and promote greater equity in education by advocating for equitable resources, culturally responsive practices, and policies that address the unique needs of transfronterizx students. These policy changes, such as the ones proposed above, will lead to the creation of accountability measures for this group and measures intended to follow the educational trajectory from crib to college.

Recommendations for School District Leaders

Document analysis revealed that all five districts for which I conducted a document search all had policies that adhered to Senate Bill (SB) 257, "School Admissions: Pupil Residency: Pupils of Deported Parents," a California education code. The districts also had language that ensures school districts uphold the Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment to the United States Constitution, which, under the *Plyer v. Doe* (1981) landmark case, established all children, regardless of their immigration status, have a constitutional right to free public education (Brennan, W. J. & Supreme Court of The United States, 1981). Additionally, districts may not request information such as visas or passports that may be used to deny access to compulsory education. These policies that regulate admission and procedures for students' enrollment should be more prominently displayed at the district level on their website and available in infographics. More importantly, the same care should be taken to publicly display this information at local schools and translate it into languages the population needs.

School districts should provide transfronterizx support services, which are available to meet the specific needs and experiences of transfronterizx students and families. District services can include morning school programs that begin at 6:30 a.m. for early crossers, translation services, mental health resources, and referrals to community organizations that address social–emotional needs. At the time of this study, the studied districts contracted with the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) to provide before- and after-school care; however, the After School Education and Safety (ASES) grant awards monies to local educational agencies (LEAs) for these types of programs. According to the California Department of Education (n.d.-a) website, the purpose of the ASES grant is the following:

> The purpose of the After School Education and Safety Program is to create incentives for establishing locally-driven Expanded Learning programs, including after-school programs that partner with public schools and communities to provide academic and literacy support and safe, constructive alternatives for youth. The ASES Program involves collaboration among parents, youth, and representatives from schools, governmental agencies, individuals from community-based organizations, and the private sector. (para. 2)

The monies awarded can be used to contract with the YMCA, contract with other organizations that meet the needs of their local population, create new district programs, or work with an entity such as the YMCA to create a tailored program for the district.

Recommendations for Schools

In addition to making enrollment information publicly available, front office school staff should be made aware of these policies and understand their role as supportive of the school and welcoming to the families, no matter where they live. Participants shared some educational leaders in schools were aware of an influx of students who live in Tijuana and cross the border daily; some of the key strategies these leaders developed can be replicated across the border region with authentic transfronterizx input (e.g., a later start time, early morning access to school with tutors, or a before-school program with morning snacks included). School can increase transfronterizx parent engagement by using culturally proficient engagement strategies, such as the seven Cs model of effective family–school and community engagement practices (Clark-Louque et al., 2019), including communication, connectedness, collective responsibility, and courageous engagement, with expanded opportunities for academic support, accommodations, and modifications to schoolwork based on transfronterizx needs.

Recommendations for Educators

Educators hold multiple roles—among them, to (a) to educate students with knowledge that will provide them with more opportunities, (b) to instill values that will help students prosper, (c) to teach students strategies to understand themselves and others, (d) to overcome trauma, and (e) to motivate them to go further. However, the institutionalized endemic nature of discrimination based on race, class, ability, gender, and other identities; other forms of marginality, such as residency status and immigration status; and how discrimination permeates our schools of education, books, news, and media have a negative impact on students. Educators must become social justice advocates who question the educational structures, processes, and discourse that function to maintain racism, classism, and all other forms of oppression. Moreover, educators of transfronterizx, that are transfronterizx themselves, inherently understand the challenges faced by students. They must continue to unlearn dominant ideologies of meritocracy to emancipate and empower transfronterizx in their educational paths in the United States. Educators of transfronterizx have creative ways to reach families who live across the border; these strategies could be applied across schools that have an influx of transfronterizx students and families to foster strategic communication, which will lead to effective collaborative engagement with families or caregivers of transfronterizx on either side of the border.

Educators should develop critical pedagogy through cultural proficiency. Educators who understand the unique challenges faced by transfronterizx families and students are an asset and are better equipped to approach them with empathy and cultural sensitivity. By recognizing the cultural and language nuances and values that shape their experiences, educators can establish

more robust connections, build trust with transfronterizx students and their families, and eliminate their invisibility in the school system (Lindsey et al., 2018; Quezada, et al., 2013).

By humanizing the curriculum based on experiential knowledge of the classroom and school community members, educators can develop and implement a curriculum that reflects the lived experiences and centers their students' cultural and language backgrounds, including the voices of transfronterizx students. By diversifying teaching modalities and including perspectives and narratives centered on marginalized voices into inclusive units of study and lesson plans, educators can create learning environments that validate and affirm the identities of transfronterizx students.

Recommendations for Schools of Education in Colleges

In reflecting on critical race theory (CRT) for teacher education (Solórzano, 2019), I applied those tenets to teacher education preparation programs; teachers must be better prepared for the social justice work they face. I suggest application of the five tenets by Solórzano (1997, 2019) in the following ways:

Tenet 1: As colleges prepare teachers, they need to center their conversations on racism in both its interpersonal and institutional forms and how racism intersects with other forms of marginalization, classism, and poverty.

Tenet 2: Deficit frameworks have been embedded in the ways colleges train teachers for well over a century. Colleges must challenge cultural deficit frameworks and explicitly teach antideficit and antiracist frameworks; this tenet has been part of social science and teacher educational research for nearly 70 years.

Tenet 3: Colleges must use antideficit and antiracist strength and asset-based frameworks, including culturally responsive and sustaining curriculum and pedagogy, funds of knowledge (FoK), CCW, and cultural proficiency.

Tenet 4: As college personnel prepare teachers to serve communities of color, they must provide social justice tools for teachers and their students. In the Freirean tradition, CRT for teacher education names racist injuries, names the problem, identifies the origin, analyzes the causes, seeks remedies for the injury, and finally finds solutions.

Tenet 5: Ethnic studies and gender and women's studies have and will continue to provide tools for our teachers and their students to identify, analyze, and act against interpersonal and institutional forms of marginalization as colleges prepare teachers for the classroom.

At University of California Los Angeles, and San Diego State University, a transfronterizx alliance student organization (TASO) has been established (Daley, 2018). Extending this organization to reach transfronterizx students in high school or middle schools would benefit transfronterizx students. This partnership would allow them to create a community and mentorship pipeline so younger students see models of success and have a transfronterizx community on which to rely. Educators must remember that the challenges they and their students encounter in and out of the classroom have historical and contextual roots, and history and context can guide them in meeting those challenges.

Recommendations for Families and Caregivers of Transfronterizx

Families and caregivers of transfronterizx must acquire knowledge and understanding of policies that could benefit the student and family. A variety of situations can propel families to move to Mexico and enroll their children in school; in some cases, students may be able to have

a residence outside of the United States, yet still be allowed to attend school without repercussions.

Communication with teachers is crucial for transfronterizx caregivers as a student progresses or encounters challenges. Residency, migration status, and other information can be kept private; however, they transfronterizx caregivers must establish a way to communicate with educators. Barriers such as time, language, and access might impede, muddle, or deter communication, nevertheless, communication should be established in some way, such as through phone calls, emails, educational applications such as ClassDoJo, or others.

