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Testimonios of Resilient Salvadoran Immigrants Who Graduated From a Public High School in the United States and Pursued Further Education

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This dissertation, directed and approved by the candidate's committee, has been accepted by the College of Graduate and Professional Studies of Abilene Christian University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

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by

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my incredible family. My parents, Jesus and Elena Guzman, prayed for me and motivated me to complete my doctoral degree. Both of you instilling the values of hard work and having an education has inspired not only me but all your children and grandchildren. My husband, *mi amor,* Ray Ingram who supported my goal from the moment I said I wanted to pursue a doctorate.

I dedicate this project to my four children, Savanah, Kade, Jace, and Camille. You pushed me to "go for it," always made me laugh, taught me how to use Zoom, and always seemed to show up at just the right time when I needed support. You have been so amazing throughout this journey, and I love you all. You four are my inspiration. You are my gifts, and I hope I have made you proud and been a good mom and role model. I hope this dissertation reminds you that you can do anything, no matter your age, through hard work and dedication and with the support of your loving family. Keep believing in yourself and always go for your dreams. You are all going to do amazing things in life; in fact, you already have. Please know I will be there to cheer you on every step of the way. I love all four of you unconditionally. You are my beautiful treasures!

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Abstract

There was little research-based understanding of how immigrant students manage to flourish and seek postsecondary educational opportunities. Understanding the experiences of Salvadoran immigrants who graduated from high school could enable educators in the United States to meet their needs more effectively. The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore through the testimonios of the experiences of Salvadoran immigrants who graduated from a public high school in the United States and were currently pursuing further education or a career. The research design was narrative research, and the data were used to discern how immigrant youth learn to flourish to answer the primary research question: What are the testimonios of Salvadoran immigrants who graduated from a public high school in the United States and are currently pursuing further education or a career? The two subquestions were: (a) What stories do the participants share about their educational experiences? and (b) What are the themes that emerge from the Salvadoran immigrants' experiences with flourishing in high school and enrolling in higher education? Two El Salvadoran immigrants participated in sharing their testimonios. One was documented and one was undocumented. Findings for Subquestion A involved conveying each participant's testimonios about their lived experiences with education. Subquestion B addressed the four emergent themes of flourishing in high school and enrolling in higher education. These themes were (a) family ties, (b) importance of school, (c) importance of community, and (d) flourishing. Finally, the primary research question's findings contained the three overarching themes of experiences with racism, motivation to leave from El Salvador, and the beauty of El Salvador. The overarching themes were critical to gaining an overall picture of each participant's story and see how their experiences connected together into a collective testimonio. The findings of this research may be used to inform school administrators and

educators of approaches and strategies to provide adequate support to help other immigrants to succeed in future careers. Several recommendations for future study are provided.

Keywords: high school, postsecondary education, testimonio, El Salvador, immigrants

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Prologue With Positionality

"Too much brown skin

Too much accent

Where'd you come from?

You don't have a #

You don't exist"

(Gonzales & Vargas, 2016, p. viii)

As I sat in my classroom full of students, I saw 13 undocumented students from El Salvador. Each had the same dream of graduating from high school and becoming bilingual to have a better life in the United States. Some of this group of 13 wanted to go on to higher education, and others wanted to join the workforce. All wanted was to thrive and flourish. In the spring of 2020, 95% of the dropouts in the high school in which I taught were undocumented students. If 95% of my 13 students dropped out of high school, only one student would remain in class and be able to pursue that American dream of flourishing with independence. The high school's administrators sought answers about how to stop this dropout trend and increase the percentage of those seeking higher education.

I am Latinx born and bilingual. My Mexican-American parents raised me on the Texas border. Thus, I am bicultural and value both the Latinx and dominant U.S. cultures. Many of my current students were held by the federal government in detention centers in Texas and attended the same Texas high school from which I graduated before they migrated to the midwestern location where I was a high school classroom teacher at the time of this study. My experiences with immigrant students mirrored evidence that many English language learners come from

third-world countries, experience interrupted schooling and witness or suffer from life threatening violence (Cho et al., 2019).

Background of the Study

The background for this research begins with evidence regarding the experiences of immigrants as chronicled through international nongovernmental agencies including United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR, 2020) and Migration Policy Institute (O'Conner et al., 2019). Researchers have shown that immigrant students face many challenges in leaving their home countries including learning a new culture or language and dealing with the effects of traumatic stress. Immigrant students struggle academically in the United States where everything, including school rules, norms, and experiences, is new to them (Hooper et al., 2017). In spite of these challenging circumstances, some of them thrive or flourish; however, there was little understanding of how immigrant students manage to flourish and seek postsecondary educational opportunities.

Most immigrants left their countries voluntarily, but many were displaced due to violence (Patel et al., 2017). There is a mix of motives for why these people leave their homes. Push factors are defined as things that make people leave their country (Pineo, 2020). Many flee or are pushed out of their countries from acts of violence that include gang warfare and cartel violence. On the other hand, pull factors attract people to a place and include the availability of family, friends, jobs, and safety in the attractive location (Pineo, 2020).

Most asylum seekers at the southern United States border are from Central America's Northern Triangle of Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras (UNHCR, 2020; Wolf-Williams, 2020). According to the Department of Homeland Security (2016), over 1 year, a 131% increase of youth and family immigrants coming from Central America occurred. For the Migration

Policy Institute, O'Conner et al. (2019) stated that "from 1980 to 2017, the size of the Central American immigrant population grew approximately tenfold" in the United States (para. 6). The United States offers attractive pull factors.

A current estimate is that 47-million immigrants reside in the United States, and approximately 3-million immigrants are from the Northern Triangle nations of Central America (Pineo, 2020). Camarota and Zeigler (2018) estimated that more than 50% of the Northern Triangle immigrants in the United States are undocumented. Immigrants contribute both economic stimulus and cultural richness to the community (Banerjee & Duflo, 2019). Accepting communities provide opportunities for immigrants such as job training, civic engagement, and community clinics that address their legal, mental, and transitional needs. Local police can help by bolstering levels of trust among their immigrant residents, while school leaders can provide academic staff with sensitivity training and offer children safe spaces. Undocumented immigrant workers accept jobs that many American citizens do not want to take. These jobs include housekeeping, farm labor, hotel staff, construction, and home health aides, and make up approximately 5% of the workforce (Dudley, 2019; Fernández Campbell, 2019).

Immigrants have always been in public schools in the United States, and there are several barriers for these children to be successful in schools. Some significant challenges that immigrant youth encounter in United States schools occur because of the legal status of their families in addition to their linguistic, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds (López & López, 2010; Suárez-Orozco et al., 2009). Immigrant status, socioeconomic status, and familial background been prevalent factors affecting the lives of Latin American children and have been highly disruptive to these children's educational trajectories.

Federal immigration policies shape and complicate students' opportunities and aspirations for higher education (Martinez & Ortega, 2019; Torres & Wicks-Asbun, 2014). Research has indicated that students can actively negotiate potential risks to their economic stability that include family members losing a job or being deported while still attending school (Martinez & Ortega, 2019; Raza et al., 2019; Torres & Wicks-Asbun, 2014). However, many immigrants are scared and concentrate on surviving first, causing their schoolwork to receive less attention and them to fall behind academically (Cisneros, 2019). The uncertain aspect of immigration policy has had notable effects on both documented and undocumented immigrants' passage to better futures for undocumented immigrant students (Torres & Wicks-Asbun, 2014; Wangensteen, 2018).

Along with the support, undocumented immigrant students face discrimination as well as legal and economic challenges while in school. Shelton (2019) stated that undocumented immigrant students' challenges of belonging included racism exhibited by fellow students, lack of social opportunities, and limited visibility of other undocumented immigrant students. Wangensteen (2018) found that all these stressors can erode undocumented immigrant students' well-being.

Immigrant students encounter academic hurdles in their adaptation to their new school settings (Bartlett et al., 2017). Immigrant students' academic performance is lower than their classmates, and English language learning immigrant have high rates of high school dropout (Sugarman, 2019). Many factors like diminished academic and social learning opportunities, expectations of teachers, and disparity in teacher quality and accountability of consequences systems contribute to high school dropout (Jaffe-Walter & Lee, 2011; Suárez-Orozco et al., 2008). Immigrant students of low socioeconomic status, regardless of documentation status, tend

to attend under-resourced schools and to suffer from insufficient educational opportunities (Jaffe-Walter & Lee, 2011). Too often, these schools are overpopulated; operated by educators who lack experience; display high truancy and high dropout rates, low academic standards, and an increase of discipline-related disturbances (Suárez-Orozco et al., 2008). These types of school circumstances have been connected to reduced levels of success among immigrant students in public schools (Jaffe-Walter & Lee, 2011).

According to Cho et al. (2019), immigrant students are unfamiliar with the school contexts they encounter in the United States; therefore, these students disengage in academic and social learning opportunities. Their appearance of disengagement may lead teachers to see immigrant students as lacking an interest in the class or refusing to perform, but teacher may misread these students' behaviors. The reality is that teachers' negative expectations of immigrant students have a significant effect on immigrant students' academic performance (Cadenas et al., 2018; Cho et al., 2019; Cook et al., 2015). Thus, building undocumented immigrant students' sense of belonging and community is critical to their academic success (Cisneros, 2019; O'Neal et al., 2016; Patler & Laster Pirtle, 2018; Raza et al., 2019). Building up immigrant students supports their development of resilience as a necessary ingredient for them to flourish in the public schools of the United States.

Resilience is the capacity to rebound from hardship, and resilience is epitomized by the act of flourishing in an environment (Bonanno et al., 2007; Keyes, 2016; Patry & Ford, 2016). Keyes (2016) defined flourishing as the "pinnacle of good mental health" (p. 100). Cassidy (2016) stated that academic resilience helps students to overcome adversities that could threaten students' academic success. Those students with strong academic resilience tend to find success, or flourish, while other students around them grapple with schoolwork or dropout (Cassidy,

2016; Richardson et al., 1990). Keyes (2016) noted that "flourishing is the achievement of a balanced life in which individuals feel good about lives in which they are functioning well" (p. 101). There is an extensive body of literature that associates resilience or flourishing in students who have experienced types of traumatic events (Bonanno et al., 2007). However, there is not a body of knowledge explaining how, in spite of their challenges, some immigrant youth flourish academically.

Problem Statement

High school Salvadoran immigrant youth do not flourish with regard to attaining higher education in the United States. A disproportionate number of undocumented students in the United States do not graduate from high school (Lukes, 2014). Jefferies' (2014) found that 40% of undocumented youth age 18 to 24 years old in the United States do not obtain a high school diploma. Barriers that include discriminatory practices, immigration policies, and a lack of a sense of belonging for undocumented youth prevent undocumented youth from graduating with high school diplomas (Cisneros, 2019; Raza et al., 2019). However, little research has been focused on immigrant youth who flourish after high school (Harklau, 2016; Punti, 2018). Delgado Bernal et al. (2006) poignantly noted that there is very little research addressing the "nuanced and complex portraits" of Latinxs' lives from which "their cultural or gendered perspectives, resources, and resilience in interactions with institutions of power" can be conveyed (p. 4). Understanding the experiences of Salvadoran immigrants who graduated from high school could enable educators in the United States to meet their needs more effectively.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore through the *testimonios* of the experiences of Salvadoran immigrants who graduated from a public high school in the United

States and were currently pursuing further education or a career. The research design was narrative research, and the data were used to discern how immigrant youth learn to flourish. The narrative data were obtained by focusing on past student's experiences in public school that help them enroll in postsecondary education courses for career training or college credit. The findings of this research may be used to inform school administrators and educators of approaches and strategies to provide adequate support to help other immigrants to succeed in future careers.

Research Questions

A single overarching question guided the study as follows: What are the testimonios of Salvadoran immigrants who graduated from a public high school in the United States and are currently pursuing further education or a career? The overarching research question was supported by the following two subquestions: (a) What stories do the participants share about their educational experiences? and (b) What are the themes that emerge from the Salvadoran immigrants' experiences with flourishing in high school and enrolling in higher education?

Definition of Key Terms

Flourishing. Keyes (2016) defined this term as the "achievement of a balanced life in which individuals feel good about lives in which they are functioning well" (p. 101).

Immigrant. This term refers to a person who, either legally with documentation or illegally without documentation, travels to the United States voluntarily or as a refugee from another country to take up residence and become employed (Patel et al., 2017).

Latinx. I use the term Latinx in this research proposal to refer to a Latinx, Latino, and Latina person who is an immigrant from a Spanish-speaking Central or South American country.

Resilience. This term refers to "the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats or even significant sources of stress" (American Psychological Association, 2014, para. 4).

Undocumented or illegal immigrant. This term refers to individuals who entered the country illegally or remained in country illegally and did not maintain legal documented status with the government (Ommundsen et al., 2014). Some sources refer to illegal immigrants as undocumented workers (Pearson, 2010; Peña et al., 2020).

Summary

Chapter 1 began with a brief prologue as a presentation of my positional statement. This discussion was followed with the background of the study addressing immigrants' experiences in schools and communities as well as the role of resilience in academic success and flourishing. Next, I provided the problem and purpose statements and research questions. The chapter ended with definitions for key terms.

In Chapter 2, I provide the conceptual framework of this study, which is resilience theory. I then present the literature on immigration and education. I discuss the available understanding of the Salvadoran immigrant experience by focusing on cultural adaption, language learning, the push and pull factors affecting immigration from El Salvador to the United States. I present studies on flourishing immigrant youth and factors that highlight the challenges faced by immigrant students and that provide support for flourishing amid challenges.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore the testimonios of Salvadoran immigrants who graduated from a public high school in the United States and were currently pursuing further education or a career. This purpose's foundation was rooted in the problem involving high school Salvadoran and other immigrant youth not flourishing with regard to attaining higher education in the United States. A disproportionate number of undocumented students in the United States do not graduate from high school (Lukes, 2014). Barriers that include discriminatory practices, immigration policies, and a lack of a sense of belonging for undocumented youth prevent undocumented youth from graduating with high school diplomas (Cisneros, 2019; Raza et al., 2019). However, little research has been focused on immigrant youth who flourish after high school, and even less research has been made available regarding Salvadoran students' educational experiences in the United States (Harklau, 2016; Perez et al., 2009; Punti, 2018; Zetino et al., 2020). Understanding the experiences of Salvadoran immigrants who graduated from high school could enable educators in the United States to meet their needs more effectively.

The literature review addresses the available research regarding the experiences of immigrant students with a focus on immigrants from Spanish-speaking Central and South American nations who attended United States public schools. In this literature review, I provide the methods used for the search of available studies. I next share the conceptual framework that served as a lens that guided the collection of data and analysis of the participants' testimonios. The majority of the chapter is focused on reviewing empirical studies of immigrant students' lived experiences with barriers to and success with flourishing.

Literature Search Methods

It is essential to review significant literature to provide a framework and establish an inventory of the variables and phenomena appropriate for an investigation (McCracken, 1988). The literature search process begins with the established criteria (Bryman, 2006). For this review, research and articles written in English dating from 2000 to 2020 were found using Google Scholar, OneSearch, and EBSCO. However, studies considered seminal or highly influential in the recent literature were collected to add longevity and depth to the understanding of immigrant students in the United States. The following keywords were used to find all available qualitative and quantitative studies reported in books, peer-reviewed journals, and dissertations: *flourish, resilience, thrive, testimonios, lived experiences, narrative research, Latinx or Hispanic, student, immigrant, undocumented*, and *high school*. The literature found in this chapter involve what is currently understood about immigrant youth, particularly from El Salvador if available, and their narratives.

Conceptual Framework: Resilience Theory and Flourishing

In this qualitative research study, I investigated the lived experiences of Salvadoran students through the resilience theory framework by Knight (2007). Resilience theory represented a conceptual map to guide the exploration of each participant's lived experiences, or testimonios. Resilience theory informed the questions and prompts used in the interview protocol with the Salvadoran immigrant students and represented the starting point from which the study was conducted. The framework was not used to shape participants' experiences but as one possible lens from which to interpret their experiences and share their stories and narratives as their testimonios. Resilience theory has been validated across cultures (Ungar & Liebenberg, 2008).

Knight's (2007) three-dimensional model of resilience helps to explain the construct holistically. Knight's model was used in this study because it contains elements that can be used to elicit in-depth stories from participants. The three dimensions characterize resilience first as a condition, second as a state, and third as a practice. The condition dimension indicates if the resilient person behaves in the presence of protective agents. The state dimension represents the individuals' set of personal attributes that contribute to their development of resilience. The third dimension involves an individuals' ability to practice the behaviors and cognitions that support resilience by having access to teachers or other mentors who encourage resilience.

Resilience involves an individual having the ability to overcome struggles. Rossouw et al. (2017) suggested that resilience "provides psychological skills and techniques to manage uncertainty and adapt faster to a changing environment" (p. 25). Ryff and Singer (2003) called resilience a positive human function involving the use of determination (a.k.a., grit) and courage to overcome adversity and despair. Resilience is a psychological attribute enabling individuals to overcome seemingly insurmountable obstacles and adversity triumphantly. Resilient individuals do not ignore the pain they feel but problem solve and use lessons learned from past adversity to emerge more empowered to continue with their life, academic, career, and other journeys. Researchers have observed that people with high-levels of resilience, also referred to as psychological grit (Vela et al., 2018) or flourishing (Lopez, 2015), are more likely to endure and overcome stressors, become successful, and demonstrate wellbeing (Motti-Stefanidi, 2018; Zetino et al., 2020). Rendón et al. (2018) noted in a literature review of studies in which Latinx students were the target population that resilience was one of several factors involved in their ability to overcome deficit views and racism at school. Therefore, this research was conducted by

applying a comprehensive definition of resilience, which is the process of adapting well despite adversity (Smith et al., 2008; Smith-Osborne & Whitehill Bolton, 2013; Windle et al., 2011).