Recommendations for Transfronterizx Students

I extol the brave students who traverse the largest international border in the world, daily. As they navigate daily life as transfronterizx, I recommend they create a community with their fellow transfronterizx along the way. This bond will support transfronterizx students through their academic journeys and help them meet their goals. I recommend they take advantage of what is available and advocate for themselves when something seems wrong. I also recommend they seek mentors who have also been or are transfronterizx, ask them questions, and find encouragement in their journeys and success.

Recommendations for Future Research

U.S. schools would benefit from additional research on transfronterizx and the number of students who cross the border to attend U.S. schools. These data would enable public schools to accurately track these students and allocate appropriate resources to support their unique needs effectively. Furthermore, the immigration status and socioeconomic backgrounds of transfronterizx students and their families remain under-researched; this knowledge would offer a crucial context for educators and policymakers.

Private schools in the United States that enroll students residing in Mexico represent an additional area of research. Investigating the dynamics of these schools, including their admissions processes, educational offerings, support systems, and the experiences of both students and families, would provide valuable insights into their experience. Understanding the ways these private schools contribute to a more supportive and inclusive environment for transfronterizx can inform positive practices for students and promote a more affirming and empowering educational experiences for all transfronterizx students and families in both private and public schools.

Additionally, there is a significant gap in research concerning the mental health of transfronterizx individuals. Exploring this area would offer valuable insights into their specific challenges and guide the development of targeted interventions and support services. Further exploration into the dynamics of the duality of invisibility and validation, fear and resistance in the identity of transfronterizx students would provide valuable insights. Understanding how this duality impacts their sense of self, academic performance, and overall well-being is essential for better understanding their experiences. Gaining insights into these factors could illuminate the intersecting challenges faced by transfronterizx individuals and inform more comprehensive and equitable approaches to their education and well-being.

Transfronterizx Critical Theory

Another world is not only possible, she is on her way. On a quiet day, I can hear her breathing.

— Arundhati Roy

Understanding the unique experience of transfronterizos/as/x calls for a critical theory that encompasses their identities, lived experiences, needs, and validation of who transfronterizx are. Literature on transfronterizx has been steadily increasing since the 1990s. The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) propelled the literature around the frontera and the

ways in which the border was evolving economically and socially. Anzaldúa (2004) tackled the multiplicity of borderland identities about being from both countries while being from neither (ni de aquí, ni de allá). Iglesias Prieto (2014) delved into the transfronterizx life in the globalized cultural context impacted by migration, and Ojeda (2005, 2009) studied the vast inequalities of the economic and sociopolitical realities for women laborers. Trueba (1999, 2002) advocated for linguistic diversity and cultural pluralism, and Solórzano (2019) continued and extended the work of CRT theorists to advocate for educational policies and practices that promote social justice and equity. Yosso (2005) focused on asset-based approaches and emphasized the importance of validating and using the forms of wealth from diverse students and politicization of the border. Falcon Orta (2021), Rivera (2020), and other academics held space for transfronterizx as they attained entrance into universities, and Tessman and Koyama (2017) sought to understand the student and family experience, and Cueva-Esquivel (2015) analyzed their perceptions of the border and educational pursuit strategies. Additionally, studies by De la Piedra et al. (2018), focused on the literacy practices of transfronterizo students. A need for theories on these individuals exists.

In this last chapter, I introduce central tenets to a new theoretical framework TransfronterizxCrit (TfxCrt). With the foundation in CRT, CCW, and borderland studies, TfxCrt builds a framework to better understand the sui generis experiences of transfronterizx. As a theoretical framework, TfxCrt seeks to continue to work on social justice and humanizing pedagogies while allowing place, space, and validation for the individuals who are transfronterizx. The emerging tenets are summarized as follows:

- Fear is endemic among transfronterizx;
- Commitment to social justice through humanizing practices;

- Endurance and sacrifice capital as forms of wealth;
- Intersectionality of global north and global south, or "global south cosmopolitan" (Sarabia, 2015); and
- Duality

In the following section I expand on the tenets and describe implications for each tenet. As previously stated, this nascent theory builds upon the work of many theorists and researchers with the intent to better frame and understand the experiences of transfronterizx:

Tenet 1, fear is endemic among transfronterizx, acknowledges that fear is a pervasive aspect of the experiences of transfronterizx individuals, stemming from the uncertainties and risks associated with the daily crossing of the international border and navigating complex sociopolitical environments within the borderland context. It recognizes the psychological and emotional toll that fear can have on transfronterizx communities, prompting them to become invisible; it emphasizes the need to address and mitigate these fears through humanizing policies and pedagogical practices that address the systemic injustices.

By foregrounding endemic fear, TfxCrt challenges dominant narratives that depict border-crossing experiences in simplistic or sensationalized terms. It invites critical interrogation of discourses that dehumanize or criminalize transfronterizx individuals, highlighting the systemic injustices that perpetuate fear and insecurity. Fear as endemic highlights the vulnerability of transfronterizx individuals within borderland contexts and places a central focus on the human experience. It emphasizes the pervasive nature of fear and anxiety stemming from the uncertainties, risks, and threats associated with crossing international borders, that can be militarized and armed. Recognizing fear as endemic calls for policy interventions that address the root causes of insecurity and violence within borderland communities. It advocates for

policies that prioritize human rights, safety, and dignity, while challenging militarized approaches that exacerbate fear and harm, thus cultivating empathy and solidarity with transfronterizx communities while fostering connections across borders and boundaries.

Tenet 2, commitment to social justice through humanizing practices, emphasizes the centrality of humanization in the pursuit of social justice. It underscores the importance of recognizing the inherent dignity and worth of all individuals, particularly communities such as transfronterizx, and emphasizes the need to challenge dehumanizing narratives and practices through advocacy and activism.

The recognition of endemic fear among transfronterizx, coupled with a commitment to social justice, underscores the psychological and emotional toll of living in constant fear, necessitating mental-health and trauma-informed approaches to support healing and resilience. It highlights the lived realities of transfronterizx individuals, foregrounding their emotions, fears, and coping mechanisms as essential aspects of their identity and agency. It encourages individuals and institutions to commit to humanizing approaches by listening to the voices of transfronterizx individuals, amplify their stories, and work collaboratively towards collective solutions.

Tenet 3, endurance and sacrifice capital as forms of wealth, reframes the concept of wealth to include the endurance and resilience cultivated through enduring daily hardships such as traversing the international border twice a day for years or decades to attend school and making economic and emotional sacrifices as well as those of time with family and friends. It recognizes the strength and resilience inherent in the experiences of transfronterizx individuals and emphasizes the value of acknowledging and honoring these forms of capital alongside more traditional notions of wealth.

By elevating endurance and sacrifice capital as forms of wealth, TfxCrt challenges existing power dynamics that prioritize certain forms of privilege and advantage. It promotes a more inclusive and equitable understanding of wealth that reflects the diverse experiences and contributions of all members of society. This tenet emphasizes the importance of acknowledging and honoring the sacrifices made by transfronterizx individuals in pursuit of education and economic opportunities. It recognizes the significant contributions of transfronterizx communities to society, despite facing systemic barriers and inequalities.

Tenet 4, intersectionality of the global north and global south, or "global south cosmopolitan" (Sarabia, 2015), highlights the complex intersectionality of identities and experiences within transfronterizx communities, bridging the divide between the global north and global south. It recognizes that transfronterizx individuals often navigate multiple layers of identity and belonging while understanding and incorporating elements of both the sociopolitical and economic dynamics of the northern and southern hemispheres. Transfronterizx politicized "glocal" experiential understanding recognizes their understanding of local sociopolitical nuances and global awareness. This tenet underscores the multiple layers of belonging that transfronterizx individuals navigate, encompassing both local and global affiliations. It recognizes their capacity to incorporate elements of both the sociopolitical and economic dynamics of the northern and southern hemispheres into their sense of identity and belonging and promotes the validation of a politicized glocal experiential understanding. By embracing the intersectionality of the global north and global south, TfxCrt empowers transfronterizx individuals with a heightened sense of global awareness.

Tenet 5, duality, acknowledges the presence of contrasting and interconnected facets of the experiences of transfronterizx individuals; invisibility and validation, fear and resistance. It

recognizes the complexity and multifaceted nature of transfronterizx identities, emotions, and social dynamics, emphasizing the need to understand and navigate the tensions between different elements.

Duality deepens our understanding of transfronterizx experiences by highlighting the multifaceted nature of identity. As a tenet, duality in TfxCrt aims to empower and liberate transfronterizx individuals, by acknowledging and validating their lived experiences and fostering spaces for self-expression, agency, and collective action. Duality challenges essentialist narratives that minimize the rich tapestry of individual stories and perspectives; it underscores the importance of recognizing and validating the tensions between contrasting aspects of their identity within transfronterizx experiences, promoting a nuanced, intersectional, and empowering approach to research, advocacy, and social change. Duality also encourages intersectional analysis, considering how different aspects of their identity, such as race, ethnicity, gender, class, and migration status, intersect and interact within transfronterizx communities.

TfxCrt theoretical framework has its foundation in CRT principles and is refined with the unique experiences and challenges faced by transfronterizx individuals to provide a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the intersecting dynamics of identity, migration status, CCW, fear and advocacy within transfronterizx communities, while also advancing critical perspectives on social justice and humanizing pedagogies. Additionally, the TfxCrt framework can be applied to various contexts, such as education policy and practice, parent engagement, healthcare, immigration policy, and community advocacy.

Concluding Remarks

At the time of this study, Denning Public School District in New Mexico was the only school district in the United States that allowed students living outside the country to attend

schools in the United States without paying out-of-state tuition. According to the education clause in the New Mexico Constitution (New Mexico, 2024), “a uniform system of free public schools sufficient for the education of, and open to, all the children of school age in the State shall be established and maintained” (Article XII, §). If this can be done in New Mexico, it can be done elsewhere.

In conclusion, this study shed light on a profound aspect of parental dedication and sacrifice in the pursuit of their children’s education, including enduring lengthy border wait times over a span of many years, relinquishing parental rights, and risking potential disciplinary actions at school, to ensure their children’s access to education in the United States. This dedication and commitment epitomize a level of parental involvement and engagement that transcends conventional notions. It is imperative that the existing understanding of effective engagement expands to acknowledge and perceive these unseen parenting practices. By validating these hidden acts of sacrifice, societies can cultivate a deeper understanding of the multifaceted nature of parental engagement and pave the way for more inclusive and supportive educational environments for all children, including transfronterizx students and their families.

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APPENDIX A

Transfronterizx Family Recruitment via Phone Call

Script (via call)
Examining Factors that Lead to Effective Collaborative Partnerships Among Transfronterizx Students and Families, US Schools, and Border Communities
University of San Diego IRB # IRB-2023-105

"Hello,
My name is Sobeida Velazquez, good afternoon (good day or good evening). _____ I am contacting you to see if you would like to participate in a study about cross-border life, specifically what it is like when you have children attend school in San Diego while living in Tijuana. I am a PhD student at USD and I am conducting research on individuals that have experience with the *transfronterizx* as part of my study.
The purpose of the study is to explore your experiences with *transfronterizx* life and explore potentials to strengthen ties between the school and parents who cross the border daily.
It would be one interview of approximately 60 minutes, in person (in San Diego or Tijuana) or by zoom, as you prefer. You will be audio recorded during this interview. If an interview is conducted via zoom, only audio will be recorded. You will also complete an anonymous online survey about your experiences as a *transfronterizx* that will take about 15 minutes. The total time will be 75 minutes. The survey can be completed either on a tablet that I have, or I can send you the link and you complete the survey on your cell phone or computer.

This study is voluntary, there will be no compensation. Taking part in this study is optional. ***Choosing not to participate will have no effect on your employment status, grades, or any other benefits to which you are entitled.*** You may also quit being in the study at any time or decide not to answer any specific questions.

This study involves no more risk than the risks you encounter in daily life. Your responses will be confidential, and all your information will be coded with a number. Your email or IP address will be deleted, and nobody will know your identity. I will keep the study data for a minimum of 5 years.

Would you be interested in being part of the study?"
IF YES, CONTINUE "Thank you, what days and times do you have available?"

IF NO, "Thank you I appreciate you taking the time to take my call

For further information or if you have any questions or concerns about this study, my contact information is:
Sobeida Velázquez, M.Ed., Ph.D. Candidate, Education for Social Justice
Email: xxxxxxx@xxxxxxx.xxx
Faculty advisor is Dr. Reyes Quezada, his contact information is the following:
email: xxxxxxx@xxxxxxx.xxx
phone number at USD is (XXX) XXX-XXXX.

Guion de invitación para padres o familiares a participar en un estudio de investigación (vía telefónica)

Título: Examinando los factores que conducen a colaboraciones efectivas entre estudiantes y familias transfronterizas, entre las escuelas de EE. UU. y comunidades fronterizas
Universidad de San Diego IRB # IRB-2023-105

"Hola buenas (tardes/días),
Habla Sobeida Velázquez. Me comunico contigo para ver si te gustaría participar en un estudio acera de la vida *transfronteriza (o).* En específico estoy investigando tus experiencias de vivir en Tijuana y traer los niños a la escuela a San Diego diario.

Soy estudiante de doctorado en USD y estoy realizando una investigación sobre personas que tienen experiencia con *transfronterizx* como parte de mi estudio. Mi asesor docente es el Dr. Reyes Quezada, su información de contacto es la siguiente: correo electrónico: rquezada@sandiego.edu y su número de teléfono en USD es (619) 260-7453.

El propósito del estudio es explorar tus experiencias con *transfronterizo (a)* y explorar potenciales para fortalecer vínculos entre la escuela y padres de familia que cruzan la frontera diario.