Flourishing is considered a positive outcome for individuals with resilience and represents a sense of positivism and productivity (Huppert, 2009). Lopez (2015) claimed flourishing involves a combination of functioning productively and having a tremendous level of mental welfare and defined flourishing as "high levels of social, emotional, and psychological well-being" (p. 252). Scales et al. (2011) added the term thriving to the construct of flourishing and referred to thriving as a person having a passion for a self-identified interest that provides direction, purpose, and joy for flourishing. Ettinger et al. (2020) agreed that the most significant factors for flourishing or thriving youth are healthy self-worth and having someone to whom they can talk, which also represent two of the dimensions of Knight's (2007) resilience model. Seligman (2011) described flourishing through theory as having five elements humans pursue independently for increased well-being as positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning, and achievement. Seligman's flourishing construct is extremely useful because it can shed insight into Salvadoran immigrants' difficult issues and how resilience may be a factor.

Thus, the focus of the study was on how the Salvadoran students learned to flourish based on Zetino et al. (2020) promoting the development of an understanding about resilience in Latinx immigrants. Researchers have observed that people with high resilience can endure and overcome stressors and become successful in developing well-being (Motti-Stefanidi, 2018; Zetino et al., 2020). The testimonios aspect of the narrative research design highlighted the voices of marginalized people and offered an opportunity to show resilience within their stories about their lived experiences.

Past researchers applied resilience and flourishing in studies with Latinx and immigrant youth (Archuleta, 2015; Dutil, 2019; McCloud, 2015; Montemayor et al., 2015; Motti-Stefanidi, 2018; Stevenson et al., 2019; Taylor et al., 2019; Vela et al., 2018; Zetino et al., 2020). Those studies are reviewed here because resilience was explicitly included in the researchers' designs. Most of the available resilience literature applied a variety of resilience definitions that varied from the Knight (2007) three-dimensional framework.

Archuleta (2015) noted that people display resilience when they produce positive results despite being exposed to challenging situations. Archuleta's (2015) quantitative research was done with English as second language (ESL) immigrants who completed measurements of their emotional regulation as part of their resilience, their Latinx acculturation, and psychological well-being. These three measurements allowed Archuleta to provide evidence of Latinx youths' acculturation, emotion regulation, and resilience but did not include in-depth stories from participants. However, qualitative research conveying in-depth life experiences may offer insight into how to support Salvadoran immigrants' development of resilience.

Stevenson et al. (2019) provided findings as part of an ongoing study on resiliency within Latinas. The theme of conceptualizing resilience as a strategy emerged as these researchers analyzed data. Stevenson et al. also discovered the importance of the Spanish language and how Spanish allowed participants to maintain communication with their families and grow relationships that enacted resilience. Stevenson et al. looked at resilience as a filter to help people develop a consciousness to succeed after adversity. This case study used semistructured interviews to hear lived experiences of how these participants negotiated between their cultures and school expectations by preserving the Spanish language to be successful in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics courses.

Vela et al. (2018) criticized researchers who applied frameworks of deficiency to describe Latinx students' mental health and academic outcomes. Vela et al. performed a quantitative study exploring college students' strengths to provide insight into students' psychological grit. In this study, Vela et al. operated from a lens based on positive psychology to look at predictors to psychological grit, which may contribute to students' academic success. This article had resilience in the subject but did not cite it in particular in the study. Even though Rendón et al. (2018) did not conduct a primary research study from a strengths or asset-driven point of view with Latinx students, they made recommendations for education suggesting that a culturally validating, asset-driven or strengths-based framework could be applied in postsecondary institutions with Latinx students who operate in *entre mundos* or multiple worlds that represent their own culture as a world and the college as a new world. Rendón et al. supported the point of view of Vela et al., yet Vela et al.'s use of positive psychology, which represented a strengths-based approach, in Latinx student research was unique.

Taylor et al. (2019) used a mixed methods study to focus on Latinx migrant farmworker (LMF) children, specifically addressing resilience factors using the ego-resilience theory which suggests individuals have flexible capacity to overcome challenges that occur daily. Using quantitative and qualitative data, Taylor et al. assessed resilience and sought answers to improve academic efficacy and provided in-depth data about the lived experiences of LMFW children. These qualitative findings converged with the quantitative results, especially regarding the utilized characteristics that the LMF youth used to succeed academically. Taylor et al. findings showed that little attention had been given in previous research to resilience factors for academic success.

Dutil (2019) addressed different adaptation strategies to address specific barriers to black and Latinx populations in school settings and focused on the traumatic grief experienced in young people and promoting resilience to help support them as they become adults and succeed academically. The findings indicated that clinical interventions are usually not implemented in schools due to many obstacles that included time, space, lack of funds, and administration support. Dutil's findings also showed that therapeutic grief services to improve students' social-emotional well-being and helping these students have academic success. Dultil discovered gaps in evidence-based interventions that specifically address lack of traumatic grief support in schools. His study used trauma-focused cognitive--behavioral therapy (TF-CBT) as its basis.

Zetino et al. (2020) found that individuals with higher levels of resilience do not experience greater amounts of emotional problems in the context of childhood adversity. They focused on the correlation between mental health problems due to adverse childhood experiences (ACE), specifically in Latinx immigrants. ACE is critical to look at due to the many adversities that immigrant youth may have encountered. Resilience was found to lessen the effects of mental health problems such as depression. Zetino et al. pointed out the lack of research exploring how ACEs correlate to emotional problems, particularly immigrant Latinx youth.

Motti-Stefanidi (2018) used an integrative framework for visualizing resilience in immigrant youth and focused on describing the heterogeneity in the transformation of immigrant youth. Motti-Stefanidi defined resilience as a positive adaptation road after adversity by analyzing strengths, assets, and positive change. Examining culture and its integral part in acculturation is significant in Motti-Stefanidi work. A key factor for positive adaptation is a welcoming society.

Montemayor et al. (2015) used sequential explanatory research to concentrate on Latinx immigrants (first and second generations) school experiences and how they face academic success challenges. After reviewing various literature studies, they discovered barriers to immigrants' educational attainment, explicitly relating to language, separation of family, and socioeconomic status. Few studies were ascertained on Latinx first-generation and second-generation students' school experiences and successful academic achievement. Mixed methods of both quantitative and qualitative methods were used to identify variables to improve Latinx immigrant performance. Surprisingly, Montemayor et al. reported no significant differences quantitatively, and the qualitative results showed the students had not come up against the considerable hindrances represented in the literature review. Instead, these students relied on a resilient social network at home and school for academic success. Family, friends, and teachers formed this safety net. Montemayor et al. focused on 10th-grade Latinx math students. It would be notable to shift the focus to studying a specific Latinx group, such as Salvadorans, who have completed higher education and note what they utilized a resilient social network identified as supports to help them become successful.

McCloud (2015) used a qualitative bricolage approach to explore immigrant students in high school enrolled in an advanced ESL classroom. McCloud examined how ESL students structured their navigation of the high school experience to perform academically. McCloud (2015) interviewed nine students (8 who were Latinx and 1 who was from China) and examined their challenges, including social inequities. McCloud discovered that newly arrived immigrants seek support from each other in language translation, school orientation, and emotional support. McCloud focused on how the students situated themselves within the school setting using cross-case analysis interviews, narrative artifacts, and field notes relying on ethnographic methods and

narrative inquiry. This study's findings demonstrated the importance of resilience and creating a learning environment for success but was not about focusing solely on the stories and narratives provided by the participants.

The Phenomenon of Immigration

Bathum and Bauman (2007) synthesized the phenomenon of immigration as a change people make:

> That can have both positive and negative consequences for those who migrate. It can mean an escape from economic deprivation and hope for a better future, yet it can lead to the loss of social networks, family and community ties. (p. 167)

Federal immigration policies shape and complicate the opportunities and aspirations immigrants to the United States have for careers and higher education (Martinez & Ortega, 2019; Torres & Wicks-Asbun, 2014). However, immigration benefits the United States economy because immigrants bring between $36 and $72 billion into the national economy annually (Orrenius, 2016). Immigrants tend to work in industries with shortages of workers (Banerjee & Duflo, 2019; Kosten, 2018; Orrenius, 2016). Some industries that benefit from immigrants in the United States include healthcare and scientific research in which highly skilled careers include medical doctors, engineers, and innovators (Banerjee & Duflo, 2019; Kosten, 2018). Kosten (2018) summarized the economic benefits involve immigrants generating tax revenue for local, state, and federal governments and creating new businesses, products, and technologies that added to the jobs available for all Americans. Thus, Orrenius (2016) noted that "when immigrants enter the labor force, they increase the productive capacity of the economy and raise GDP [gross domestic product]. Their incomes rise, but so do those of natives. It's a phenomenon dubbed the 'immigration surplus'" (para. 5).

The economy is not the only area to benefit from immigration in the United States. Immigrants offer cultural and linguistic assets to the United States. Contributions that immigrants bring to the nation are also cultural and linguistic. Linguistic diversity impacts the national economy by bringing in a global connectedness (Gorter et al., 2015). Hirschman (2013) stated immigrants make significant contributions "to the creation of American culture through the performing arts, sciences, and other cultural pursuits" (p. 26).

Why Immigrants Leave the Northern Triangle

El Salvador has been labeled as the *murder capital of the world* due to its current social, political, and economic conditions and its government's ongoing corruption (Human Rights Watch, 2020). El Salvador is geographically the smallest but also the most densely populated country in Central America. The Northern Triangle, one of the poorest regions in the Western Hemisphere, consists of Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador (Human Rights Watch, 2020) as seen in Figure 1.

Figure 1

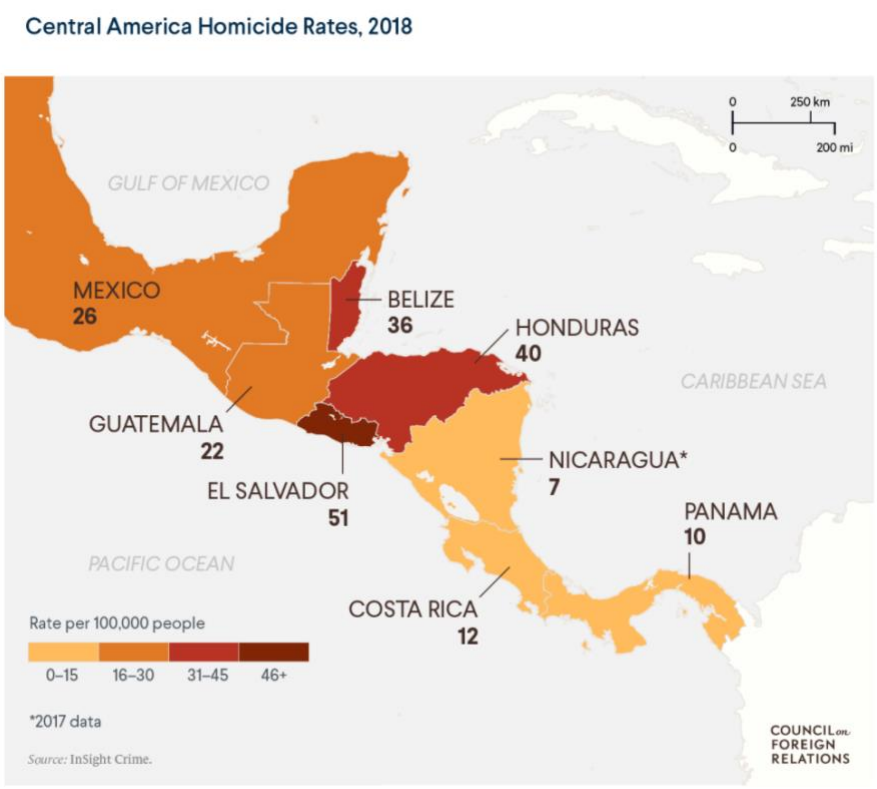
The Northern Triangle of Central America

Note. Reprinted from *World Report: El Salvador*, by Human Rights Watch, 2020 (https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2020/country-chapters/el-salvador). CC BY-NC as seen in Appendix D.

El Salvador is included in the list of the Top 10 most violent and murderous countries not undergoing a civil war (De Jesus & Hernandes, 2019). The Northern Triangle has had the highest homicide rates globally for several decades (Cheatham, 2019). The homicide-rate is rooted in the complex criminal ecosystem that flourishes in countries with impoverished and corrupt governments. The *maras* gang in El Salvador killed 20,000 people from 2014 to 2017 and faced no repercussions for their actions from the government. El Salvador's 3-year homicide rate from 2014 to 2017 was higher than the number of deaths for the same period in the combined countries of Libya, Somalia, and Ukraine, all of which were embroiled in civil wars from 2014 to 2017 (Cheatham, 2019). Figure 2 shows the homicide rates in 2017.

Figure 2

Homicide Rates per 100,000 People for Central America in 2017 as Reported by Cheatham (2019) for the Council on Foreign Relations



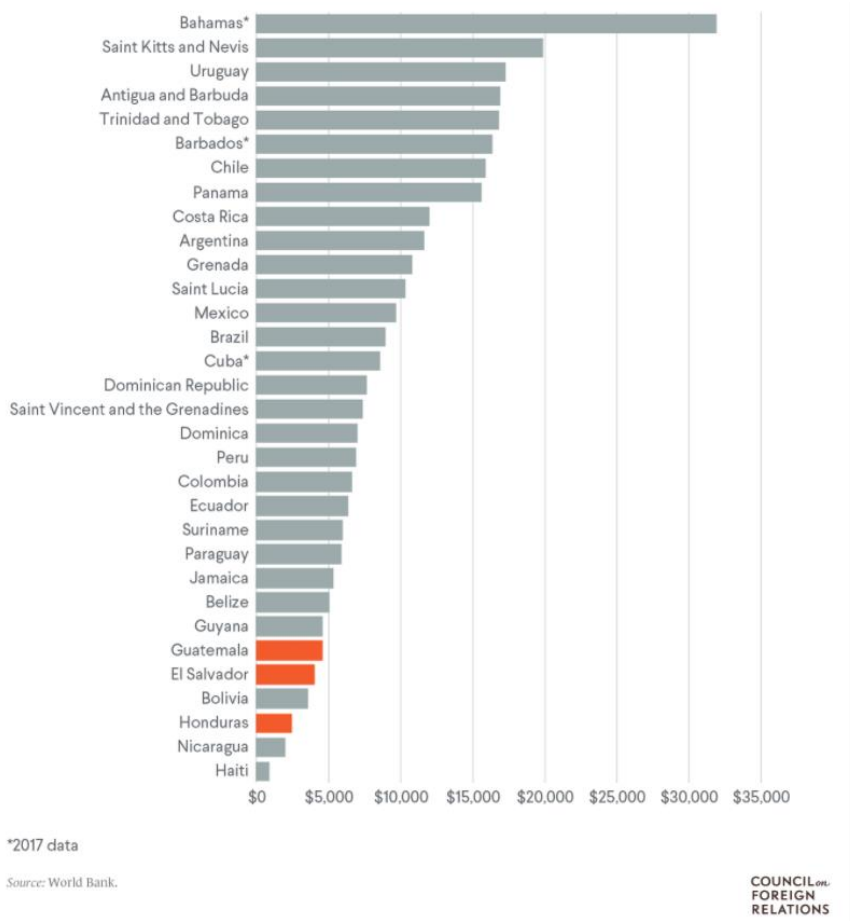
Note. From *Central America's Turbulent Northern Triangle,* by A. Cheatham, 2019, Council on Foreign Relations (https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/central-americas-turbulent-northern-triangle). Copyright 2019 by Council on Foreign Relations. Reprinted with permission as seen in Appendix D.

Furthermore, World Bank (2020) reported El Salvador's poverty rate as 29%. Poverty in El Salvador means a person makes a living at less than $1.90 per day (World Bank, 2020). The annual earnings for the impoverished nation affect El Salvador's gross domestic product (GDP). Figure 3 represents the GDP per capita comparisons for the Caribbean and Central American countries near The Northern Triangle. El Salvador's GDP is among the bottom five in the list

with group of Northern Triangle countries ranking in the bottom quartile for the GDP per capita (Cheatham, 2019). These countries' GDP creates economic instability that contributes to their citizens choosing to emigrate away from Central America.

Figure 3

2017 GDP per Capita Comparing Between Caribbean and Central American and The Northern Triangle Countries as Reported by the Council on Foreign Relations



Note. From *Central America's Turbulent Northern Triangle,* by A. Cheatham, 2019, Council on Foreign Relations (https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/central-americas-turbulent-northern-triangle). Copyright 2019 by Council on Foreign Relations. Reprinted with permission as seen in Appendix D.

National Immigration Forum (2019) represented push factors as the forces causing persons to voluntarily leave their home countries due to risking something, such as their lives, if they stay. The specific push factors affecting El Salvador include the low GDP, governmental instability, longstanding gang wars, and ongoing violence (Cheatham, 2019; De Jesus & Hernandes, 2019). El Salvador is also known to have the highest emigration rates that make up the second-biggest unauthorized immigrant population in the United States (O'Conner et al., 2019). Gangs also tend to target people living in poverty and victimize them because of their socioeconomic vulnerability (National Immigration Forum, 2019). The economic and violent conditions in El Salvador create push factors for emigration.

El Salvador's history of national instability has enabled extensive criminal networks that include the transnational criminal gangs, or *maras*, of Eighteen Street (M-18) and Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13) to operate unchecked by the government (Cheatham, 2019). Gang members target people living in poverty and victimize them because of their socioeconomic vulnerability (National Immigration Forum, 2019). Gang members target 12- to 25-year-old adolescents and young adults (Cruz & Rosen, 2020). Participants interviewed by International Crisis Group (2018) reported living in constant fear of gang violence and extortion that caused them to want to flee the country.

The United States contains pull factors that motivate Salvadorans to immigrate; consequently, immigrants from El Salvador account for almost 4% of the United States' Latinx population and comprise the nation's fourth-largest community of Latinx origin (Lopez, 2015). In 2013, an estimated 2-million Salvadorans lived in the United States, an estimated 59% of Salvadorans in the United States were foreign-born, and only half of the Salvadorans in the United States were proficient in English (Lopez, 2015). Salvadorans demonstrated the lowest

educational attainment levels among any Latinx group in the United States population where only 8% of Salvadorans earned a college degree (Lopez, 2015).