Sera una entrevista de aproximadamente 45 minutos, en persona (en San Diego o Tijuana) o por zoom, como prefieras. Serás grabado *solo por audio* durante esta entrevista, si la entrevista es por zoom, *solo el audio* será grabado.

Una encuesta anónima en línea, que tomara aproximadamente 10 minutos en completar también es parte del estudio. En total el tiempo seria de 55 minutos. La encuesta se puede tomar ya sea en una tableta que yo tengo o te mando el enlace y la llenas en tu celular o computadora.

Este estudio es completamente voluntario.

¿Te interesaría ser parte del estudio?"
SI ESTA INTERESADA/O: "Gracias, ¿qué fechas tienes disponible?
Te paso mi contacto.

Sobeida Velázquez
Email: xxxxxxx@xxxxxxx.xxx"

SI NO ESTA INTERESADO: "Gracias por tu tiempo en tomar mi llamada"

APPENDIX B

Transfronterizx Family Minor Recruitment via Phone Call

Family recruit minor Script (via call)
Title: Examining Factors That Lead to Effective Collaborations Between *Transfronterizx* Students and Families, Between US Schools and Border Communities
University of San Diego IRB# IRB-2023-105

"Thank you for agreeing to take part in the investigation. I also wanted to ask if you would be willing for me to interview your child(ren) for this same study. The interview would take a maximum of **20 minutes**. They would be *audio recorded* during this interview. If an interview is conducted via zoom, only audio will be recorded. I am a PhD student at USD, and I am conducting research on individuals that have experience with the *transfronterizx* as part of my study

This study is voluntary, there will be no compensation. Taking part in this study is optional. ***Choosing not to participate will have no effect on, grades, or any other benefits.*** Your child(ren) may also quit being in the study at any time or decide not to answer any specific questions.

The questions are about how they feel at school being a *transfronterizx* student and what they would like it to be different.
Here are a sample of the questions I could possibly ask them depending on how the conversation is going and how they are feeling:

How do you feel when you are at school, in the school office?
Do you feel that you are treated differently for living in Tijuana? How do you feel crossing the border every day? How do you feel when you arrive at school? How do you feel if you are late? What would you like your teacher to know? How could your teacher support you?

The child(ren)'s responses will be confidential, and all information will be coded with a number. The email or IP address will be deleted, and nobody will know the identity. I will keep the study data for a minimum of 5 years. Would you let your child participate?"

IF YES "Thank you very much, do you think it can take place on the same day as yours?"
IF NO "Thank you for taking my call
If you have any questions or concerns my contact information is:
Sobeida Velázquez, M.Ed., Ph.D. Candidate, Education for Social Justice
Email: xxxxxxx@xxxxxxx.xxx
Faculty advisor is Dr. Reyes Quezada, his contact information is the following:
email: xxxxxxx@xxxxxxx.xxx
phone number at USD is (XXX) XXX-XXXX."

Guion de reclutamiento para que los padres o familiares participantes den su consentimiento para que sus hijos participen en el estudio de investigación (por teléfono)

Título: Examinando los factores que conducen a colaboraciones efectivas entre estudiantes y familias transfronterizas, entre escuelas de EE. UU. y comunidades fronterizas
Universidad de San Diego IRB# IRB-2023-105

"Gracias por aceptar participar en la investigación. También quería preguntarle si estaría dispuesto a que entreviste a su(s) hijo(s) para este mismo estudio.

La entrevista tomaría un máximo de 20 minutos. Serían grabados en audio durante esta entrevista. Si se realiza una entrevista a través de zoom, solo se grabará el audio.

Soy estudiante de doctorado en USD y estoy realizando una investigación sobre personas que tienen experiencia con *transfronterizx* como parte de mi estudio. Mi asesor docente es el Dr. Reyes Quezada, su información de contacto es la siguiente: correo electrónico: rquezada@sandiego.edu y su número de teléfono en USD es (619) 260-7453.

Participación en el estudio es voluntario y no habrá compensación.

Las preguntas son sobre cómo se sienten en la escuela siendo un estudiante transfronterizx y qué les gustaría que fuera diferente.

Aquí hay una muestra de las preguntas que podría hacerles dependiendo de cómo vaya la conversación y cómo se sientan:

¿Cómo te sientes cuando estás en la escuela, en la oficina de la escuela?
¿Sientes que te tratan diferente por vivir en Tijuana? ¿Cómo te sientes cruzando la frontera todos los días? ¿Cómo te sientes cuando llegas a la escuela? ¿Cómo te sientes si llegas tarde?
¿Qué te gustaría que tu profesor supiera?
¿Cómo podría apoyarte tu maestro?

¿Dejarías que tu hijo participara?

¿Muchas gracias, crees que se pueda hacer el mismo día que el tuyo?
Una vez más, aquí está mi información de contacto.

Sobeida Velázquez
Correo electrónico: xxxxxxx@xxxxxxx.xxx"

APPENDIX C

Educators of *Transfronterizx* Recruitment via Email

Invitation to Educators to Participate in Research Study (via email)
Examining Factors that Lead to Effective Collaborative Partnerships Among Transfronterizx Students and Families, US Schools, and Border Communities
University of San Diego IRB # IRB-2023-105

Research Study
I am a PhD student at USD, and I am conducting research on individuals that have experience working with the *transfronterizx* students and families as part of my study.

The purpose of this study is to explore the factors that affect *transfronterizx* family engagement to create and strengthen partnerships among families, schools, students, and educators that work with *transfronterizx* students for their success.

To participate in this research, you must be:
- an educator that works with *transfronterizx* students

Taking part in this study is optional, there will be no compensation. ***Choosing not to participate will have no effect on your employment status, grades, or any other benefits to which you are entitled.*** You may also quit being in the study at any time or decide not to answer any specific questions.

The study involves:
- completion of an anonymous online survey (approximately 15 minutes)
- one 60 -minute (approximate) one-on-one interview which will take place either on zoom or in person, whichever is most convenient to you.
- You will be audio recorded during this interview. If an interview is conducted via zoom, only audio will be recorded.

Total time is 75 minutes approximately
If the interview is in person, the location will be in a mutually decided upon place and time.

This study involves no more risk than the risks you encounter in daily life. Your responses will be confidential, and all your information will be coded with a number. Your email or IP address will be deleted, and nobody will know your identity. I will keep the study data for a minimum of 5 years.

CONTACT
For further information about this study, please contact:
Sobeida Velázquez, M.Ed., Ph.D. Candidate, Education for Social Justice
Email: xxxxxxx@xxxxxxx.xxx
Faculty advisor is Dr. Reyes Quezada, his contact information is the following:

APPENDIX D

Transfronterizx Families Semistructured Interview Protocol

Semi-Structured Interview Protocol *Transfronterizx* Families
Examining Factors that Lead to Effective Collaborative Partnerships Among *Transfronterizx* Students and Families, US Schools, and Border Communities
IRB #2023-105
Interview Protocol & Guide
Sobeida Velázquez, Ph.D. Candidate, Education for Social Justice
The purpose of this study is to explore the factors that affect *transfronterizx* family engagement to create and strengthen partnerships among families, schools, students, and educators that work with *transfronterizx* students for their success.

Semi-Structured Interview Protocol *Transfronterizx* Families
Hello. Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study and for being available for this conversation. If at any moment during the conversation you don't feel comfortable answering a question, please don't feel obligated to do so. Also, know that your anonymity will be ensured throughout the process, so feel free to answer honestly and openly. Are you okay with me audio recording our conversation? Do you have any questions before we proceed? Okay. Let's begin.

Interview questions
Demographic Information
Please start by stating your:
Name, preferred pseudonym (if you have one),
Role (parent, grandparent, leader, teacher, etc.).
Age
Gender
Ethnicity
Educational background
Please tell me about who you are, where you are from, your family, and/or your culture?
Does your child(ren) teacher speak Spanish? Are you able to communicate with them?

Belonging Interview Questions

1. Please reflect on your child(ren) pre-K-12 schooling experience as a transfronterizx. Share a memory (tell me a story) that captures your experience as a parent, please describe the school (public or private; elementary, middle, or high school; racial or ethnic demographics)
2. How well does school (including teachers) understand you as a person?
3. Overall, how much do you feel like you belong at your school?
4. **In what ways does this impact your interaction with the school (teachers, events, meetings etc.)?**

Dignity Interview Questions

1. How would you define dignity? (probe)

2. When your child(ren) is in school, do you feel they are treated with dignity? (descriptive questions)
3. Can you tell me about a time you recall you were treated in this way? (follow up)
4. **In what ways does this impact your interaction with the school (teachers, events, meetings etc.)?**

Inclusion Interview Questions

1. **In what ways** do you feel your school educators include the knowledge they bring with them from home in the school?
2. Is there an example you could share with me?
3. **In what ways does this impact your interaction with the school (teachers, events, meetings etc.)?**

Justice Interview Questions

1. How would you define justice?
2. In what ways do you feel your child (ren) are treated justly or unjustly?
3. Can you tell me about a time you recall you were treated in this way? (follow up)
4. **In what ways does this impact your interaction with the school (teachers, events, meetings etc.)?**

Closing remarks

Is there anything else that you would like to share or add related to family-school-community engagement that we have not discussed?

Any final thoughts about what we've been talking about?

Thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts and experiences! If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at any point.

I will contact you in the coming weeks to solicit feedback on your responses and if I captured them correctly.

Protocolo de entrevista con Adultos *Transfronterizx*

Título: Examinando los factores que conducen a colaboraciones efectivas entre estudiantes y familias transfronterizas, entre las escuelas de EE. UU. y comunidades fronterizas

IRB # 2023-105

Protocolo & guía de entrevistas

Sobeida Velázquez, PhD. (candidata) Educación para justicia social

El propósito de este estudio es explorar y determinar los factores que afectan la participación familiar transfronteriza para crear y fortalecer asociaciones entre familias, escuelas y educadores que trabajan con estudiantes transfronterizos para su éxito. Esto se logrará a través de un examen de la medida en que los educadores entienden a las familias transfronterizas y las percepciones que las familias transfronterizas tienen de los educadores y las escuelas en los Estados Unidos.

Protocolo de entrevistas semi-estructuradas con familias *Transfronterizx*

Hola. Gracias por aceptar participar en este estudio y por estar disponible para esta conversación. Si en algún momento de la conversación no se siente cómodo respondiendo una pregunta, no se sienta obligado a hacerlo. Además, sepa que se garantizará su anonimato durante todo el proceso, así que siéntase libre de responder con honestidad y franqueza. ¿Estás de acuerdo con que grabe en audio nuestra conversación? ¿Tiene alguna pregunta antes de continuar? Bueno. Vamos a empezar.

Preguntas de entrevistas

Información demográfica

Comience indicando su:
Nombre, seudónimo preferido (si tiene uno)
Rol (padre, abuelo, líder, maestro, etc.)
Años
Género
Etnicidad
Nivel educativo
Cuéntame un poco de quién eres, de dónde eres, tu familia y/o tu cultura.
¿El maestro de su(s) hijo(s) habla español? ¿Puedes comunicarte con los maestros?

Preguntas sobre el sentido de pertenecer

1. Reflexione sobre la experiencia escolar de su(s) hijo(s) de prekínder a 12 como transfronteriza/o. Comparta un recuerdo (cuénteme una historia) que capture su experiencia como padre. Describa la escuela (pública o privada; primaria, secundaria o preparatoria; demografía racial o étnica)
2. ¿Qué tan bien sientes que te entiende la escuela (incluidos los maestros) como persona?
3. En general, ¿cuánto sientes que perteneces a tu escuela?
4. ¿**De qué manera** crees que eso afecta tu interacción con la escuela (maestros, eventos, juntas)?

Preguntas sobre el sentido de dignidad

1. ¿Cómo definirías la dignidad? (Investigación)

2. Cuando su(s) hijo(s) está(n) en la escuela, ¿siente que son tratados con dignidad? (preguntas descriptivas)
3. ¿Puede hablarme de alguna vez que recuerde que su(s) hijo(s) fue(n) tratado(s) de esta manera? (hacer un seguimiento)
4. ¿**De qué manera** crees que eso afecta tu interacción con la escuela (maestros, eventos, juntas)?

Preguntas de la entrevista de inclusión

1. ¿En qué manera sientes que los educadores de tu escuela incluyen los conocimientos que tu hija(o) traen de casa?
2. ¿Hay algún ejemplo que puedas compartir conmigo?
3. ¿**De qué manera** crees que eso afecta tu interacción con la escuela (maestros, eventos, juntas)?

Preguntas de la entrevista de justicia

1. ¿Cómo definirías la justicia?
2. ¿Siente que su(s) hijo(s) son tratados con justicia?
3. ¿Puede decirme un momento en que su(s) hijo(s) fue(n) tratado(s) de esta manera?
4. ¿**De qué manera** crees que eso afecta tu interacción con la escuela (maestros, eventos, juntas)?

Palabras de cierre

¿Hay algo más que le gustaría compartir o agregar relacionado con la participación de la familia, la escuela y la comunidad que no hayamos discutido?
¿Algún pensamiento final sobre lo que hemos estado hablando?
¡Gracias por tomarse el tiempo para compartir sus pensamientos y experiencias! Si tiene alguna pregunta o inquietud, no dude en ponerse en contacto conmigo en cualquier momento.
Me comunicaré con usted en las próximas semanas para solicitar comentarios sobre su respuesta y si los capturé correctamente.

APPENDIX E

Educators of Transfronterizx Elementary Students Semistructured Interview Protocol

Examining Factors that Lead to Effective Collaborative Partnerships Among *Transfronterizx* Students and Families, US Schools, and Border Communities
IRB # 2023-105
Interview Protocol & Guide
Sobeida Velázquez, Ph.D. Candidate, Education for Social Justice

The purpose of this study is to explore the factors that affect *transfronterizx* family engagement to create and strengthen partnerships among families, schools, students, and educators that work with *transfronterizx* students for their success. This will be accomplished through an examination of the extent to which educators understand *transfronterizx* families, and the perceptions *transfronterizx* families have of educators and schools have in the US.