De Jesus and Hernandes (2019) provided evidence of the violent and unsafe conditions found in the Northern Triangle in a qualitative study. They interviewed youth from the Northern Triangle who did not emigrate but stayed in their countries and were enrolled in higher education institutions. Resilience emerged as a protective factor affecting the participants. Resilience allowed them to mitigate the day-to-day violence that they experienced. They reported having strong support from friends, family members, and community and maintained positive outlooks about their futures as well as dedication to higher education. De Jesus and Hernandes were focused on hearing the voices of youth who had not emigrated and were likely to be overlooked by other researchers; however, they did not include youth who had not enrolled in higher education, so their findings about resilience might not apply to all Norther Triangle youth. The main focus of the De Jesus and Hernandes' (2019) study was youth enrolled in higher education so the push and pull factors were likely represented differently their sample than a sample of youth who had not attained higher education in the region. A review of research regarding immigrants in United States public education follows beginning with studies of their belongingness, acculturation, and English learning.

Immigrants' Experiences With Adapting

Immigrant students regularly face discriminatory, legal, and economic challenges while in school. Shelton (2019) stated that challenges of belonging included racism from other students, blocked social opportunities, and limited visibility of other undocumented immigrant students. Roth (2017) claimed the importance of developing social connections is essential for academic success. It is critical to have a tie between staff and immigrant students because of the

significant effect on the students' educational pathways (Roth, 2017). Campuses need to have a climate that accepts and integrates undocumented students; it needs to be a place of belonging (Cisneros, 2019; O'Neal et al., 2016; Patler & Laster Pirtle, 2018; Raza et al., 2019). With regard to acculturation, Potochnick and Perreira (2010) observed that immigrant youth have acculturation stress that affects their mental and physical health. Six recent studies are reviewed in the following paragraphs.

Anguiano (2018) empirically examined a theoretical model of the outcomes of language brokering among 362 Latinx youth. Anguiano explored the variations in language brokering as they related to academics using segmented assimilation theory. Anguiano found that the translation of contexts was a high stakes activity for the Latinx youth that was negatively linked to academic achievement and heightened stress levels. Anguiano identified a positive relationship between academic achievement and language brokering among the sample that a qualitative study could be used to explain. In in-depth interviews with in successful Latinx immigrant participants could describe interventions that capitalize on resiliency and improve language brokering effectiveness.

Chavira et al. (2016) used mixed methods to explore the educational and career ambitions and expectations among 24 Latinx immigrant youth and their parents in a correlation of grade predictors. Chavira et al. discovered that previous research had been conducted primarily with African American or European American on this particular issue, and little has been on Latinx youth. Many Latinx immigrants negatively navigate the academic pipeline and dropout. This study looked at the roles of the *congruence* between Latinx immigrant youth's career and educational aspirations. Chavira et al. found the significance of parents' ongoing influence on their children's goals regarding their education and vocation. The language was a barrier for

parents in helping their students in school. Parents with high expectations and aspirations were a significant factor for students having better grades. Another crucial finding was students with careers and educational aspirations concurring were more likely to be successful in academics. The findings showed the criticalness of building resilience in Latinx youth due to many educational barriers to succeed academically. This Chavira et al.'s weakness was the lack of a longitudinal design, suggesting the need for a design with Latinx immigrant youth who can look back over their high school experiences and provide a longitudinal perspective about their testimonios.

Jung and Zhang (2016) investigated the relationships among parental involvement across multiple aspects, including school involvement, English language proficiency, and control of children and its correlation with children's school aspirations and achievements. Participants were immigrant families from diverse backgrounds. Based on their findings, the parent's English proficiency and involvement in school were major factors. Parents' control was a negative factor. Gender and ethnic diversity were also considered as possible determinants of youth aspirations and parent involvement. Recommendations for the fostering of academic success would be designing targeted intervention programs to support a new immigrant family. The strength of this quantitative study was that they collected data from diverse families. A weakness would be that it did not have in-depth information from the voices of the participants.

Giraldo-García et al. (2019) explored what factors predict Latinx youth successfully graduating from high school with critical race theory as the conceptual framework because of Latinx youth having the highest high school dropout rate due to struggles with English language, discrimination, and poverty. Giraldo-García et al. showed that students do achieve a good grasp of the English language (within 1 to 2 years of an expected date of graduation) significantly

improving their chances of finishing high school. Latinx students with economic disadvantage or none to few prior formal schooling experiences reduced high school completion likelihoods. Giraldo-García et al. used a secondary data set causing the design to lack flexibility in the ability to compare completion rates between distinct Latinx subgroups. Salvadoran students could experience cultural influences that different from Mexican or other Latinx subgroups to create specific barriers. A sample of Salvadoran immigrant participants could provide in-depth stories that indicate distinct barriers affect them differently than those faced by other Latinx subgroups.

Borrero (2015) used in-depth interview data for his study of five Latinx bilingual students from an urban school. Borrero focused on the role of bilingualism, and its influence on students' academic success in school to learn ways to help institutions better support Spanish-speaking immigrant families because language can be a connective tool across the context of culture for student learning. Borrero demonstrated that the English language impacts students daily. This theoretical research approach focuses on the student's cultural and language assets that they possess. Using the student's voice, this educational researcher gathered and analyzed data to help find answers to support immigrant students. A limitation of this study was the generalization of the findings by using only a few preselected participants in an urban school that promoted bilingualism, suggesting a gap involves lack of voice from immigrants who attended a rural school.

Torres and Glenn (2020) collected narratives as written by young Latinx immigrants about the experiences they had while coming to the United States because written texts empower marginalized groups that have been silenced in schools. Torres and Glenn sought to gain insight about young immigrants' sense of identity. A key finding was success with English, hard work, and resilience through adversity are needed to achieve academic achievement. Torres and Glenn

provided a study that honored immigrant voices but used a different design that did not target Salvadoran students specifically. They urged researchers to continue listening to stories about the difficulties immigrants experience, especially within the United States at the time of their study (Torres & Glenn, 2020). Similarly, Jaffe-Walter and Lee (2018) supported training educators to use immigrant student's narratives as a way to connect with students and build relationships and belongingness as a sustainable pedagogy. In-depth data with insight about Salvadoran immigrants' high school experiences, stories, and lives may fill the empowerment gap for this population, given that additional studies focused specifically on barriers.

Barriers Affecting Latinx Immigrants

Immigrant students in public schools in the United States face many challenges and barriers. As noted earlier, higher education attainment rates are low for immigrants with a disproportionately low number of undocumented Latinxs graduating from high school (Lukes, 2014). These findings suggest that Salvadorian students also might not flourish academically. Several researchers found barriers to flourishing in higher education that included discriminatory practices, immigration policies, and a lack of support or resources (O'Neal et al., 2016; Raza et al., 2019; Salinas et al., 2019; Segura-Robles et al., 2016).

Researchers' findings indicated that students can actively negotiate potential economic risks that include family members losing a job or being deported and continue attending school (Martinez & Ortega, 2019; Raza et al., 2019; Torres & Wicks-Asbun, 2014). Some immigrant students might have to support their entire households if a parent becomes unemployed. Students who find themselves supporting their whole families may lack the ability to maintain high academic performance. Many immigrants concentrate on survival of the family as their first

priority; consequently, their schoolwork receives less attention, and they fall behind in their classes (Cisneros, 2019).

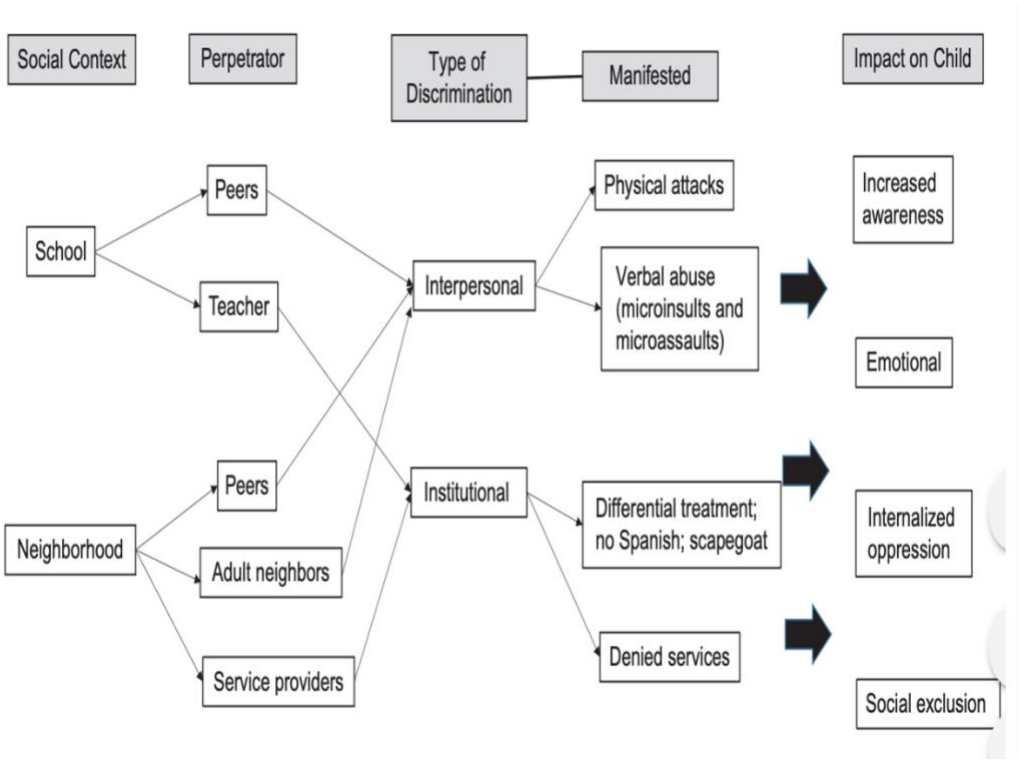
Bartlett et al. (2017) performed ethnographic research centered on Dominican immigrant youth that made the journey to the United States because youths are likely to become separated from their parents and families during the journey to a new country. Bartlett et al. (2018) discovered that a significant incentive for immigration is educational opportunity even though immigrants experience *cruel optimism* by believing that educational aspirations can be attained upon arrival. Bartlett et al. (2017, 2018) interviewed the Dominican immigrants and discovered that the participants not only experienced the pain of being separated from their mothers but also viewed schooling as essential to their academic success and their mothers' happiness. Bartlett et al. (2017, 2018) concluded that the Dominican youth in their sample were expected to learn academic English as well as a new educational system almost instantaneously if they were going to generate economic mobility for their families. The participants experienced shame from their families if they did not adapt immediately. Bartlett et al. (2017, 2018) interviewed immigrants from a Spanish-speaking Caribbean country that had different GDP and governmental stability characteristics than those found in El Salvador, so their studies' findings might not represent all immigrants from Spanish speaking countries, suggesting a study with Salvadoran immigrants would add depth of understanding to the phenomenon.

And additional factor that negatively affects immigrants in school is discrimination (Player et al., 2016). Player et al. (2016) discussed discrimination as barrier to flourishing. Philbin and Ayón (2016) found schools operating with institutional discrimination and teachers engaging in verbal abuse as the primary source of interpersonal discrimination. These researchers' findings have significant consequences for immigrant students trying to flourish

because when teachers provide negative verbal messages to students, students start believing these messages their teachers share (Ayón & Philbin, 2017). This verbal messaging toward immigrants by teachers affects immigrants both academically and psychologically (Philbin & Ayón, 2016). In other words, discrimination is a significant stressor negatively affecting immigrants' mental and physical health (Philbin & Ayón, 2016; Szaflarski & Bauldry, 2019). Figure 4 summarizes the findings by Ayón and Philbin (2017) as a visualization of the flow of Latinx children's discrimination experiences.

Figure 4

Latinx Children's Experiences With Discrimination as Found by Ayón and Philbin (2017)



Note. From "'Tu No Eres de Aquí': Latinx Children's Experiences of Institutional and Interpersonal Discrimination and Microaggressions," by C. Ayón and S. P. Philbin, 2017, *Social Work Research*, *41*(1), p. 22 (https://doi.org/10.1093/swr/svw028). Copyright 2017 by National Association of Social Workers. Reprinted with permission as seen in Appendix D.

Ayón and Philbin (2017) observed the complexity of discrimination affecting immigrant students by concluding that the racial/ethnic disproportionality in school discipline across the nation's urban and suburban schools affecting African American and Latinx students causes these students to undergo to higher rates of removal from school for discipline related reasons. Their evidence suggests the education system contains institutional barriers that disproportionately affect students of color and immigrant students (Ayón, & Philbin, 2017; Philbin & Ayón, 2016). The Office of Civil Rights (OCR) of the U.S. Department of Education (2014) determined that African American and Latinx students were punished three times more often than their White peers for comparable offenses causing their academic gaps, reduced exposure to learning opportunities, and involvement in the school-to-prison pipeline (Crawford & Arnold, 2017).

According to Gass and Laughter (2015), school-to-prison pipeline occurs because of educators applying discipline policies disproportionately. The students in the school-to-prison pipeline are usually minorities of low socioeconomic status; these students are pushed into the criminal justice system and face future prison terms. The disproportionate discipline that contributes to the school-to-prison pipeline could affect immigrant students who not only could face prison time but also deportation if they are treated the same as citizen students who are Latinx and African American. Examples of the discipline disparities affecting students of color are higher suspension rates, representing 1 out of every 6 African American students, 1 out of 13 Native American students, and 1 out of 14 Latinx students (Gass & Laughter, 2015).

Implicit biases held by educators cause the disparities in discipline affecting students of different races (Crawford & Arnold, 2017). African American and Latinx students are punished more severely with suspensions and expulsions for infractions that constitute minor acts of

classroom misbehavior (Crawford & Arnold, 2017). Implicit biases in school discipline and the use of exclusionary practices that disproportionately affect Black and Latinx students could affect the experiences of immigrant Latinx students from El Salvador. The literature on the academic outcomes of Latinx immigrants follows in the next section.

Academic Outcomes and Latinx Immigrant Youth

Five studies were found representing Latinx immigrant youth's educational outcomes. Kotok (2017) and Patel et al. (2016) provided cross sectional quantitative studies of student outcomes, while May and Witherspoon (2019) offered a quantitative, longitudinal study. There were two qualitative studies. Player et al. (2016) engaged in participatory action research of immigrant youth. However, Miranda and Jaffe-Walter (2018) provided an ethnography of school administrators' experiences.

Kotok (2017) used multilevel modeling to analyze a subset of ninth graders with math performance regarding the achievement gaps of African American and Latinx students when compared to White and Asian students. Kotok discovered that previous research on minority youth with high academic performance utilized qualitative study, and the few large-scale quantitative studies were over 10 years old, making the study timely. Kotok (2017) used the most recently available nationally representative secondary data through multilevel modeling and examined the opportunity structures and individual factors affecting high-achieving students by race/ethnicity. Self-efficacy, peer engagement, course tracking, immigration status, and socioeconomic status (SES) represented significant factors affecting achievement gaps. Although Kotok's research enriched the comprehension of achievement gaps in school for Latinx and African American students, the data could not represent the in-depth lived experiences of opportunity in the community that may motivate some students. Such opportunity may become

visible in an in-depth narrative provided by participants in a qualitative study. The nature of community as a support for Salvadorans in high school needs attention that a quantitative data set like the one in Kotok's study cannot address.

Player et al. (2016) used participatory action research as their design to learn from immigrant youth and address access to higher education issues. They interviewed nine middle and high school students who visited a college campus. Only one student was of Mexican descent; the other eight students were of Indonesian descent. All students participated in a university library guided tour as a group. Player et al. regarded their effort as "a more ethical approach to research that sees participants as fully human in their intellect, knowledge, emotion, and complexity" (p. 218). Testimonios offers an opportunity to highlight the resilience mindset and to seek solutions from Salvadoran youth about what supports they need to flourish and succeed in higher education (Yeager & Dweck, 2012).

Miranda and Jaffe-Walter (2018) used an ethnographic research design to understand how school leaders used student data in a small, low-income city high school. The findings suggested organizational, contextual, and cultural structures are needed in high schools for teachers to effectively ensure successful academic outcomes for marginalized learners. Miranda and Jaffe-Walter found the practice of handing out raw data in meetings with other school personnel caused harmful, unintended negative consequences. When the raw data sharing happened, the staff focused on students' deficits rather than talking about ways to build on students' strengths and bring out positive results. A study that asks participants about what worked in their high school when they were students could enable future administrators to take a strengths-based approach using what works with academically successful students in high school.

Patel et al. (2016) surveyed, in a quantitative study, only newcomer immigrant youth from Latin America, Asia, and the Caribbean to understand what interventions would be suggested to help decrease Latinx youths' and immigrants' achievement gaps. These youth face difficulties in educational success. Some examples of these barriers are language acquisition, discrimination, and economic strain. These researchers analyzed occurrences of life stressors as related to students' academic outcomes. Patel et al. recommended that intervention strategies should be implemented to help connect Latinx youth and families to the school. Also, Patel et al. recommended that institutions apply culturally sensitive interventions for teaching resiliency to empower youth who needed to overcome ongoing life stressors. A limitation of this study was the participants were extracted only from an urban international school setting. The lived experiences of Salvadoran participants in a rural United States location could add a different perspective.

Because higher educational attainment for Latinx youth is comparatively lower than it is for students of other ethnicities/races, May and Witherspoon (2019) performed a longitudinal study using a within-group (2 cohorts) approach to analyzed changes in Latinx youth's educational expectations, specifically from 10th to 12th grade. May and Witherspoon identified disparities in education between Latinx youth and other youth of other ethnicities in which that first-generation participants had more disadvantages than later-generation youth and were significantly challenged to achieve educational expectations. Also, income, parent education, and achievement accounted for differences between the two cohorts. Lack of involvement by parents or adult guardians was associated with less education attainment. English proficiency contributed to the achievement of higher education among all students in the sample. A limitation of this research was that it did not analyze whether processes differ by different nationalities of origin.

Targeting Salvadoran immigrants might close the gap on whether May and Witherspoon produced findings that represented the Salvadoran subgroup of the Latinx population.