Semi-Structured Interview Protocol Educators of *Transfronterizx* Elementary Students

Hello. Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study and for being available for this conversation. If at any moment during the conversation you don't feel comfortable answering a question, please don't feel obligated to do so. Also, know that your anonymity will be ensured throughout the process, so feel free to answer honestly and openly. Are you okay with me audio recording our conversation? Do you have any questions before we proceed? Okay. Let's begin.

Please start by stating your:
Name, preferred pseudonym (if you have one),
Role (parent, grandparent, leader, teacher, etc.).
Age
Gender
Ethnicity
Educational background
Years of teaching
Please tell me about who you are, where you are from, your family, and/or your culture?

Semi- structured Interview Questions:

1. Tell me about your experience working with *transfronterizx* students.
2. Can you share more about working with students that cross the border daily?
3. Tell me about your experience working with *transfronterizx* families.
4. Do you have any supports or structure in place specifically for *transfronterizx* students and families?
5. What are your thoughts on what services *transfronterizx* would benefit from?
6. What does *transfronterizx* family engagement look like?
7. Why do you think that is? (If engagement is high)
8. How could this increase? (If engagement is low)
9. What are barriers you see that *transfronterizx* overcome?
10. In what ways does the school system help or hinder?

Closing remarks

Is there anything else that you would like to share or add?

Any final thoughts about what we've been talking about?

Thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts and experiences! If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at any point.

I will contact you in the coming weeks to solicit feedback your response and if I captured them correctly.

APPENDIX F

Transfronterizx Students Semistructured Interview Protocol

Examining Factors that Lead to Effective Collaborative Partnerships Among *Transfronterizx* Students and Families, US Schools, and Border Communities
IRB # **2023-105**
Interview Protocol & Guide
Sobeida Velázquez, Ph.D. Candidate, Education for Social Justice

The purpose of this study is to explore the factors that affect *transfronterizx* family engagement to create and strengthen partnerships among families, schools, and educators that work with *transfronterizx* students for their success. schools have in the US.

Transfronterizx elementary students' interviews will be conducted once in the 2022- 2023 academic school year.**Semi-Structured Interview Protocol *Transfronterizx* Students**
Hello. Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study and for being available for this conversation. If at any moment during the conversation you don't feel comfortable answering a question, please don't feel obligated to do so. Also, know that your anonymity will be ensured throughout the process, so feel free to answer honestly and openly. Are you okay with me audio recording our conversation? Do you have any questions before we proceed? Okay. Let's begin.
Demographic Information
Please start by stating your:
Name, preferred pseudonym (if you have one),
Role (parent, grandparent, leader, teacher, etc.).
Age
Gender
Ethnicity
Educational background
Please tell me about who you are, where you are from, your family, and/or your culture?

Dignity, Respect, Belonging, and Justice
Tell me about your experience living in Tijuana and coming to school in the US

Possible probing questions:
Do you feel you are treated with dignity at school? Do you feel you are treated as a regular kid at school? How do you feel when you are at school? How do you feel you are treated at school? Do you feel you are treated differently because you live in Tijuana? Do you feel you are respected at school? Do you feel you belong when you are at school? Do you feel you are treated fairly at school? What would you like your teacher to know? How could your teacher support you? How do you feel crossing the border every day? How do you feel if you arrive late?

Closing remarks
Is there anything else that you would like to share or add?
Any final thoughts about what we've been talking about?

Thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts and experiences! If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at any point.
I will contact you in the coming weeks to solicit feedback your response and if I captured them correctly.

Protocolo de entrevista con estudiantes *Transfronterizx*

Título: Examinando los factores que conducen a colaboraciones efectivas entre estudiantes y familias transfronterizas, entre las escuelas de EE. UU. y comunidades fronterizas

IRB # 2023-105

Protocolo & guía de entrevistas

Sobeida Velázquez, PhD. (candidata) Educación para justicia social

El propósito de este estudio es explorar y determinar los factores que afectan la participación familiar transfronteriza para crear y fortalecer asociaciones entre familias, escuelas y educadores que trabajan con estudiantes transfronterizos para su éxito. Esto se logrará a través de un examen de la medida en que los educadores entienden a las familias transfronterizas y las percepciones que las familias transfronterizas tienen de los educadores y las escuelas en los Estados Unidos. Estudiantes *transfronterizx* de primaria las entrevistas se llevarán a cabo una vez durante el ciclo escolar 2022 - 2023.

Protocolo de Entrevista Semi-Estructurada Alumnos de Primaria Transfronterizx

Hola. Gracias por aceptar participar en este estudio y por estar disponible para esta conversación. Si en algún momento de la conversación no se siente cómodo respondiendo una pregunta, no se sienta obligado a hacerlo. Además, sepa que se garantizará su anonimato durante todo el proceso, así que siéntase libre de responder con honestidad y franqueza. ¿Estás de acuerdo con que grabe en audio nuestra conversación? ¿Tiene alguna pregunta antes de continuar? Bueno. Vamos a empezar.

Información demográfica

Comienza indicando tu:

Nombre, seudónimo preferido (si tiene uno),

Rol (padre, abuelo, líder, maestro, etc.).

Años

Género

Etnicidad

Antecedentes educativos

Cuéntame quién eres, de dónde eres, tu familia y/o tu cultura.

Dignidad, Respeto, Pertenencia y Justicia

Cuéntame sobre tu experiencia viviendo en Tijuana y viniendo a la escuela en los EE. UU.

Posibles preguntas de sondeo:

¿Sientes que te tratan con dignidad en la escuela? ¿Sientes que en la escuela te tratan como a un niño normal? ¿Cómo te sientes cuando estás en la escuela? ¿Cómo sientes que te tratan en la escuela? ¿Sientes que te tratan diferente por vivir en Tijuana? ¿Sientes que te respetan en la escuela? ¿Sientes que perteneces cuando estás en la escuela? ¿Sientes que te tratan de manera justa en la escuela? ¿Qué te gustaría que tu profesor/ra supiera? ¿Cómo podría apoyarte tu maestro? ¿Cómo te sientes cruzando la frontera todos los días?¿Cómo te sientes si llegas tarde?

Palabras de cierre

¿Hay algo más que le gustaría compartir o agregar?

¿Algún pensamiento final sobre lo que hemos estado hablando?
¡Gracias por tomarte el tiempo para compartir tus pensamientos y experiencias! Si tienes alguna pregunta o inquietud, no dudes en ponerte en contacto conmigo en cualquier momento.
Me comunicaré contigo en las próximas semanas para solicitar comentarios sobre su respuesta y si los capturé correctamente.

APPENDIX G

Adult Consent Form

University of San Diego Institutional Review Board # 2023-105
Research Participant Adult Consent Form
For the research study entitled:
Examining Factors that Lead to Effective Collaborative Partnerships Among *Transfronterizx* Students and Families, US Schools, and Border Communities

I.Purpose of the research study

Sobeida Velázquez is a student in the School of Leadership and Education Sciences at the University of San Diego. You are invited to participate in a research study she is conducting. The purpose of this research study is: To explore the factors that affect *transfronterizx* family engagement to create and strengthen partnerships among families, schools, and educators that work with *transfronterizx* students for their success.