Undocumented Students

Discriminatory practices cause undocumented students additional stress because of the fear of their immigration status being disclosed to authority figures and their lack of information about the immigration process (O'Neal et al., 2016; Raza et al., 2019; Salinas et al., 2019; Segura-Robles et al., 2016). Perez et al. (2009) noted that immigrant students face rejection and repeatedly being excluded from institutional and societal activities. Undocumented students have more restrictions to access to higher education and encounter several episodes of discrimination during college experiences than documented immigrant students (Salinas et al., 2019). On higher education campuses, immigrant students, regardless of legal status, undergo stressors that include food scarcity, inadequate finances, immigration status challenges, and institutionalized discrimination (O'Neal et al., 2016; Raza et al., 2019; Salinas et al., 2019). When immigrant students experience discrimination, they conceal their immigration status and fear for their ability to remain enrolled and in the country, and all of these stressors affect their academic performance (Raza et al., 2019).

Raza et al.'s (2019) finding supported the findings by Diaz-Strong and Ybarra (2016) who performed a quantitative study regarding age-at-arrival in the United States. While the age-at-arrival variable did not affect high school graduation among Latinx immigrants, students' immigration status reduced students' chances for high school graduation. Diaz-Strong and Ybarra called for educational institutions and other stakeholders to consider what role immigration status may have in their policies designed to address educational disparities. Diaz-

Strong and Ybarra recommended additional studies with immigrant youth to understand how undocumented status prevents high school graduation.

Undergoing bias from persons in authority causes students to undergo higher levels of stress and produce academically at lower levels (Cisneros, 2019; O'Neal et al., 2016; Raza et al., 2019). Locke et al. (2016) noted that students in the marginalized group of undocumented immigrants underwent discrimination that influenced their lower-level academic achievement. With lower achievement, immigrants become despondent and drop out of high school. Thus, the United States' immigration system negatively impacts the opportunities for higher education available to undocumented immigrant youth (Torres & Wicks-Asbun, 2014; Wangensteen, 2018). El Salvadorian students might not apply to college because of their immigration status and could believe attaining college admissions is impossible.

Yasuike (2019) conducted interviews with 29 undocumented Latinx college students. Yasuike recommended that higher education institutions recognize the importance of programs to support immigrants of low-income or first-generation in college status in developing social capital and human capital. Acquiring trusting relationships with teachers or counselors was regarded as a significant determinant for achieving academic success. Finally, family-based social capital, or familisism, represented as a strong obligatory sense for family welfare through emotional support for their college pursuit positively affected the participants' experiences in college. While this research added knowledge about the criticalness of support for undocumented Latinx college students, the familisism support was the main finding, and there is a need to understanding what other support systems operating outside of immigrants' families benefit Salvadoran immigrants' educational outcomes.

Negrón-Gonzales (2017) offered an autoethnographic perspective about the effect of national politics on undocumented youth living in the United States. In a climate that is against immigration, such as the Trump administration, Negrón-Gonzales discussed using lack of political power as a strength to keep fighting for the impossible goal of legal status and solidarity among undocumented immigrants as protection or insulation from outside forces seeking to harm these students. Understanding of these struggles from a marginalized group of Salvadorans could lead to potential solutions, similar to the Crawford and Arnold (2017) findings in a study of school leaders.

Crawford and Arnold (2017) used qualitative research with snowball sampling to investigate the influence of K-12 school leaders on a school climate that enhances receptiveness toward undocumented youth. The leaders in the Crawford and Arnold (2017) study actively influenced a positive school climate to help undocumented immigrants flourish. The participants demonstrated that they did act to ensure immigrants gained a sense of belonging and a welcoming climate that could support these students' academic performance. Crawford and Witherspoon Arnold noted that engaging exercises to recognize their biases helped leaders reflect on their implicit biases and discontinue rhetoric that perpetuated damaging undocumented immigrant stereotypes. Crawford and Arnold's findings were based on a sample of school leaders rather than a sample of narratives collected from Salvadoran immigrant high school students.

Testimonios Research

While much evidence supporting the need to help underachieving students from disadvantaged backgrounds, little evidence highlights what experiences explicitly contribute to immigrant students successfully attaining higher education (Sanchez Gonzalez et al., 2019).

Undocumented youth have a difficult life, and these stories bring to life what these students experience (Pentón Herrera & Obregón, 2020). Immigrants' voices may be used to produce enriched details that generate opportunities for educational leaders to meet these students' needs in their high schools.

Pentón Herrera and Obregón's (2020) highlighted marginalized voices using testimonios of six undocumented Latinx newcomer immigrant youth to learn about their struggles during the Trump era. Pentón Herrera and Obregón's used the stories to share evidence about those harmed by the current political climate in which the Trump administration discontinued or reduced access to programs designed to offer undocumented immigrants opportunities to navigate through the United States school and higher education systems. The researchers provided a narrative from each participant but did not provide a qualitative thematic finding. Pentón Herrera and Obregón (2020) used the testimonio design because their research was specific to Latinx immigrants and as a way to refer to the legacies of freedom narratives.

Finally, Naseem Rodríguez and Salinas (2019) conducted a qualitative study conceived from the minimal attention immigrants currently receive in high school classroom settings by observing how educators created safe spaces for their immigrant students to express their testimonios. The teachers made engaging, transformative pedagogies from testimonios, which included the students' struggles. Testimonios were used both as pedagogy and as a research method. Naseem Rodríguez and Salinas showed how testimonios are indispensable for improving overall learning and the student-teacher connection, but the focus of the research was not specifically on the students' lived experiences. Testimonios from Salvadoran immigrants may generate understanding about how epistemological shifts in American schools could occur.

Synthesis and Conclusion

When examining the research on Latinx immigrant students, the themes of low academic success, social inequalities and discrimination, economic strain, language barriers, and resilience over traumatic adversity are widespread. Studies on Latinx immigrants' low academic success focus on social inequalities and discrimination (Giraldo-García et al., 2019; Kotok, 2017; May & Witherspoon, 2019; Miranda & Jaffe-Walter, 2018; Patel et al., 2016; Player et al., 2016). Some researchers focused on economic strain as a barrier to educational success (Giraldo-García et al., 2019; Kotok, 2017; May & Witherspoon, 2019; McCloud, 2015; Montemayor et al., 2015; Patel et al., 2016; Yasuike, 2019). Other studies have examined the impact of language acquisition as a barrier (Anguiano, 2018; Borrero, 2015; Giraldo-García et al., 2019; May & Witherspoon, 2019; Patel et al., 2016). All these stressors can erode their well-being and lead to acculturation stress (Potochnick & Perreira, 2010; Wangensteen, 2018). Researchers found building immigrant students' sense of belonging and community is critical (Cisneros, 2019; O'Neal et al., 2016; Patler & Laster Pirtle, 2018; Raza et al., 2019).

At the same time, other studies have taken a broader look at resilience (Archuleta, 2015; Dutil, 2019; Stevenson et al., 2019; Zetino et al., 2020) through adversities. However, only Vela et al. (2018) specifically identified positive psychology as the driving framework for their strengths-based approach to studying Latinx students. Player et al. (2016) approached their study of eight Latinx high school students during a college campus visit from a collaborative framework related to community partnerships so that they could ascertain ways to support students in college. Player et al., however, approached the analysis of the eight Latinx students' data neutrally to remain open minded about the needs the Latinx students would identify regarding what they anticipated as future experiences in college. Player et al.'s findings

supported the Rendón et al. (2018) identification of a need for a culturally validating Latinx student success framework for postsecondary institutions in which students have cultural wealth.

Six of the 29 studies reviewed in this chapter involved researchers sharing the voices of immigrant youth (Borrero, 2015; De Jesus & Hernandes, 2019; Naseem Rodríguez & Salinas, 2019; Pentón Herrera & Obregón, 2020; Player et al., 2016; Torres & Glenn, 2020). Only two of these six used testimonios as an approach to inquiry that centers the participants' voices (Naseem Rodríguez & Salinas, 2019; Pentón Herrera & Obregón, 2020). The lack of study with in-depth testimonies suggests a need for further researcher, particularly with Salvadoran immigrants, whether documented or undocumented, as participants.

Gaps in the literature review involve a lack of Salvadoran youth voices based on a framework of resiliency and flourishing. Although all the studies included Latinx immigrants, only five of the 29 studies included El Salvador youth (De Jesus & Hernandes, 2019; Pentón Herrera & Obregón, 2020; Taylor et al., 2019; Yasuike, 2019; Zetino et al., 2020). The studies were focused on a deficit framework for academic performance across all topics except for Vela et al. (2018), who focused on exploring strengths. After analyzing other people's literature writings, none of these studies fulfill my purpose of exploring how immigrant youth learn to flourish by listening to the stories and narratives of Salvadoran immigrants who are currently pursuing further education or a career. The research gap may be narrowed through the collection of testimonios from El Salvador immigrants' voices who have been academically successful.

Summary

There is ample literature describing the violence of Central America's Northern Triangle, but the experiences of the youth who immigrate from this geographic area have not been collected (De Jesus & Hernandes, 2019). Salvadoran immigrants who attended public schools in

the United States are a population rarely represented in education research (McGinnis & Garcia, 2012). Thus, the problem of Salvadoran immigrant students not flourishing academically and attaining higher education was served more effectively with further in-depth research (McGinnis & Garcia, 2012).

This narrative case study aims to generate knowledge about the lived experiences of Salvadorans who have graduated high school. This chapter contained the literature review and the conceptual framework. Resilience theory provides a foundation for collecting and analyzing participants' narratives from a strengths-based approach (Zimmerman, 2013). The topics of El Salvador and the Northern Triangle, immigration, factors affecting immigrants in public schools, research specific to undocumented immigrants, research conducted as testimonios, and a synthesis of the information were included in the chapter.

Exploring and listening to the narratives of Salvadoran immigrants as it relates to resilience may be essential to understand how to support other immigrant youth to pursue further education or careers. In-depth data from recent high school graduates may provide information that could be useful to school leaders seeking to support immigrant students' achievement of educational goals (Sanchez Gonzalez et al., 2019). This research could potentially benefit this widespread issue and educate high school administrators in this area and enable them to create a foundation that encourages immigrants (Sanchez Gonzalez et al., 2019).

In the next chapter, the research method and research design are explained to listen to the testimonios effectively. The testimonials can be the vehicle to use voices of high school graduates to empower current high school students who are immigrants. Chapter 3 presents the research design and procedures used for collecting testimonios from Salvadoran immigrants.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Delgado Bernal et al. (2006) poignantly noted that there is very little research addressing the "nuanced and complex portraits" of Latinxs' lives from which "their cultural or gendered perspectives, resources, and resilience in interactions with institutions of power" can be conveyed (p. 4). There is not much information on El Salvadorian immigrants' educational experiences in the United States. Historically, this population is underrepresented and have not had a platform to voice their stories. Understanding the experiences of immigrants who graduated from high school could enable educators in the United States to meet their needs more effectively.

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore the testimonios of Salvadoran immigrants who graduated from a public high school in the United States and were currently pursuing further education or a career. A single overarching question guided the study: What are the testimonios of Salvadoran immigrants who graduated from a public high school in the United States and are currently pursuing further education or a career? The overarching research question was supported by the following two subquestions: (a) What stories do the participants share about their educational experiences? and (b) What are the themes that emerge from the Salvadoran immigrants' experiences with flourishing in high school and enrolling in higher education? The significance of this study allowed for making practical recommendations that benefit educational leaders' efforts to provide equitable educational opportunities for immigrant students from El Salvador in Chapter 5.

This chapter includes the procedures for fulfilling the purpose by answering the research questions. The chapter contains the rationale for the research design involving narrative research and testimonios in which the participants were narrators of their lived experiences. The

population and study sample are portrayed. The instrument and data collection and analysis procedures are explained. The chapter also covers the ethical considerations; issues of trustworthiness; and limitations, assumptions, and delimitations.

Research Design and Method

Qualitative research is conducted to understand human behavior within specific experiences and provide rich, in-depth data about the phenomenon of interest (Bogdan & Biklen, 2002). The research design allowed me to provide a comfortable platform for participants to elicit their stories. Narrative research is a strategy for inquiry into the lived experiences of participants through personal stories and narratives that reveal the participants' lived truths and testimonials about the conditions of human existence (Creswell, 2009; Riessman, 2008). Narrative research is emergent, open, and continuously evolving because participants are invited to partner with the researcher, become storytellers, and share in the construction of the presentation of their lived experiences (Kim, 2016).

The narrative design was most appropriate for this study because I asked participants to share stories about their lives to fulfill the purpose of the study (Creswell, 2009). Creswell (2009) offered that "people tell stories to researchers" and "feel listened to" which enables the "stories reported in qualitative narrative research [to] enrich the lives of both the researcher and the participant" (p. 511). The narrative approach also supports the research as a form of testimonios, which is described by Reyes and Rodríguez (2012) as a culturally relevant form of narrative research that represents an avenue for sharing Latinx participants' life experiences. Narratives, or testimonios, from marginalized immigrants can be personal, individualized, and subjective. Testimonios are a type of critical narrative that honors Latinx tradition and empowers voices to emerge from otherwise marginalized individuals (Reyes & Rodríguez, 2012).

I collected the narratives through two or more interviews with each participant. Each participant was asked to provide an oral, historical narrative related to living through immigration and experiencing public education in the United States. As the participants share their narratives, they may become empowered to recount details about their experiences that reflect existential themes (Finlay, 1999; Green, 2019).

Testimonios are rooted in oral storytelling and used to represent the nature of struggle from the Latinx perspective (Delgado Bernal et al., 2012). Testimonios represent personal narratives that disrupt silence, build comradery and solidarity, and expose struggle and brutality (Delgado Bernal et al., 2012). Testimonios reflect on the cultural and linguistic lives of immigrants that happened in their country of origin and in the United States (Delgado Bernal et al., 2006, 2012).

Researchers called for collecting testimonios from immigrant youth who need to be heard and have a voice (Burciaga, 2007; Delgado Bernal et al., 2006, 2012). There are limited firsthand testimonio accounts from immigrant students and their struggles to attain higher education. No testimonio research with Salvadoran immigrants to the United States was found in the literature review. Therefore, the testimonios design promoted a collective understanding of the El Salvadorian participants' navigation of their immigration and education experiences in the United States.

Population and Study Sample

I used a purposeful sample of participants who had common factors to provide insight into flourishing after high school. Purposeful sampling is defined as selecting participants as a representative sample by the researcher based on their knowledge or experience in a particular subject (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). According to Van Manen (2015), purposeful sampling

is the best method when analyzing lived experiences because the culture of the participants can receive focus in the data analysis and be based on the participants' foundational knowledge of their experiences within the culture they represent. Purposeful sampling occurs with an emphasis on selection criteria; thus, inductive and richly descriptive qualitative studies employ this type of sampling (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018). Furthermore, samples in qualitative studies can be as few as one person (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011; Saldaña & Omasta, 2018). Testimonios as a form of narrative research focuses on the stories of the participants rather than on establishing strict saturation criteria, so interviewing fewer participants with multiple interviews generated the opportunity for rich, in-depth story telling (Reyes & Rodríguez, 2012).

I asked key people in my education and local communities for recommendations for possible participants. I also contacted former high school students for whom I had contact information. The selection criteria required finding two participants who represent the following:

- Over 18 years of age,
- Born in El Salvador,
- Immigrated to the United States,
- Graduated from a public high school in the United States, and
- Pursuing further education or a career.

I consulted with key informants such as college educators in different parts of the United States and community leaders local to me for referrals to possible participants. I sought two Salvadoran immigrants for the sample. Legal status as a documented, legal immigrant versus an undocumented, or illegal, immigrant was not part of the selection criteria due to the current legal climate affecting immigrants in the United States. I accepted any participant immigrant from El Salvador, regardless of legal immigration status. Therefore, the ethical considerations discussed

later in this chapter were paramount for the protection of the participants' confidentiality. I used rolling recruitment method with an invitation letter (Appendix A) sent by email to recruit participants and attached the informed consent form that assured them of their voluntary participation and confidentiality (Appendix B).

Instrument and Data Collection Procedures

The qualitative interviews allowed me to hear the voice of the participant and look through their lens to reveal their perspectives. The data collection involved conducting two interviews with each participant to elicit their stories, their testimonios, as fully and richly as possible. A semistructured interview protocol was used for the first interview to help the testimonials flow (Patton, 2014). The first interview was guided by open-ended questions and allowed for follow-up questions to be asked for ensuring both interviewee and interviewer flexibility.

The second interview was unstructured to allow the participants to elaborate on the details of the stories and experiences they shared in the first interview. According to Patton (2014), "the perspective of others is meaningful, knowable, and able to be made explicit" through the participants' stories (p. 341). The setting in which each participant attends their respective interviews was different, but the interview format was the same to enable each participant to have the opportunity to share their stories as rich and in-depth.

I was the research instrument in seeking to amplify the voices of the participants about their experiences in this qualitative research focused on sharing the participants' lived experiences. I made sure the participants received worth and value from me. Kim (2016) stated that the interview's most critical aspect is to build rapport and trust with the participants. To develop this type of relationship, the interviewer must be willing to open up about themselves

with the participants; thus, my own positionality as a teacher, granddaughter of immigrants enabled me to relate to the participants in a meaningful, trust-building manner (Kim, 2016). Hence, I wrote in a journal my own story and shared it as part of the conversations with the interviewees and to facilitate collecting the complexity of their own stories that might not have been told otherwise.

As the researcher, I served as a vital instrument both for collecting and analyzing data (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018). As the instrument, I interpreted both the transcripts from the interviews that were audio recorded and the notes I took during the interviews. I used a reflection journal as part of interpreting and understanding the storied data shared by the participants (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018). To document the experiences and journeys of the participants, each interview was conducted by Zoom due to the COVID-19 pandemic preventing even locally positioned participants from having in-person contact with researchers, given the risks of disease transmission.

The Zoom web conference platform allows for conducting secure interviews, collecting interview notes that attend to the nonverbal aspects of communication, as well as the transcription of the audio recorded during the interviews. Recording and transcribing interviews are valuable strategies for collecting trustworthy data (Bogdan & Biklen, 2002). I also used a backup recording device to record the audio; this device was an application on my smartphone for making digital recordings. Furthermore, all Zoom-based voice-to-text transcriptions required verification and cleaning. I reviewed the transcriptions against the recorded audio and edit the transcripts by listening to the recordings while reading and editing the transcripts at least three times to ensure accuracy in the words and to make note of all the paralinguistic cues that could include vocal pausing, throat clearing, and observed facial expressions.