II.What you will be asked to do

If you decide to be in this study, you will be asked to:
Complete an anonymous survey that ask about the ways you feel as a *transfronterizx*.
Participate in an interview about what your experience is as a *transfronterizx.*
You will be audio recorded during this interview. If an interview is conducted via zoom, only audio will be recorded.

Your participation in this study will take a total of 75 minutes (60 minutes for the interview and 15 minutes for the survey).

III.Foreseeable risks or discomforts

Sometimes when people are asked to think about their feelings, they feelsad or anxious. If you would like to talk to someone about your feelings at any time, you can call toll-free, 24 hours a day:
San Diego Mental Health Hotline at 1-800-479-3339

IV.Benefits

While there may be no direct benefit to you from participating in this study, the indirect benefit of participating will be knowing that you helped researchers better understand the experiences of *transfronterizx* and the educators that work with them.

V.Confidentiality

Any information provided and/or identifying records will remain confidential and kept in a

locked file and/or password-protected computer file in the researcher's office for a minimum of five years. All data collected from you will be coded with a number or a pseudonym (fake name). Your real name will not be used. The resultsof this research project may be made public and information quoted in professional journals and meetings, but information from this study will only be reported as a group, and not individually.

The information or materials you provide will be cleansed of all identifiers (like your name) and may be used in future research.

VI.Compensation

You will receive no compensation for your participation in the study.

VII.Voluntary Nature of this Research

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary: you do not have to do this.
You can refuse to answer any question or quit at any time. Deciding not to participate or not answering any of the questions will have no effect on any benefits you're entitled to, like your health care, or your employment or grades. **You can withdraw from this study at any time without penalty.**

VIII.Contact Information

If you have any questions about this research, you may contact either

Sobeida Velazquez, PhD Candidate
USD Email: xxxxxxx@xxxxxxx.xxx

Reyes Quezada, EdD, Faculty Advisor
USD Email: xxxxxxx@xxxxxxx.xxx

I have read and understand this form, and consent to the research itdescribes to me. I have received a copy of this consent form for my records.

Signature of Participant Date

Name of Participant (**Printed**)

Signature of Investigator Date

Formulario de consentimiento del adulto participante en la investigación

Junta de Revisión Institucional de la Universidad de San Diego
IRB # 2023-105
Para el estudio de investigación titulado:
Examinando los factores que conducen a asociaciones colaborativas efectivas entre estudiantes y familias transfronterizas, escuelas de EE. UU. y comunidades fronterizas

I. Propósito del estudio de investigación

Sobeida Velázquez es estudiante de la Escuela de Liderazgo y Ciencias de la Educación de la Universidad de San Diego. Está invitada/o a participar en un estudio de investigación que está realizando. El propósito del estudio es explorar tus experiencias como *transfronterizo/a* y explorar potenciales para fortalecer vínculos entre la escuela y padres de familia que cruzan la frontera diaria.

II. Lo que se le pedirá que haga

Si decide participar en este estudio, se le pedirá que:
Complete una encuesta anónima que le pregunte cómo se siente como siendo *transfronteriza/o*.
Participe en una entrevista sobre cuál es su experiencia como *transfronteriza/o*.
Usted será grabado en audio durante esta entrevista, si la entrevista es por zoom, solo el audio será grabado.

Su participación en este estudio tomará un total de 55 minutos (45 minutos para la entrevista y 10 minutos para la encuesta).

III. Riesgos o molestias previsibles

a) A veces, cuando se les pide a las personas que piensen en sus sentimientos, se sienten tristes o ansiosas. Si desea hablar con alguien sobre sus sentimientos en cualquier momento, puede llamar sin cargo las 24 horas del día:
Línea Directa de Salud Mental de San Diego al 1-800-479-3339

I. Beneficios

Si bien es posible que no obtenga un beneficio directo de participar en este estudio, el beneficio indirecto de participar será saber que ayudó a la investigadora a comprender mejor las experiencias de *transfronterizx* y a los educadores que trabajan con ellos.

II. Confidencialidad

Cualquier información proporcionada y/o registros de identificación permanecerán confidenciales y se mantendrán en un archivo cerrado y/o en un archivo informático protegido con contraseña en la oficina de la investigadora durante un mínimo de cinco años. Todos los datos recopilados sobre usted se codificarán con un número o un seudónimo (nombre falso). Tu nombre real no será usado. Los resultados de este proyecto de investigación pueden hacerse públicos y la información puede citarse en revistas y reuniones profesionales, pero la información de este estudio solo se informará como grupo y no individualmente.
La información o los materiales que proporcione se eliminarán de todos los identificadores (como su nombre) y podrán utilizarse en investigaciones futuras.

III. Compensación
No recibirá ninguna compensación por su participación en el estudio

IV. Naturaleza voluntaria de esta investigación
La participación en este estudio es totalmente voluntaria. No tiene que hacer esto, y puede negarse a responder cualquier pregunta o renunciar en cualquier momento. Decidir no participar o no responder ninguna de las preguntas no afectará los beneficios a los que tiene derecho, como su atención médica, su empleo o sus calificaciones. Puede retirarse de este estudio en cualquier momento sin penalización.

V. Información de contacto
Si tiene alguna pregunta sobre esta investigación, puede comunicarse con
Sobeida Velázquez, candidata a doctorado
USD Correo electrónico: xxxxxxx@xxxxxxx.xxx

Reyes Quezada, EdD Asesor Docente
USD Correo electrónico: xxxxxxx@xxxxxxx.xxx

He leído y entiendo este formulario, y doy mi consentimiento para la investigación que me describe. He recibido una copia de este formulario de consentimiento para mis registros.

Firma del Participante Fecha

Nombre del Participante (Impreso)

Firma de la Investigadora

APPENDIX H

USD Assent Form Ages 15–17

Examining Factors that Lead to Effective Collaborative Partnerships Among Transfronterizx Students and Families, US Schools, and Border Communities
University of San Diego IRB # IRB-2023-105

USD ASSENT FORM Ages 15-17

I. Purpose of the research study

My name is Sobeida Velázquez
I am a student at The University of San Diego. I am conducting a research study titled Examining Factors that Lead to Effective Collaborative Partnerships Among Transfronterizx Students and Families, US Schools, and Border Communities. I am doing this study because I am trying to learn about the experiences of students that live in Tijuana and cross the border daily to come to school in San Diego. I am asking you to be a part of this study because you are a student at a school in San Diego. This form will tell you a little bit about the study so you can decide if you want to be in the study or not.

II. What you will be asked to do

If you want to be in this study, you will be asked I will ask you to take part in an interview where you will share your experiences. You will be audio recorded during this interview. If an interview is conducted via zoom, only audio will be recorded. This study will take place in person at a place of your parents choosing, or via zoom and will last about 20 minutes.

III. Foreseeable risks or discomforts

Sometimes when people are asked to think about their feelings, they feel sad or anxious. If you would like to talk to someone about your feelings at any time, you can call toll-free, 24 hours a day. **San Diego Mental Health Hotline at 1-800-479-*3339)***

IV. Benefits

If you choose to be in this study, you may learn new things and help the researchers learn more about the ways that living in Tijuana and coming to school in San Diego have an impact on students.

V. Confidentiality

Any information you give me or any of your records that I see will not be shared with anyone and I will keep them secure with me for five years. All the information you give me will be given a number or fake name. Your real name will not be used. The results of this study may be made public and information quoted in professional journals and meetings, but information from this study will only be reported as a group, and not individually.
The information or materials you provide will be cleansed of all identifiers (like your name) and *may* be used in future research.

- Your Parent/Guardian will be able to see the answers you share with me.

Confidentiality will be breached if you tell me that:

- Somebody is hurting you or
- You want to hurt yourself or someone else, I will need to tell somebody

VI. Compensation

You will receive no compensation for your participation in the study.

VII. Voluntary Nature of this Research

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You do not have to do this**,** and you can refuse to answer any question or quit at any time, without any problems.

VIII. Contact Information

If you have any questions, you may contact either:
Principal Investigator: Sobeida Velázquez, M.Ed., Ph.D. Candidate, Education for Social Justice Email: xxxxxxx@xxxxxxx.xxx
Faculty Advisor: Reyes Quezada, Ed.D. Email: xxxxxxx@xxxxxxx.xxx

I have read and understand this form, and consent to the research it describes to me. I have received a copy of this consent form for my records.

Signature of Participant Date

_____

Name of Participant (**Printed**)

_____

Signature of Investigator Date

_____

APPENDIX I

USD Assent Form Ages 11–14

Examining Factors that Lead to Effective Collaborative Partnerships Among Transfronterizx Students and Families, US Schools, and Border Communities
University of San Diego IRB # IRB-2023-105

USD ASSENT FORM Age 11-14

My name is Sobeida Velazquez
I am a student at the University of San Diego. I am conducting a research study titled Examining Factors that Lead to Effective Collaborative Partnerships Among Transfronterizx Students and Families, US Schools, and Border Communities. I am doing this study because I am trying to learn about the experiences of students that live in Tijuana and go to school in San Diego. I am asking you to be a part of this study because you are a student at a school in San Diego and live in Tijuana. This form will tell you a little bit about the study so you can decide if you want to be in the study or not.
If you want to be in this study, I will ask you to take part in an interview where you will share your experiences. You will be **audio** recorded during this interview. If an interview is conducted via zoom, **only audio** will be recorded.
This study will take place in person at a place of your parents choosing, or via zoom and will last about 20 minutes.

Your parent will be able to see the stuff you tell me or give me.
If you tell me that:

- Somebody is hurting you or
- You want to hurt yourself or someone else, I will need to tell somebody.

Some good things might happen to you if you participate like learning something new that will help other kids like you.

Talk with your parents before you decide if you want to be in this study. I will also ask your parents if you can participate. Even if your parents say you can be in the study, you can still say no. It is okay to say "no" if you don't want to be in the study. No one will be mad at you. *You can stop being in this study at any time.*

You can ask me any questions about this study. You can also talk to my advisor Dr. Reyes Quezada, or your parent about this study and you can decide if you want to be in this study or not.

If you want to be in this study, please write your name.

If you do not want to be in this study, do not write your name.

_____ _____

Student Name	Date
Sobeida Velazquez	Date

CONTACT

For further information about this study, please contact: Sobeida Velázquez, M.Ed., Ph.D. Candidate, Education for Social Justice Email: xxxxxxx@xxxxxxx.xxx
Faculty Advisor: Reyes Quezada, Ed.D. Email: xxxxxxx@xxxxxxx.xxx

University of San Diego
Institutional Review Board

Certification of Translation

When to use this form:
If research is conducted in a language other than English, the Principal Investigator (PI) may be required by the USD IRB to submit this form with all translated materials. The Certificate of Translation provides information regarding the credentials of the translator and verifies that the translations are accurate. The translator must provide a brief description of their qualifications, skills or experience for serving in this role and sign the certificate of translation form.
Please note the following: • For research conducted in languages other than English, the USD IRB must have all versions of the research material (e.g., consents, recruitment documents or scripts, instruments, interview scripts, etc.) in both English and the language in which research is being conducted. • It is acceptable for the PI, Co-Investigator or other member of the research team to translate the research material if they are qualified. • Researchers should delay the initial translation of documents until after the IRB has reviewed and approved the English versions to avoid multiple translations. The researcher bears any cost associated with translating documents. • After initial approval of the study and the English language document, the PI must then submit a Modification application in Cayuse and attach the translated materials and a copy of the certificate of translation. Research involving the non-English speaking participants may not begin until all translated documents have been reviewed and approved by the IRB.

SECTION 1. USD IRB APPLICATION INFORMATION (To be completed by the PI)

1A. Principal Investigator: Sobeida Velázquez
1B. USD IRB Number: 2023-105
1C. Project Title: "Voices from *Transfronterizx* Students, Families, and US Educators in Border Communities: Experiences that Lead to Effective Collaborative Partnerships"

SECTION 2. TRANSLATOR (To be completed by the Translator)

2A. Translator's Name: Sobeida Velazquez
2B. Translator Email Address: svelazquez@sandiego.edu
2C. Translator's Qualifications: BA in Spanish Literature, M.Ed. Bilingual/Cross-Cultural Education, native Spanish speaker elementary and middle school years were completed in Mexico.
2D. Language of translation: Spanish
2E. List of document(s) translated: Assent under 7 Assent age 7-10 Assent age 11-14 Assent age 15-17 Consent Parents Family Recruitment via call Family Recruitment via call to recruit their children (minors) Family Interview Protocol Student Interview Protocol

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2F. Date(s) of translation(s): May 1, 2023 to May 22, 2023
2G. I, Sobeida Velázquez, affirm that the translated version(s) of the documents listed in section 2E is/are a complete and correct translation of the documents provided to the USD IRB in English and do(es) not contain information that is not presented within the context of the English versions. Translator Signature  Date May 23, 2023

Date: 3-16-2024

IRB #: IRB-2023-105
Title: Voices from Transfronterizx Students, Families, and US Educators in Border Communities: Experiences that Lead to Effective Collaborative Partnerships
Creation Date: 10-28-2022
End Date:
Status: Approved
Principal Investigator: Sobeida Velazquez
Review Board: USD IRB
Sponsor:

Study History

Submission Type Initial	**Review Type** Expedited	**Decision** Approved
Submission Type Modification	**Review Type** Expedited	**Decision** Approved
Submission Type Renewal	**Review Type** Expedited	**Decision** Approved

Key Study Contacts

Member Sobeida Velazquez	**Role** Principal Investigator	**Contact** svelazquez@sandiego.edu
Member Reyes Quezada	**Role** Primary Contact	**Contact** rquezada@SanDiego.edu