I contacted former high school students for whom I had contact information. I asked key people in my education and local communities for recommendations for possible participants. Once I received the names of potential participants, I sent rolling invitation emails and called them to recruit them to participate. I shared the informed consent form and assured them of their confidentiality. I described how I would use pseudonyms to protect their identities and geographical locations in the United States based on the advice of Pentón Herrera and Obregón (2020) about conducting research in the current climate of the United States that involved public controversies toward immigrants. I also explained that the recordings would be digitally shredded after the thorough, multistep process of transcribing the data. I asked them to print, sign, and scan the consent forms or to use electronic signatures. Once I had their consent, I began the first and subsequent interviews.

I shared the interview guide with participants before the interview to allow participants to see the questions and remember critical times in their past experiences while conveying their testimonios. The participants' ability to see the questions in advance of the interviews might have alleviated any nervousness as they could see the items ahead of time. This type of format "keeps the interactions focused while allowing individual perspectives and experiences to emerge" (Patton, 2014, p. 344), thus facilitating their sharing of the stories and testimonios.

I recorded each participant's interviews (either on Zoom or by cell phone app). The interviews were transcribed (word for word) and checked for accuracy. To help facilitate the first interview, I followed the interview guide as presented in the following:

1. Tell me about yourself. Who are you?

2. Please share with me where you came from. Tell me what you recall about your home in El Salvador. (Follow up encourager: Only share what you are comfortable talking about.).
3. Tell me about your educational experiences in El Salvador. What are some key memories?
4. Why did you leave El Salvador and come to the United States? How old were you? Tell me about your journey. (Follow up encourager: Only share what you are comfortable talking about.).
5. Describe your first year in United States public schools? What memories stand out for you? Tell me your stories. (Follow up encourager: Only share what you are comfortable talking about.).
6. What was your experience with learning English? How did you do it?
7. What were your experiences with adapting to this nation's culture? What stands out in your memories? (Follow up encourager: Only share what you are comfortable talking about.).
8. Follow up questions could be worded as: Tell me more about [previous topic, story, terminology].
9. How do you define flourishing? (Clarification/rewording: What does it mean to flourish for you?).
10. Describe your high school experiences in the United States. What are some key memories? (Follow up encourager: Only share what you are comfortable talking about.).
11. Who or what helped you to flourish through and after high school? (i.e., mentors, programs, support systems)

12. What were barriers that you overcame to graduate high school? (Clarification: Encourage participant to elaborate on who or people and what or programs, just like with the who or what in flourishing item.).
13. Why did you decide to seek higher education?
14. What supports did you have in high school that enabled you to pursue further education after high school?
15. Who or what has contributed to your enrollment in higher education? (i.e., mentors, programs, support systems)?

The second interview was unstructured and began with a prompt that was based on the preliminary analysis of the first interview round's data from all participants. The second interview allowed the participants the opportunity to use their reflections on the first interview to add to their testimonios. An example of a starting prompt for the second interview was the following: After reflecting on our first interview, what are some additional thoughts or experiences you want to share about being an immigrant in the United States or pursuing higher education after high school? I also sent the second transcript to the participants for them to evaluate and offer them an opportunity to make any final clarifications they think need to be made; they could call me or ask for one more Zoom-powered conversations if they chose to add any further depth to their stories.

Data Analysis

The data were sequentially and concurrently analyzed. All interviews were audio recorded using the Zoom-based platform, and the data were transcribed for analysis. I analyzed the data from the first round of interviews for preliminary themes before the second round of interviews was conducted with the participants. The participants had the opportunity to review

their first-interview transcripts for accuracy prior to the second interview so that they could reflect and provide additional details (Valencia, 2020). Checking for accuracy ensured the data had trustworthiness. This analysis strategy allowed me to design follow up questions for the second interview and for the participants to provide fully enriched data during the second interviews. I also sent the second-interview transcripts to the participants for final accuracy checks. I performed data analysis line by line and used an MS Excel spreadsheet to help me organize the codes and themes. I also used the Rev.com application for transcriptions from Zoom audio transcripts. Once I received the rough transcripts from REV.com, I listened to the recordings several times to compare the transcription with the audio and edited the transcripts in Word. To ensure validity, I cross-referenced each transcription and audiofile using notes that I had made during each interview. I also watched the videos of the interviews several times to understand the visual and paralinguistic aspects of the testimonios by observing pauses, tone changes, and cadence (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018).

I sent several follow-up emails to the participants to obtain clarification or approval of their stories. The participants had the opportunity to review their first-interview transcripts for accuracy prior to the second interview so that they could reflect and provide additional details (Valencia, 2020). I also sent the edited second-interview transcripts to the participants for final accuracy checks. Checking for accuracy ensured the data from both rounds of interviews were trustworthy. The transcription and data verification process lasted approximately 3 weeks. After the first round of data were verified, the initial analysis began, and the second interviews followed before verifying the second round of data collection. During the second interviews' data verification, the analysis of the first round of data collection continued.

The data were sequentially and concurrently analyzed. As part of the sequential analysis, I analyzed the data from the first round of interviews for preliminary themes before the second round of interviews was conducted with the participants. As part of the concurrent analysis of the data collected from both participants' two interviews, I compared the participants' transcript and interview data and my field notes to understand what patterns were similar between the participants' testimonios. I performed data analysis line by line to code to understand the data's patterns and infer the themes as part of co-creating the testimonios used to answer the research questions.

I recognized that the data alone do not answer the research questions because "the analysis of the data, not the amount of data collection, determines the originality and significance" of the study (Foss & Waters, 2003, p. 50). Nonetheless, the findings included each participant's full narrative as a testimonio that was coherent and flowing to exhibit the participants' lived experiences as immigrants attending school in the United States. The data analysis yielded thematic findings that relate to the research questions. Thus, I sought out the themes that emerged between the participants to ascertain and present the lived experiences of the phenomenon. In sum, the findings offered the emancipation of the participants from stereotypes and offered discourse that supported social justice through testimonio (Pentón Herrera & Obregón, 2020).

Ethical Considerations

Ethical assurances were in place to protect the rights of participants. I followed the Belmont Report's three basic principles for ethical research practices with human subjects: respect for persons, beneficence, and justice. First, when conducting research, it was critical to consider how this research could impact the participants, which was important in the current

climate of the United States regarding immigration policies (Pentón Herrera & Obregón, 2020). Nonetheless, the data represented oral histories that are generally considered to have no risk associated with participation and are often used by historians, sociologists, and anthropologists (Clandinin, 2013; Kim, 2016; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

According to Saldaña and Omasta (2018), an appropriate consent form stating a participant's rights and research information was needed for obtaining Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval, given that Abilene Christian University operates under the auspices of a federal fund receiving institution. The IRB ensures research is performed ethically with human participants, and in the case of using oral histories for testimonios, the IRB certifies the study as exempt (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018).

The participants provided oral histories of their experiences, so they were not expected to experience any risks with participation because their identities were masked for the final report of the testimonios. Thus, the use of pseudonyms fulfilled an ethical consideration that showed the participants that confidentiality was critical for their involvement, to ensure their participation had no risks more than those of daily living, and to encourage their honesty (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Saldaña & Omasta, 2018). In following this type of narrative inquiry process, a sacred space was created where the participants were safe with whom they were and sensed connectivity with me, as the researcher (Kim, 2016).

Trustworthiness and Credibility

I sought to produce findings that would be trustworthy and credible in this study by honoring my participants' stories faithfully when sharing their lived experiences with the immigration and education phenomena in the United States. According to Patton (2014), trustworthiness is displayed when a researcher recognizes and accepts the participants'

experiences. Credibility is critical in establishing trustworthiness. As the cocreator of the presentation of the participants' testimonios, I became keenly aware of my biases, collaborate with the participants, and discuss the analysis with a peer debriefer to ensure the data have received the maximum amount of objective treatment possible. Testimonios have credibility due to focusing on the participants' in-depth stories with presentations that apply authenticity and quality without bias.

First, I considered and examined how my bias or previous experiences could impact my thoughts (Kim, 2016). I maintained a reflection journal to help me bracket away my bias from the analysis while allowing it to inform my interactions with participants and how I analyzed the data. The processes of reflecting and journaling about who I was and what I brought to this story enabled me to promote trustworthiness by acknowledging and bracketing away my bias from the data analysis (Clandinin, 2013; Kim, 2016; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Patton, 2014).

Second, every participant's story was not complete until the participant confirmed that the data represented their words, stories, and experiences (Clandinin, 2013). Clarifications were sought from the participants throughout the interviews and data analysis process to make sure nothing the participants say was misconstrued (Clandinin, 2013; Kim, 2016; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). I co-constructed the participants' testimonios by actively listening and collecting notes during the interviews as well as by analyzing the transcribed data.

Third, I asked participants to read and make sure the transcripts of each of their interviews contained the contextual meanings they intended to convey. Participants chose when to add to their transcripts or take back anything they said by this type of checking that helped with creating faithful and accurate representations of the collected stories (Kim, 2016). Fourth and finally, I engaged with a peer debriefer about the data and my interpretations. If the peer

debriefer agreed with my conclusions or independently came to the same conclusions, then I was assured of the reliability of my analysis of the data (Kim, 2016; Patton, 2014). Finally, after the conclusion of study, I gave the participants an executive summary of the research so they would know how their voices were used and if they would be willing, they could collaborate on presenting the findings to interested parties alongside me.

Limitations, Assumptions, and Delimitations

All qualitative research is affected by limitations that prevent transferability or generalizability of findings to other settings and populations (Creswell, 2009; Riessman, 2008). Researchers make assumptions about the research they conduct (Kim, 2016). Finally, researchers use delimitations to define the boundaries, such as the target population or selection criteria, of their studies (Kim, 2016; Van Manen, 2015). The limitations, assumptions, and delimitations of study are presented in the follow subsections.

Limitations

The data were from a small sample of immigrants from El Salvador; therefore, the findings may not represent to the testimonios of Spanish-speaking immigrants from other Central and South American countries. A partial limitation could have occurred if the participants were fearful of talking, they might have provided data that were not in-depth or rich (Munro Hendry, 2007). This could have caused the findings to have limited implications and transferability to other Salvadoran immigrants in the United States. One other limitation was context specific, meaning that the participants' stories were collected from Salvadoran immigrants in the United States, so the findings and stories could be limited to immigrants in the United States and might not transfer to the experiences of immigrants from El Salvador who immigrate to other countries. Finally, due to COVID-19 pandemic related social distancing protocols that began in 2020, the

interviews were conducted by a web-based videoconference software known as Zoom which reduces the richness of interpersonal interactions, particularly the ability to recognize and respond to nonverbal and paralinguistic cues.

Assumptions

Assumptions were that participants could construct honest and rich dialogs with me and give voice to their life experiences. I assumed I could fulfill my role as an interpreter and collaborator sharing in the participants' storytelling (Kim, 2016). I assumed that I could build enough trust to have them be transparent with me by creating a relationship of trust through our discussions. Finally, because of the lived experience during 2020 in the COVID-19 pandemic that caused most interpersonal interactions and formerly face-to-face meetings to occur via Zoom and other web conferencing platforms, I assumed that conducting interviews using Zoom would the equivalent of meeting with participants face to face.

Delimitations

The delimitations represent the scope and boundaries of the narrative research (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). Therefore, the delimitations required the participants to be Salvadoran immigrants who graduated from a public high school in the United States and were currently pursuing further education or a career. The scope of the study was focused on how the participants told their respective stories about their particular experiences in public high schools in the United States. The participants' locations within the United States were not a delimiter, but I sought at least two Salvadoran immigrants for the sample. Legal status as a documented, legal immigrant versus an undocumented, or illegal, immigrant was not a delimitation. I accepted any participant immigrant from El Salvador, regardless of legal immigration status.

Summary

In Chapter 3, I discussed the research methodology and design for the study involving collecting testimonios about how Salvadoran immigrants flourish and attain higher education or career goals. The study sample selection process and data collection procedures were discussed. The researcher as instrument as well as the interview protocol were presented. The ethical considerations were outlined. Finally, the limitations assumptions, and delimitations were discussed. Chapter 4 presents the participants' testimonios and answers to the research questions.

Chapter 4: Findings

This chapter provides the findings of narratives of Salvadoran immigrants who graduated from a public high school in the United States and are currently pursuing further education or a career. The findings emerged from hearing their voices through testimonios. This chapter will introduce two Salvadoran participants sharing personal testimonios to describe their journey and how they flourished. I performed a cross-case analysis to provide school recommendations on new Salvadoran immigrants' assistance to help them flourish and go on to higher education. Participants use an alias to protect their identity. Both participants were born in El Salvador, have U.S. high school degrees, and currently work in different jobs. They both self-identify as flourishing within their work and life experiences.

The Institutional Review Board approved this research on January 14, 2021 (Appendix C). The data collection began later in January 2021 and ended in early February 2021. The research design of testimonios involved using interviews, and data were collected over a period of 3 weeks. The accumulated data consisted of interviews with two Salvadoran participants. Due to COVID-19, all interviews were administered using the video recording Zoom software. The first interviews ranged between 70 and 80 minutes. The second interviews were from 10 to 30 minutes. I used the REV.com application for the initial audio to text transcriptions of the interviews by downloading the digital audio recording from Zoom and uploading the audio to REV.com. Once I received the rough transcripts from REV.com, I listened to the recordings several times to compare the transcription with the audio and edited the transcripts in Word. To ensure validity, I cross-referenced each transcription and audio files using notes that I had made during each interview. I also watched the videos of the interviews several times to understand the visual and paralinguistic aspects of their testimonios by observing pauses, tone changes, and

cadence (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018). For example, Angelica shook her head and looked down every time she would describe frustrating situations like good schools being 3-hours away. Her face appeared happy with a big upward curl of her lips and upright posture when she mentioned family or teachers who pushed her toward academic achievement. Marcos' face appeared serious or thoughtful with knitted eyebrows and pursed lips when I asked a follow up question about his journey in Mexico; however, he shook his head and laughed when discussing the experience of federal agents in Mexico arresting him for lacking appropriate legal status and travel documentation. Marcos also used his hands within the video frame quite a bit to emphasize things of importance, such as a story of carrying a propane tank for miles to prove to his father he was strong.

I sent follow-up emails to the participants to obtain clarification or approval of their stories. The participants had the opportunity to review their first-interview transcripts for accuracy prior to the second interview so that they could reflect and provide additional details (Valencia, 2020). I also sent the edited second-interview transcripts to the participants for final accuracy checks. Checking for accuracy ensured the data from both rounds of interviews were trustworthy. The transcription and data verification process lasted approximately 3 weeks. After the first round of data were verified, the initial analysis began, and the second interviews followed before verifying the second round of data collection. During the second interviews' data verification, the analysis of the first round of data collection continued.

The data were sequentially and concurrently analyzed. As part of the sequential analysis, I analyzed the data from the first round of interviews for preliminary themes before the second round of interviews was conducted with the participants. As part of the concurrent analysis of the data collected from both participants' two interviews, I compared the participants' transcript and

interview data and my field notes to understand what patterns were similar between the participants' testimonios. I performed data analysis line by line to code to understand the data's patterns and infer the themes as part of co-creating the testimonios used to answer the research questions.

A single overarching question guided the study as follows: What are the testimonios of Salvadoran immigrants who graduated from a public high school in the United States and are currently pursuing further education or a career? The following two subquestions supported the overarching research question: (a) What stories do the participants share about their educational experiences? and (b) What themes emerge from the Salvadoran immigrants' experiences with flourishing in high school and enrolling in higher education? The findings for each of these questions are presented in this chapter.

Findings for Subquestion A: Shared Stories About Educational Experiences

Evidence of Angelica and Marcus's shared education experiences appear in the testimonios. Each participant's testimonio is organized to ensure their voices of their educational experiences are presented accurately. Their individual subheadings denote their unique experiences, whether those occurred in El Salvador or in the United States. Angelica's testimonio appears first and is followed by Marcus's testimonio. Table 1 provides a summary of the characteristics of each participant.

Table 1

Participants' Descriptors

Participant	Age	Gender	Origin city in El Salvador	Age at U.S. arrival	Reason for leaving El Salvador	Post high school education
Angelica	26	Female	Sesori	19	To pursue higher education	Earned BS in Health Administration
Marcus	26	Male	El llano la quesera, San Gerardo	16	To help family financially	Needs 1 course credit for Associates in Criminal Justice

Angelica's Testimonio

Angelica's testimonio began by Speaking of "soñadores como yo" [dreamers like me] in Spanish:

> Dicen que no importa de dónde vienes, sino hacia dónde vas, pero yo creo que de donde vienes tiene que ver hacia dónde quieres ir y por qué. Para bien o para mal, hay siempre personas que nos mostraran lo que queremos ser, por lo que queremos luchar, y lo más importante es hacia donde nunca hay que regresar. [They say that it does not matter where you come from, if not where you are going, but I think that where you come from is relevant to where you want to go and why. For better or for worse, there are always people who will show us what we want to be, what we want to fight for, and the most important thing is where we never have to return].

I am from Sesori, El Salvador, which is a small town which is about 2 hours from San Miguel. I left El Salvador in May of 2014 when I was 19 years old and was still able to graduate from a U.S. high school. I come from a big family of seven. I am the youngest. It was really hard for my parents to take care of everyone. It's a little complicated. My dad decided to come to the United States to make money to provide for us. My mom came too and got pregnant with me in the United States but then they decided to come back home to El Salvador to have me since my

siblings were little and they needed them too. My dad ended up moving back to the United States when I was 2 or 3 years old. I actually only saw him twice growing up. Once when I was 12 years old for a few weeks and then another time when I was 15. I only communicated with him through letters and pictures (looks up). There were no Zoom meetings back then so I never saw him (shakes and lowers head).

Schools were far from where we lived (shakes head and looks down). I had to walk an hour each way to get to school. There were no buses. I dreamed of being a physician and going to college (slight smile). I went to public schools because private schools were expensive and far. My dad sent money every month. I mean it was enough to live but we did not have extra for things like attending college or gifts. He did his best!

I got sick with seizures when I was 10 and my father could not send much money (shakes head). My eldest brother and sister decided to move to the United States to help with finances. Together they could make more money so we could go to school. It was hard (sighs). We had to leave at 6:00 a.m. and walk for an hour. Sometimes it was raining. We took two pairs of shoes. One to cross a river and the other to use when we got to school. We also carried food to eat there (smiles and shakes head). They did not have food at school like they do here. I ended up only going to high school on Saturdays. They called it “distancia” which means distance. I worked during Monday to Friday and then went to school on Saturday all day (sighs).

One memory I remember was being in a poetry contest. I won and got to read my poem on El Salvador at a radio station for the whole state in my area (cheeks puff out and lips curl upwards). I was proud. I tried to go to college but it was too expensive, too far, and too dangerous (knitted eyebrows and pursed lips). We had no family in the city and no place for me to live. Once I remember people in a car with guns chasing us. We ran and my mom called the

police. Another time bad people came to my grandma's house and stole our money (sighs). After that, my mom was afraid and told me I could not go and had to stay home. It is normal in El Salvador to be afraid. There are many bad people and gangs there. My grandparents say it is worse now. However, we do have a new President, so I think it is getting better (smiles, upright posture, and shoulders back). Now everyone is able to see the beauty of El Salvador.

El Salvadoran School Experiences. Schools are much different there. There are not many resources or books and no computers. The teacher just lectured and you had to write everything down. I guess that was good because I learned to write (smiles). You did not focus on the computer. It was us doing it. Schools did not have enough teachers either (knitted eyebrows). My elementary school only had three teachers (giggles). It was about 150 students. There was not enough space (pauses) so we only went in the morning to school while another group went in the afternoon. There were around 50 students per teacher. In high school, it was the same too. I only went to school on Saturday, sometimes Sunday and there were around 55 students per teacher due to the same reasons for no space or teachers. It was hard. Teachers had trouble trying to help everyone and keep our attention (laughs and then lips tighten). I had to change schools 3 times due to different schools only going to certain grades and each was further away.

Traveling to school was such a problem. In fact, my dad did not finish school because of these reasons. He only finished third grade because he had to work. My granddad did not even know how to read or write for the same reasons. Another barrier, I see is that my family did not think education was a priority.

My *tias* [aunts] think that education is not important because at the end, after they finish, there's not enough jobs in El Salvador for those who have finished high school. There are no jobs especially in my town so why bother. You would have to travel 2 to 3 hours to work in the city if

you could even get a job there and then you could not afford to live there (shakes head). It did not make sense to finish school.

My dad, however, wanted us to go to school. He worked three jobs to send us money. He worked so hard that he only slept on the bus between jobs. He did not want that for us and encouraged us to go to school. He did not want us to suffer. Three of us graduated from high school.

I decided to leave El Salvador (pauses) because I wanted to go to school to get a better job. I could not do that because of money and distance. Also, outside of my town, the gangs would not allow people to travel freely (lips tighten). I was lucky (slight smile) and had a visa because my parents had worked on my papers. I traveled with a visa to the U.S. by plane and later got my green card. My other family members had to come across the border on land, and it was hard. I was lucky. I actually became a U.S. citizen last year (big smile). I am blessed.

U.S. High School Experiences. My dad and I went to the local high school here (smiles and giggles). Even though I was 19 when I arrived, the principal told me that I had the opportunity to go to the high school and graduate but I would have hard classes and I had to pass all of them (looks up and laughs). He was encouraging. I saw many other El Salvadoran and Mexican students that first day which I was excited about. It also made me sad because I noticed that they did not appreciate school (knitted eyebrows and looks down). I did not hang out with them, and they were mad at me. I just could not believe that they were not thankful to be in a public school with so many opportunities including learning Spanish and English. I noticed many students did not speak formal Spanish and this school could help them learn both languages properly (clears throat).

It was hard at first with no friends, but I just concentrated with school. I met some students that were nice, but we did not have most of the classes together. I was put into a government class, and the teacher did not speak any Spanish (laughs and rolls head back). It was really hard because we were learning another type of terminology. I wanted to change classes, but the teacher would not let me because I needed that class to graduate. The government teacher was nice and told me he would help me after school and during lunch. I did use this extra help and ended up getting an A-plus grade. I was so happy (tilts head and smiles). I actually ended up having this same teacher the next semester for history because they transferred me from ESL (English Second Language) history to regular history.

Regular history was so hard (tilts head and laughs). They would watch videos about different wars, and I did not understand anything because it was all in English but this teacher would help me after class. I remembered he took time to explain to me what was happening in the movie Schindler's List. I also had this same teacher for crew, which is similar to a study hall or homeroom, which is a time to do homework. I felt lucky to have him for that class too. I took lots of notes and would take my textbooks home and translate everything at night. It was hard and took lots of time.

I also took an AP class at lunch, so I never hung out with friends (scratches head and gets lips pursed). I stayed in the classroom and worked with my professor. I also had two other teachers who would help me practice presentations and my English. I also got involved with the club called Newcomers from El Salvador (slight smile). One of my teachers, the nurse, and the school psychologist encouraged me to help mentor the other new students. We used the club to help them feel like they belonged. I did this to help them, but it actually helped me (tilts head and pauses). I wanted to be part of something that helped others to be included in the community. I

wanted to encourage my classmates to realize how important it was to take advantage of learning opportunities (knitted eyebrows and pursed lips). Our parents had sacrificed to give them this chance. It was sad to see that many did not take advantage of the educational opportunities.

I think the school should be stricter about all students showing respect and being appreciative. I also think it is important to get involved with the community. Schools should reach out to organizations and get students involved in different community groups. Since graduating high school, I have done this, and being involved has helped me grow as a person, relate to all types of people, learn English faster, and feel like I am a part of this community.

Learning English. I learned English fast because I asked a lot of questions (shakes head and laughs). I also asked for help. I want to know if I make mistakes. I practice all the time. I am not shy. I watch TV in English. I go to English church services where I volunteer too. I read English newspaper (pauses). I took extra English classes at the local college. I also was around people that were positive and supportive. There will always be negative people who say, "You can't do it," (shakes head and uses hand to signal pushing away) but I try to surround myself with positive people. I think that is why I hung out with teachers (smiles and looks to side). I also wanted to be a part of the school groups, so I hung out at the library. I tried to surround myself with students who studied.

Pros and Cons of Schools in El Salvador and the U.S. El Salvador lacks resources for public schools, but the United States lacks restrictions for public schools. By this, I mean U.S. teachers do not have the freedom to discipline. They are restricted so they do not receive enough respect, which is important. In El Salvador, teachers are respected. I think El Salvador has great potential, a lot of people have come to the United States to work hard to make a difference, and they have succeeded (smiles). For example, there is a judge from El Salvador who has been on

the Colorado Supreme Court for more than 2 years. He inspires me. Not everything in El Salvador is bad, but conditions in the country make it seem that way in the eyes of others. I want to work hard to strengthen relationships between teachers from El Salvador and the United States.

Barriers in U.S. Schools. One barrier at the U.S. high school was when teachers spoke Spanish. It was not good because it made it hard to learn English. Everyone would just speak Spanish. I had one class where you had to write a different ending for Romeo and Juliet. We were given a choice to do it in Spanish or English. It was hard but I chose to do it in English (tilts head and laughs). It was challenging but it helped me improve my English faster than another group of students who wrote the assignment in Spanish. I remember once when a classmate fought with someone in the halls during a break period.

Sometimes Anglo students were mean (slight smile and tilts head). They would say bad words, tell us to learn English better or even go back to El Salvador. Sometimes they would just ignore me (roll eyes) in class. Some people assumed that since I spoke Spanish I was from Mexico. Others made comments about me crossing the border illegally even though I came to the United States on a visa. Some thought I was illegal. It made me uncomfortable to go to school at times (shakes head and looks down). I think that is why the school psychologist encouraged me to start the Newcomer group. We were all bullied, and we needed support (looks to side and hangs head a little). She thought that sometimes newcomers acted bad or wanted to drop out to protect themselves. I agree with her.

I helped start a Newcomer group, but it did not go like we thought. It was hard because some students that were born in the United States did not allow us to be part of them (tilts head and smiles). They grew up here. They did not understand what it was like to be a new immigrant

in school. They were not really welcoming to us as new immigrants. They tried to put us away. Teachers did not see the way immigrant students treated each other differently. They thought since we were all Latinos it was good. We did not tell the teachers that it was not good (frown). We wanted to be a part of a group that accepted us. A place where we were all equal. This group was not. I do not think it was on purpose (pause and looks up) but it stopped us from fully integrating into the school.

This incident showed me that Chicanos (Mexican Americans born in the United States) can be racists too. Some would not even talk to me in Spanish. I remember asking for help in understanding something in history class from a Chicano classmate (slight smile and tilts head). She commented that she did not speak Spanish in school, only at home, and she would not help me. So, we were not only not accepted by some Anglos but also not accepted by some Chicanos.

I still see racism today (smiles and tilts head). My last workplace, I was hired to work in a hospital. I started with 3 years of volunteer experience, a college degree in health administration. I am also bilingual. I was hired at the same time as an Anglo girl with no degree and no experience. She ended up making more money than I did. People have told me that I should not be working here because of my accent. I have even gotten comments like: “How was coming across the border?” Also, many people in the United States assume I am Mexican just because I speak Spanish. It is very frustrating.

Flourishing. Flourishing means that you are growing, it is changing in a good way (pauses and laughs). It means to be able to help yourself as well as help others. A couple of teachers helped me to flourish and go on to college. They believed in me (big smile). They gave up their lunches or time after school to talk to me, work with me, and encourage me to go to college; not every teacher would do that. These teachers pushed me. One teacher even took me

by the hand to the college counselor to talk about college. This teacher helped me fill out applications and build my resume to find jobs. I did not think I could go because I did not have money.

College Dream. I dreamed of college. I worked three different jobs while doing high school to help my family pay for my expenses and maybe go to college (knitted eyebrows). I worked as a housekeeper, dishwasher, and prep cook. It was hard (slight smile and tilt of head). I worked every holiday, break, and weekends. My parents let me live at home with them but could not afford to help me with any college expenses. I ended up getting a couple of scholarships, but I had to pay the rest by myself. Also, at that time everything at the local college was in English. I had to translate everything. I was used to it but the task of translating all the material took lots of time. I knew I could do it, but it would take time. I am a strong believer of "if you dream it, you can achieve it," and I did (big smile).

Teachers are Key. I think teachers really make a difference. I remember my first teacher. She was amazing (big smile). She took so much time for me even after school. She would send notes home telling my parents how fast I was learning. She believed in me. She even pushed me to be in first grade. My parents thought I was too little but finally let me even though I was young. I actually ended up graduating from high school in El Salvador at age 15. My classmates were 18 and 19 years old. I was young and at times that was hard too because I did not have close friends and was sometimes bullied. My teachers were actually my friends (big smile). I had another teacher in high school who stood out. He also believed in me (smiles). He would tell me not to take anything personal and to keep dreaming. I am still in touch with him today. Those teachers I mentioned in my story are the ones that planted seeds that I could believe in myself and go for my dreams. Many of my dreams have come true. I just graduated from

college with a Bachelor of Science degree in healthcare administration. I am married to my best friend (big smile). I help others in the community through my volunteer time and have become an American citizen.

My next dream is to maybe get a masters degree in public health (slight smile and tilt of head). I would also like to become a professional medical interpreter. I just finished working for the local hospital as a financial assistant representative, and now I am currently working for the Colorado Health Department as a contact tracer. I recently had COVID-19 and know what it is like. I am now helping and supporting people that have it now. Being bilingual is a gift that I am able to use to help both English and Spanish speakers in my town get through this pandemic. I have received so much from this community, and I think it is important to give back to the community.

Marcos' Testimonio

I am 26-years-old and married. I work as a bartender here at a local restaurant and was studying criminal justice at a local college. However, because of the pandemic, I had to put that on hold for the moment. It has been really tough, but I am glad to have a job. I have had to work more than 40 hours a week even though there are not as many people coming in. My wife had COVID but I have not had it.

Family in El Salvador. I come from a small town in El Salvador. I am the youngest of three. I have two older sisters. My dad passed away 3 years ago. He died from liver cancer. It was hard living there, especially transportation. Although, my mom says it is better. I do not know since I have not been back for 10 years now. I left when I was 16-years-old.

My father was a farmer. We grew all our own fruits and vegetables to eat for the year. We sold any extra we had to buy seeds for the next year. My dad also worked for the city to

build roads. My mom was a housewife. School is hard because the buildings were far. I had to walk 30 minutes to get to school (shakes head). My middle school was an hour in a half away and high school was even further. I had to walk about 20 minutes to catch a bus and then ride for 2 hours to get to the school. We did not have much money so I had to work all week but my parents allowed me to go to "distancia" school on Saturdays (nods head). It lasted all day from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sometimes I would go back on Sundays to do homework or to catch up.

I felt safe in my little town. The gangs are mostly in the big cities. My town everyone was related, and we all knew each other (slight smile). We did not have lots of money. We had food and a roof over our head, but we did not have electricity or water until I was around 10 years old. I remember digging holes for 6 months to get water to our house (crosses arms and upward curl of lips). We made a "*pila"* in our house. It is a cement basin that holds water. We also had to build a "*pozo de agua*" where the natural springs come from to get the water. I still remember the first time we got clean water in the house. It was fun (laughs and smiles).

Schools in El Salvador. Some barriers at school were first the distance (slight smiles). Everyone had to walk far to get there. We had to get up at 5 a.m. to get there by 8 a.m. Also, there was no running water. We would have to go to the river for drinking water and showers. I liked school and was a good student (laughs and throws head back). I remember lunches. Every mom would take turns cooking lunch for the whole school, which was nice, but I know it was hard for the moms to cook for 80 kids.

Also, there were only two teachers for the whole school (slight smile). They taught the younger kids in the morning and the older kids in the afternoon. The classes were crowded but I learned. One memory I remembered in high school was taking the bus and one of the wheels fell off (shakes head and laughs). There was dust everywhere and we had to climb out through a

window. We were so late for school but things like this happened. It was normal. It was tough because we only had teachers on Saturday. They were amazing teachers (big smile). They would go the extra mile. I would take my assignments and books home and work on it on my own but come to class with questions. My teachers would explain to me when I was confused. They were so supportive and made sure I understood everything.

I started working at age 13 (knitted eyebrows and pursed lips). I would help my uncle build houses. I worked Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. – 3 p.m., eight hours a day (smile and nods). It was hard but I really wanted to keep going to school. My mom said I used to cry if I was going to be absent (laughs). I enjoyed it and knew it was the road to a better life.

I am the only one in my family to go on to further education. My mom only finished fourth grade and my dad finished sixth grade (pauses). My sisters finished six grade too and then stayed home and helped around the house until they married.

I ended up leaving El Salvador because I wanted a better life and knew if I stayed it would be the same (shakes head). My uncle was making plans to go and asked me on Monday if I wanted to go with him. At first, my parents thought it was a crazy idea and that I was too young (laughs and throws head back) but after talking to another uncle living in the United States, they changed their mind. I left on Friday.

Leaving my Home Country. We rode a bus from El Salvador and Guatemala. There was no problem because you can cross with just your passport. After that we rode in a car through Mexico. It was harder crossing the Mexican border into the United States because we had to cross the Rio Grande River in small inner tubes (looks up and pauses). I chased my immigration agent there but ended up at a house there for a couple nights. I got separated from my uncle but then we got back together. We then had to walk for three days in Texas, hiding from the

checkpoints. It was like a desert, hardly any trees. We looked for trees for shade. It was so hot and we were getting dehydrated that we started walking at night (shakes head and uses hands to describe situation. We heard lots of coyotes, but I was not scared (slight smile). I was used to being out in the wild in El Salvador. The only thing I was nervous about was the stories of ranchers that would shoot people but we never saw any. It was a hard journey, but we finally made it to Houston. We stayed there a couple days and then got in a car and drove for 3 days until we made it to Maryland.

My parents and uncle pitched in $8,000 to pay the coyotes to bring me. They paid some at the beginning of the trip, I paid some in the middle, and then paid the rest when we got there. The people picking me up had the final payment and would not pay it until they had me. I was a bit worried about them stealing my money but luckily it did not happen (shakes head and slight smile). There were 12 in my group, but we ended up leaving one person behind because he was slowing us down. I never heard what happened to him (shakes head).

I did skip the part where we got caught by Mexican agents after 10 days into my journey (small laugh). I got separated from my uncle and put in jail there until they sent me back to El Salvador. My uncle got sent back too. We decided to try again. The coyote we pay gives you three attempts, if you do not make it by the third attempt you lose your money. The second attempt is what I described before. That trip took about 15 days to make it to Texas.

Made It to the United States. After I made it to Maryland, I could not find a job. After a month, I moved to Virginia with a relative but still could not find a job. I had to work and repay my parents. I ended up coming back to Maryland and living with some strangers. I rented a floor space to sleep at night. I did not sleep on a bed for over a year. I did end up finding two jobs, one as a dishwasher and one at McDonalds (smiles and laughs). I was working 15 to 18 hours a day.

I never spoke English. Everyone around me spoke Spanish so for two years I did not feel like I needed to learn English. Later though some friends encouraged me to take ESL (English as a Second Language) classes to learn and I signed up for them at a local community college. Everything was free. I took classes for 2 years there and learned slowly but ended up meeting an amazing teacher that encouraged me to get my GED (general education diploma) and showed me where to sign up for those classes. My English was still not good enough, so I ended up taking preGED classes for 6 months and then I finally graduated in 2015 after 16 months of GED classes.

I want to talk more about my ESL teacher. She was the best. She was always patient. She did not speak any Spanish, but she never gave up on me (big smile and shakes head). She would even come to my house to help at times. I loved that she would dress up for all the holidays and explain them to use (uses hands to describe). I learned about American culture there. She also taught a lot of American slang. She made class fun but most important was that she pushed me to get my GED. I will always be grateful for that. My ESL classes had students from lots of countries. I think this made it easier to learn English because we had to communicate in English to talk. I know if everyone had known Spanish, we would have talked in Spanish and been distracted. My GED courses were also in English. I was actually given a choice but decided it was better to take them in English so I could improve.

More About Schools. Difference that I have noticed between El Salvador and U.S. schools is that the teacher has more power in class in El Salvador. Here in the states, they do not seem to have much power. I think it is because U.S. teachers do not have the authority to discipline the students, so there is less respect in U.S. classrooms. El Salvador may not have as many resources as the U.S. schools, but they do have more teacher respect. I think people think

that El Salvador does not have good schools, but they do. They do not have as many resources, but I learned a lot there and teachers were respected. Students would even have duties to clean and keep the classroom clean daily. That does not happen here. Other assumptions I hear is that El Salvador is not a good country. That they only have gangs. Every country has good and bad people. We do have gangs but we also have lots of good people. El Salvador is beautiful. It has many beautiful beaches, animals, plants, great food, and lots of culture.

One thing I never understood about American culture was why adults dress up for Halloween (laughs). I understand the kids dress up but not the adults. In El Salvador, we did not celebrate Halloween. We do celebrate All Saints Day on November 2 by taking flowers to the tombs of those deceased.

Flourishing. Flourishing means improving. It would be like starting from the bottom and now you are on top (uses hands). For example, starting a job as a dishwasher and moving up to becoming a busser. The first person to help me flourish was that teacher I mention but then I had an American coworker that helped me too (big smile). She was constantly correcting my English and would put me in uncomfortable situations that force me to talk in English. I remember one time she invited me for dinner and left for an hour where I had to talk to her family in English the whole time (big smile and laughs). It would be rude of me to not answer so I tried. It was uncomfortable but it helped me so much. It forced me to use my English. It helped me not be afraid. I think one of the biggest barriers to learning English is fear of people making fun of you (eyebrows knitted and looks down). Another time she took me to a theme park and left me in line to buy the tickets and order food all in English. She took me out in the community and made me use my English. That helped me flourish.

Never Give Up. Another barrier I think for those learning English is time. I remember taking my GED test and it was online. I knew the material but was not able to write it down in the time I was given. I failed the test twice. It was frustrating because I did know the material, but my English writing skills were slow (uses hands and lips pursed). I never gave up. I see obstacles as something to help me grow up (shakes head and slight smile). I cried many times, but it has made me work harder.

I remember we lived 20 minutes away from the nearest store. One day my dad bought a full propane tank and put it on my shoulders (smiles and uses hands to show the story). I was 9 years old. He told me to carry it home. I would not put it down. I did have to stop a few times, but I was determined to make it home. I have always been like that.

Moving to Colorado. I ended up moving to Colorado to be with my girlfriend from back in El Salvador (laughs and big smile). She was living here and we got married. I had actually met her in "distancia" classes and we had kept in touch. She encouraged me to keep taking ESL classes. I did and met another teacher, who only spoke English that believed in me and encouraged me to go on to higher education. Teachers again (laughs). I am so thankful for more teachers that came into my life. I had never thought of it before but decided to try it. I also had my wife encouraging me to better myself. She was a great role model because she was also in college. It was hard at first because I still did not have my papers and so it was so expensive. I was being charged out of state tuition and I could not afford that but I met a counselor that searched for help and eventually got me in a program which allowed me to pay in state tuition. I was lucky. The program ended later. I am almost finished with my associate degree in criminal justice and then I can go to the police academy although you need your permanent residency to

be enrolled. Colorado is one of the few states that lets you attend without being an American citizen. My dream is to be a detective.

Legal Status. I think one of the hardest things that I struggled with in going on to higher education is my legal status (slight pause and lips pursed). People see that and they think *you will not make it*. I remember even picking up my diploma and the lady made a comment about maybe it was because I did not have a social security number (looks down and shakes head). It was discouraging. I run into many problems with my legal status and going to school such as assumptions that I will not succeed, why bother, cost is expensive, and applications are hard.

It is interesting that I also get discouragement from other Latinos about higher education. Some do not understand why I try to go to school because they know that being illegal makes it difficult plus they think it is not worth it (looks down). However, since I moved here, I see how important education is and how it can help you have a better life. There are more jobs if you are bilingual and if you have a college degree.

People will tell you why you are wasting your money on getting some classes if you will not be able to do anything at the end (rubs head). It is hard if you are constantly hearing those words and you do not have any support. It is embarrassing and I feel like a failure when anyone asks about my status (shakes head). My fear is anytime someone asks for my social security number because I am afraid they will say I can do something (shakes head). I am lucky that our local community works with immigrants and does not ask about status. They have helped me to get lower tuition and pay for books. I never dreamed I would go to college when I lived in El Salvador. This country has so many opportunities. I first dreamed of making money and then going back to El Salvador but now my goals are to get more education and become a policeman.

I am excited to dream even bigger. Who knows what will happen? I will not stop dreaming (smiles).

Findings for Subquestion B: Emergent Themes of Flourishing in High School and Enrolling in Higher Education

I identified the emergent themes of flourishing in high school and enrolling in higher education or a career by labeling and organizing the raw interview data. I individually coded and analyzed each participant's data using open and axial coding to find themes that applied to understanding how the participants flourished in high school (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). After reading through both transcriptions of the participants' lived experiences, I reduced the body of data to small points of data and coded each one with a descriptive label. Open coding involved identifying what terms in the data were used by the participants that generated context to support patterns for axial and values coding. Table 2 shows the codes that were used for finding themes. Once I viewed the codes within their context, I began identifying the patterns and assessing the relational trends related to the values the participants espoused the most in their testimonios. This value coding occurred in tandem with axial coding and helped me manage, code, and examine the qualitative data. I supplemented axial coding with values coding for ascertaining the emergent themes that answered the subquestions and the primary research question (Saldaña, 2015).

Table 2

Code Matrix of Number of Times a Participant Provided Information About a Code

Code	Participant 1	Participant 2	Totals
Assumption/assume/discrimination	6	8	14
Barriers/Obstacles	0	7	7
Money	14	31	45
Gangs/gangsters/fear/danger/scare	3	16	19
School being far/travel/walk/	14	61	75
Jobs/Work/Working	53	116	169
Language/English/communicate/speak	53	104	157
Believe/Support/help	75	53	128
Community	13	8	21
Dream/opportunity/goal/flourish	20	8	28
El Salvador	11	43	54
Beautiful/Beauty/ love of country	3	4	7
Family	111	26	137
Mom/Dad/father/mother/parents	34	47	81
Brother/sister/sibling	8	12	20
Grandma(abula)/Grandpa(abuelo)	3	5	8
Uncle/Aunt/Husband/Wife	3	12	15
Home/House	21	37	58
School/Education	122	94	216
Classes	43	93	136
College/Higher Education	15	22	37
Diploma/GED/graduate/graduation	5	19	24
Learn/study/grade/grades	54	81	135
Teachers	41	36	77
Status/illegal/social security/visa/legal	11	32	43
Totals	736	975	1,711

After establishing the trends and relations between the codes in the aggregated data, the broader categories or themes emerged with the axial and values coding. Table 3 depicts the themes by their codes, descriptors, and exemplar quotations. The common themes from both participants' data were the following:

1. Family ties - both participants had family members supported them to go on to higher education.
2. Importance of School - both participants had the mindset that school was critical for a better life although one participant mindset changed after he arrived in the United States.
3. Importance of Community - both participants repeatedly stated the importance of teachers, counselors, co-workers and peers, and church members within their communities.
4. Flourishing - both participants cited people and institutions that supported them to their success for higher education.

After distinguishing repeated common words, phrases, and themes within their lived experiences, I recorded notes about what I wanted to highlight. I used my notes to guide me when emailing the participants about clarifying questions that I had developed and reflected on as essential in the data analysis, and I also contemplated how the various codes interrelated. I also looked at any crucial nonverbal communication and jotted notes for analysis. I used values coding of the raw data by making V for values, B for beliefs, and A for attitudes on the transcribed interviews. Saldaña (2015) defined a value as the importance people ascribe to themselves, another individual, or idea; attitude as the way people think and feel about themselves, another individual, or idea; and belief as a system of thinking that embodies people's ideas, values, and attitudes.

Table 3

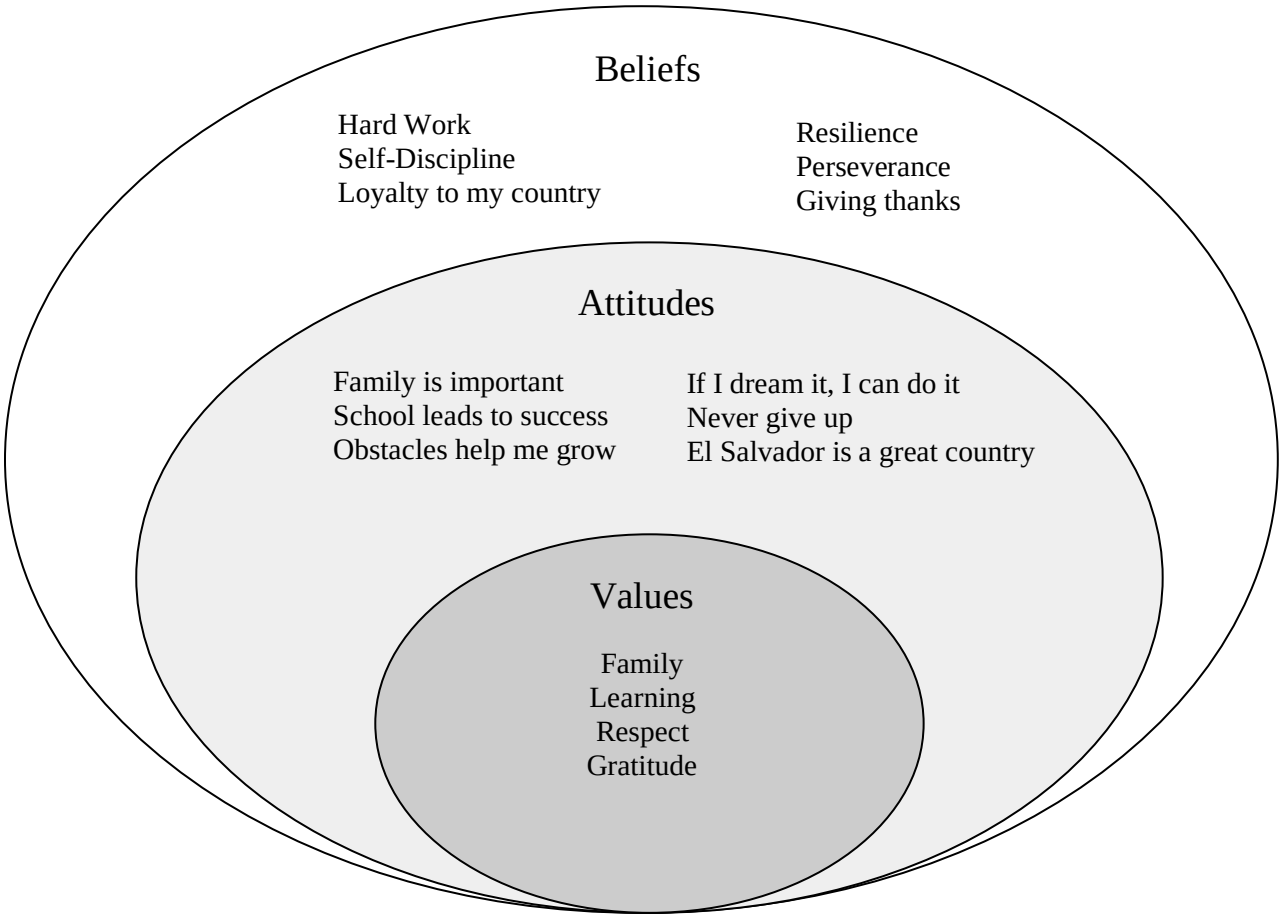
Evidence for Emerging Themes

Theme	Codes	Descriptors	Exemplar quotes
Family Ties	Mother, father, sister, brother, uncle, *abuelo* (grandpa), *abuela* (grandma), husband, wife	Any mention of family members or description of a time when family supported education.	"My dad was a little bit different. He was like, um, even, uh, even that I didn't go to school because I couldn't, I have to work. I want you guys to do better to, you know, um, work hard to get a better education so you can get a better job. And so, he was always like that."-Angelica
Importance of School	U.S. Schools El Salvadorian Schools-*distancia* (distance learning)	Any schools that participants attended-elementary, high school, college, and the mindset of the importance of higher education.	"My goals are, as soon as I can, get a higher education, it is possible to become a police officer and just keep going, like a detective or something higher."-Marcos
Importance of Community	Teachers, teachers, counselors, co-workers, friends, and church members	Any teachers that participants had in schools in the U.S. or in El Salvador that supported school.	"The teachers are the biggest influence, I believe, besides, my parents have been the teachers in my life."- Angelica "And that's where I met one of my teachers, which I'm so grateful with her. And she encouraged me to go to, um, to take my GED because by that time I was already 19 years old."-Marcos
Flourishing	Believe, support, community, teacher	Things that helped participants to flourish in life and school.	"My teacher to help me to apply for, um, scholarship, which they didn't require you, um, your immigration status or anything. They helped me to pay my books and everything for college. They helped me through the whole year and everything."-Marcos

The values coding step allowed me to make a diagram (see Figure 5) to see the participants' values, attitudes, and beliefs (Saldaña, 2015) and by doing so show their perspectives and exploring their cultural identities. The participants shared similar value systems that are reflected from their emotion, need, and wants shown in Figure 5.

Figure 5

The Values, Attitudes, and Beliefs Shared by Angelica and Marco



Code weaving helped me to see how all the code pieces fit together into a narrative form (Patel, 2014). Both participants went through various life experiences that included barriers and supports. However, both held similar beliefs and valued hard work, self-discipline, loyalty to their country, resilience, perseverance, and giving thanks.

Findings for the Primary Research Question

I answered the primary research question by analyzing data of both participants' testimonios. The primary question was answered by synthesizing their stories of their lived experiences. The two participants' testimonios led to three overarching themes related to

experiences with racism, motivation to leave from El Salvador, and the beauty of El Salvador. The evidence for these themes appear in Table 4. These findings resulted from analysis and synthesis of the co-created narratives and led to a better understanding of why the participants left El Salvador.

In El Salvador, the participants had obstacles to obtaining an education. Both sought a better life; however, economic issues represented Marcos's primary reason for leaving El Salvador and seeking higher education. Angelica left El Salvador primarily for educational reasons. Experiences with racism were struggles both participants wrestled with in U.S. schools. Finally, the theme of the beauty of El Salvador was strong in both stories and was interwoven into who they are now as part of the land from which they came. The three themes enabled sense making for the testimonios, provided understanding of the two participants' journeys, and conveyed needed information for school administrators.

Table 4

Evidence for Testimonios Themes

Themes	Codes	Descriptors	Exemplar Quotes
Experiences with Racism	Assumptions, discrimination, status	Things that people assume about the participants	"Um, I was trying to get my diploma from the college in Maryland and one of the front desk [workers], she's made a comment like 'maybe it's because he doesn't have a social security that he doesn't appear here.'" - Marcos
Motivation to leave from El Salvador	Obstacles, Money, gangs, jobs	Things that motivated participants to immigrate to the U.S. Better living and working conditions in the U.S.	"That was my first main goal. And I will say that almost everyone who comes here, main goal, just to save money because you always left family back in your country and everything that your main goal always will be save money, make a lot of money and just go back to your own country." - Marcos "I left because I couldn't, um, finish my education. I always wanted to go to school to get a better job. You know, I did have jobs in El Salvador when I was 18. Um, I was selling stuff like going to sell stuff, um, different things used to get money, but, um, it was not, I mean, I wanted to do something different, like, and I, I wasn't able to do it over there because of the same reason, the resources, the gangsters, even though you want to do something better, they were not allowing you to do that." - Angelica "We had a roof under our head and everything, but we didn't have enough money to like, have a better life. For example, we didn't have, um, electricity until 2000." - Marcos
The Beauty of El Salvador	El Salvador, beauty	Descriptions of how beautiful El Salvador is.	"We have beautiful places, uh, right now, our president is working on, you know, um, trying to provide more resources to the schools. Um, and there are some many good people." - Marcos "It has beautiful beaches. It has beautiful rainforest. A lot of volcanoes, a lot of mountains, like culturally, maybe cultural is not as big as another countries or we do have some, um, some Indian culture. Like we have some, um, pyramids as well and everything. So it's, it's a small, but it's a lot of, it has a little bit of everything on it."-Marcos Most of the people, when you were speaking about El Salvador, their first impression will be gang members, a lot of violence, a lot of poverty and everything. And it is true. It has a lot of that, but it also has a lot of beauty in it." - Angelica

Summary

Chapter 4 began with a brief prologue of the time frame of the research analysis and details of the process of interviewing the participants. The primary research question was answered by the testimonios of Angelica and Marcos; however, to support answering it, the subquestions' findings were provided first to establish the context of the participants' individually lived experiences. Findings for Subquestion A involved conveying each participant's testimonios about their lived experiences with education. Each participant provided an in-depth, rich story. Angelica's story contained information about her U.S. high school experiences, learning English, pros and cons of schools in El Salvador and the United States, barriers in U.S. schools, flourishing, college dream, and teachers are key. Marco's story contained information about his family in El Salvador, schools in El Salvador, leaving his home country, making it to the United States, more about schools, flourishing, never giving up, moving to Colorado, and legal status. Subquestion B addressed the four emergent themes of flourishing in high school and enrolling in higher education. These themes were (a) family ties, (b) importance of school, (c) importance of community, and (d) flourishing. Finally, the primary research question's findings contained the three overarching themes of experiences with racism, motivation to leave from El Salvador, and the beauty of El Salvador. The overarching themes were critical to gaining an overall picture of each participant's story and see how their experiences connected together into a collective testimonio.

Chapter 5: Discussions, Implications, and Recommendations

The focus of the study was to understand the narratives of Salvadoran immigrants who graduated from a public high school in the United States and are currently pursuing further education or careers. The findings emerged from hearing their voices through testimonio. This chapter's purpose is to review and discuss the findings. This chapter also provides implications for the theoretical framework and practice and recommendations for future research. The study involved collecting testimonials from two participants, Marco and Angelica. Each participant provided an in-depth, rich story. Angelica's story included her U.S. high school experiences, learning English, pros and cons of schools in El Salvador and the United States, barriers in U.S. schools, flourishing, college dream, and teachers. Marco's story contained information about his family in El Salvador, schools in El Salvador, leaving his home country, making it to the United States, more about schools, flourishing, never giving up, moving to Colorado, and legal status.

The primary research question's findings contained the three overarching themes of experiences with racism, motivation to leave from El Salvador, and the beauty of El Salvador. Findings for Subquestion A involved conveying each participant's testimonial data about their lived experiences with education. Subquestion B addressed the four emergent themes of flourishing in high school and enrolling in higher education. These themes were (a) family ties, (b) importance of school, (c) importance of community, and (d) flourishing.

Discussion of Findings

The discussion begins with the four themes supporting Subquestion B and the literature to which these themes relate, whether supportive or contradictory. The first four themes discussed are family ties, importance of school, importance of community, and flourishing. Next, the overarching themes that emerged in the analysis of both testimonios are discussed. The

overarching themes are the following: (a) experiences with racism, (b) motivation to leave from El Salvador, and (c) the beauty of El Salvador.

Family Ties

Research findings from both participants suggest that family ties are essential to flourish academically. Both Marco and Angelica reported having strong family ties that enabled them to succeed in school. Montemayor et al. (2015) and Chavira et al. (2016) also found that students with academic success had strong family ties. Both participants' fathers instilled goals of getting a better education to get a better job and have a better life for obtaining economic security that benefits the family. Because benefitting the family is an important motivator for these Salvadoran immigrants, this theme supports Yasuike's (2019) familism in which immigrants have a strong obligation to family welfare. Angelica and Marcos both used their educational goals for the benefit of their families, both those in the States and those remaining behind in El Salvador. For example, Marcos sent money to support his family living in El Salvador.

Additionally, the theme of family ties that came from these Salvadoran immigrants' testimonios contributed to the body of knowledge given that Yasuike (2019), Montemayor et al. (2015), and Chavira et al. (2016) based their findings on data from Latinx higher education students without regard to the students' countries of origin. The Salvadoran participants' testimonios suggest this Latinx subgroup shares values with other Latinx subgroups. The family ties theme provided evidence supporting how Salvadoran immigrants' educational outcomes in both the high school and college levels happen because of support and encouragement from their parents.

Importance of School

The theme of the importance of school emerged from both testimonios. Marcos stated

that his current goal is to get higher education for his family. Angelica stated that she wanted to continue with school even though she just finished a health administration degree. She added wanting to earn some health professions certifications. Both participants saw the importance of school in improving their lives.

Previous researchers did not yield evidence on the importance of school to Salvadoran immigrants in the United States as a mindset or attitude. De Jesus and Hernandes (2019) showed academically successful youth living in the Northern Triangle indicated having a dedication to higher education. However, my findings contributed to the body of research because I interviewed Salvadoran, or North Triangle, immigrants living in the United States.

Bartlett et al. (2017) and Bartlett et al. (2018) reported on the educational experiences of Dominican immigrants. In both studies, the authors found the Dominican immigrants viewed school as essential for success. However, my study contributed new knowledge by specifically focusing on Salvadoran immigrants who graduated from U.S. high schools. Both of my participants had a mindset that school was important, which was a finding that was shared in the study of the Dominican immigrants as well as by the Latinx students in Player et al. (2016). Furthermore, this mindset of school as important was an attitude held by Angelica and Marcus who both claimed that they had loved school since early childhood.

Jung and Zhang (2016) found that the higher the English proficiency of the parent, the higher the students' school aspirations. My findings contradicted this assertion. Neither of Marcos' parents spoke English, and while Angelica's dad spoke some English, her mother did not speak any English. Nevertheless, both participants reported having the mindset to pursue higher education, even though their parents did not speak English.

Importance of Community

Both respondents specifically noted that observing the impact of people in their communities, like teachers, believing in them revealed their profound sense of debt and gratitude. Angelica discussed her teachers as the most significant members of her community in her life. Marcos articulated the same view when he talked about being so grateful to one teacher who encouraged him to finish his high school education even though he was older. Teachers empowered the participants to flourish, which is something Rendón et al. (2018) recommended for educators to do in their framework for culturally validating Latinx student success. Marcos described teachers in the school community working together for promoting his success in higher education. Marcos's teacher helped him apply for scholarships and institutions that did not require immigration status and the program provided him with free books.

While Ayon and Philbin's (2017) study showed that students believe the negative messages they receive from teachers, Angelica's and Marcos's testimonios offer evidence of the opposite. Angelica and Marcos believed in the positive messages they received from their teachers which in turn helped them to flourish. Angelica recalled her teacher pushing her by telling her that she could do the work, finish high school, and attend university. She named several incidents during which her teachers encouraged her to go to higher education and emphasized her academics abilities. Marcos also spoke about a teacher telling him that he was smart and could go on to college. Marcos had never even thought about higher education until his teacher encouraged him. These findings show how the support of educators helped both participants flourish and thrive academically because Angelica and Marcos went on to graduate from high school. Both participants attributed their success in school to the teachers who encouraged them, suggesting teachers enabled them to develop resilience and self-efficacy in the

pursuit of education.

The stories told by Angelica and Marcos contained evidence of early education success and positive school experiences in El Salvador where Angelica won a school poetry contest and Marcos had an elementary school teacher who believed in his abilities. These supportive experiences might have influenced their development of confidence or self-efficacy to perform in school (Bandura, 1997). In Bandura's (1997) self-efficacy theory, people's beliefs in their own abilities influence and affect how they live their lives and work toward accomplishing goals. In other words, if people believe that they can do it, they continue trying until they succeed. Angelica and Marcos never gave up and have continued forward progress toward their educational and career goals.

Flourishing

Keyes (2016) defined flourishing as the "pinnacle of good mental health" (p. 100). Angelica and Marcos demonstrated a strong well-being and positive relationships with family, friends, and teachers that indicated they flourished. They shared beliefs in hard work, self-discipline, loyalty to their home country, resilience, perseverance, and giving thanks, all which represent a foundation for strong well-being and high resilience (Motti-Stefanidi, 2018; Zetino et al., 2020). Ettinger et al. (2020) discussed that the most critical flourishing factors in youth are self-worth and having a safety net of those around them like trustworthy teachers.

Motti-Stefanidi (2018) claimed that people with high resilience can endure and overcome stressors and become successful in developing well-being. My participants' testimonios support Motti-Stefanidi's claims and extend Zetino et al.'s (2020) and Motti-Stefanidi's findings regarding Latinx immigrants to Salvadoran immigrants who flourish in U.S. public schools. Academic resilience is built over time. Cassidy (2016) stated that academic resilience helps

students to overcome adversities that could threaten students' academic success. Those students with strong academic resilience tend to find success, or flourish, while other students around them grapple with schoolwork or dropout (Cassidy, 2016; Richardson et al., 1990). Angelica and Marcos demonstrated resilience by describing their own resilience-building experiences that involved members of their communities, including teachers and church members. Indeed, my findings contribute evidence connecting resilience to flourishing among Salvadoran immigrants in United States high schools. My findings support Rendón et al.'s (2018) calls for the application of a culturally validating Latinx student success framework in high schools and postsecondary institutions.

Experiences With Racism

The participants discussed their experiences with racism that came from people's assumptions about them. First, Marcos recalled a time when an "Anglo school secretary" made a remark Marcos regarded as racist when she noted he did not have a Social Security number while looking for his diploma. Second, Angelica noted "Anglo students" ignored her in class or said bad words to her in the classroom because she spoke English with an accent.

However, both participants encountered prejudice not only coming from White people but also coming from members of other Latinx subgroups. Angelica received discriminatory treatment from a Spanish-speaking Mexican Latina who refused to help her and explain the lesson in Spanish. Angelica also mentioned how Latinx students born in the United States treated her as if she was worth less than them because of where they were born and based on where she was born. The testimonios support Shelton's (2019) findings, in which participants encountered prejudicial treatment from other students of the Latinx group.

Tensions among Latinx groups by country, where they are born, how long they have been in United States, linguistic differences, and residential status all play into an intragroup conflict. Many people tend to clump every Latinx into one group. This tension expressed by the participants disrupts the stereotype that all Latinx students represent one single group causing those holding the stereotype not to see Latinx students as individuals. Doing this study, I see my own struggle with this. I know there are various groups. My study even focused on only Salvadoran students, yet I have put Latinx students of various origins together in my head when addressing them in class. The findings caused me to reflect on my own practices and come to this realization.

Barreto et al. (2012) stated that half of people who are not Latino describe Latinos as less educated, welfare recipients. The most common stereotype is that Latinos are in gangs and can only hold a job as a housekeeper or landscaper. Marcos and Angelica experiences are evidence of this and can be damaging to self-worth. According to Barreto et al.'s findings, a common perception in the United States is that Latinos and undocumented (illegal) immigrants are one in the same. These experiences with racism and prejudice suggest that Marcos and Angelica experienced stereotyping. Museus and Kiang (2009) stated that one stereotype typically associated with Asian Americans is to regard them as academically successful just because they are Asian. The use of any stereotype erases individual differences and can damage students' sense of worth and resilience because the person adhering to the stereotype ignores the reality of systematic racism that students of color encounter daily.

Angelica talked about times when people assumed she was illegal because she was an immigrant from a Central American country. She noted that many people in the United States think that "just because I speak Spanish, I am Mexican." Both Angelica and Marcos discussed

times when people presumed they were not English speakers, ignored them, and prevented them from participation school-related activities. These experiences support Chan (2013) who studied stereotypes affecting Latinx people and concluded that people conflate all Latinos into one group representing the unauthorized immigrant population.

These testimonios show that racism still exists and that stereotypes represent a divisive wedge. My research helps shine a light on two Salvadoran immigrants not fitting Latinx stereotypes while flourishing. This study's testimonios disrupt the stereotypes affecting Salvadorans attending U.S. public schools and supports the need for providing climates of acceptance for Salvadoran students to succeed. The findings support the disruption of deficits and illustrates the narratives of immigrants as strengths, suggesting there are benefits to culturally validating Latinx student successes (Rendón et al., 2018). Finally, my findings suggest undocumented and documented students need acceptance for integration and success even though Angelica and Marcos both thrived in spite of the racism in school (Cisneros, 2019; Patler & Laster Pirtle, 2018; Raza et al., 2019).

Motivation to Leave El Salvador

Motivation to leave El Salvador was a theme revealed in Angelica's and Marcos's testimonios that provided further insight into the understanding of higher education aspirations of these Salvadoran participants. Marcos discussed that his main goal for coming to the United States was to make money to send home to the family. Angelica's main goal was to obtain a higher education. Because the two Salvadorans offered different motivations, it is important for educators to learn the perspectives of recently arrived Salvadoran youth. Penton Herrera and Obregon (2020) showed the importance of listening to the stories of undocumented students to generate better school opportunities for immigrants. This study of the testimonios of one

documented and one undocumented Salvadoran immigrant supports the findings and recommendations made by Penton Herra and Obregon (2020) in terms of the experiences that helped them flourish.

Beauty of El Salvador

On multiple occasions, both respondents expressed the beauty of El Salvador by describing its beautiful beaches, rainforests, mountains, and people. They were frustrated that people assumed that El Salvador was all about gangs and violence and only seen in a bad light when it has so much to offer. El Salvador is known to have the highest murder rate in the world (Cheatham, 2019; De Jesus & Hernandes, 2019) so most people think negatively of this country. There seems to be a tension between the motivations Angelica and Marcos left El Salvador and their love for their home country. Neither Angelica nor Marcos had a simple relationship with their experiences between El Salvador and the United States. Their stories offered a more complex picture of the reality of whence they came in El Salvador, which had negative aspects and few opportunities that caused them to migrate to the United States.

My participants said many people had a negative bias toward them because they were from El Salvador. Crawford and Arnold (2017) discussed how implicit biases held by educators affect students. This study's evidence supports implicit biases as having a negative effect on Salvadoran immigrants in the United States. It is important for educators to see the cultural wealth of Salvadorans and leverage these students' home country assets when teaching (Rendón et al., 2018).

Limitations

The first limitation was that due to COVID-19, I could not conduct in-person interviews as I intended. CDC and local governments placed strict regulations on how people could interact

with each other beginning in March of 2020. Those restrictions were in place during the period when the interviews were conducted in early 2021. Therefore, all communication and data gathering occurred via technology through telephone, email, and web conferencing with Zoom. This limitation made it hard to observe body language because the computer camera has a small area of coverage. Lack of in-person communication opportunities represented a barrier to collecting complete observations. Therefore, I could only rely on limited nonverbal cues, such as tone of voice. I did not have the opportunity to rely on full-scale body language.

Second, my sample was only two Salvadoran immigrant participants because the purpose of the testimonios was not to generalize but to understand the specific stories of Angelica and Marcos. Their voices are missing from the dominant narrative of Latinx immigrants in the United States. Their stories might not be representative of all Salvadoran high school graduates' stories because they were from different locations of El Salvador and had different economic backgrounds. One was male, and one was female. One was a documented immigrant, and one was an undocumented immigrant. Third, the findings were limited because they emerged from two people's testimonios and shared experiences. These experiences may not represent other Salvadoran students, so it is up to the reader to determine whether the findings have transferability or not.

Implications for Resilience Theory

The two testimonios that were collected, transcribed, and compiled were analyzed based on resilience theory as a theoretical framework. Open coding was applied to develop the themes, and resilience theory was used as a form of reference to develop the theme after the coding was accomplished. The flourishing theme was evaluated according to the Knight (2007) three-dimensional resilience model. However, the importance of school could also be seen in the data.

Within the three concepts of the theory presented by Knight (2007) and the analysis of the testimonios, the themes of flourishing and the importance of school strongly aligned between the participants.

Knight's (2007) description of resilience as a state in which psychological wellbeing leads to academic success, as a condition determined by both personal and environmental factors, and as a practice of behavior was shown in both participants. Angelica and Marcos both flourished in spite of many barriers. For example, when obstacles occurred, the participants used personal resources and drew on institutional resources to make new connections in adapting to the new conditions that potentially enhance success. Angelica and Marcos had a mindset that school was important and even worked many jobs to obtain higher education. Both participants were confident in their abilities and status and had strong identities (Knight et al., 2013). Marcos repeatedly discussed his determination to not give up, and Angelica believed "if you dream it, you can become it." The importance of school involved learning, hard work, and seeing school as a success, all of which were determined by both Angelica and Marcos' personal and environmental factors.

These findings support the application of Knight's (2007) three-dimensional resilience model with empirical evidence and suggest resilience theory can be applied in education with Salvadoran immigrants. The resilience theory may be applied in professional development programming targeting educators who work with Latinx, Salvadoran, and immigrant students. I recommend that school leaders provide classes on resilience for all their teachers to understand better how to support immigrant students in their classrooms, because Angelica and Marcos received opportunities to develop resilience from educators and others in their communities. The social supports that helped with the development resilience resonated within Angelica's and

Marcos's stories, suggesting that Rendón et al.'s (2018) recommendation for schools to apply a culturally validating Latinx student success framework could be used to build social support for the development of resilience in Salvadoran students. Access to opportunities helped Angelica and Marcos to navigate throughout their schooling, suggesting that the development of resilience occurs through experiences with teachers in the school environment, which is part of Knight's resilience theory.

Implications for Practice

This narrative inquiry of Angelica and Marcos' lived experiences suggests practical implications. Five implications include the following: (a) teachers need to learn about the backgrounds of recently-arrived immigrant Salvadoran youth to better serve them, (b) parents with some English proficiency have higher school aspirations so school need to provide English classes to immigrant students' parents, (c) teachers need to receive implicit bias and cultural awareness and empathy training, (d) school leaders need to address racism between students, (e) school leaders and teachers need to support the empowerment of Salvadoran students, and (f) educators in the United States could benefit from having discussions with teachers in El Salvador about their classroom cultures and processes.

First, the testimonios from this narrative inquiry imply that hearing the background of recently-arrived youth and implementing this knowledge in schools can better serve Salvadoran students. The testimonios from Angelica and Marcos gave voice to a marginalized group similar to the Torres and Glenn (2020) study that gave insight into immigrants' sense of identity. I created a space for Angelica and Marcos to reflect and contemplate their journeys and how they flourished academically in a new country and while learning a new language. The process of sharing their stories was a pedagogical tool for learning about them and being able to relate to

them as an educator. The implication for practice comes from these testimonials. Administrators need to understand Salvadoran immigrants' struggles to generate potential solutions, similar to the recommendations made in the discussion of findings by Crawford and Arnold (2017) whose research was focused on a sample of educators.

Second, this inquiry implies that parents with no or very little English proficiency do have higher educational attainment aspirations for their children. Additionally, the participants believed in the importance of their families in their academic successes, so schools need to provide English classes to immigrant students' parents. I recommend providing English classes after regular school hours for the whole family at the school to support students' efforts to thrive academically. This type of service to the immigrant community would also help parents build relationships with school staff, feel more comfortable at the building, and become more involved with their child's education (Jung & Zhang, 2016).

Third, this inquiry suggests that implicit bias and cultural training with teachers is crucial for improving students' learning experiences. Teachers need to receive implicit bias and cultural awareness and empathy training. I recommend training for teachers and the whole staff to decrease racism toward Salvadorans which would help them feel like they belong, creating a safe place to flourish academically. Intentional classes for educators, like Crawford and Arnold (2017) recommended, could help immigrant students to flourish in schools.

Ayon and Philbin (2017) also found a disproportionality of immigrant students experiencing discipline referrals in U.S. schools, and educating teachers may improve relationships with immigrant students, reduce discipline referrals, and help teachers understand that the messages they give children can squash or build up students' dreams (Ayón, & Philbin, 2017). In this study, Angelica and Marcos had teachers who did encourage them to go for their

goals. Their teachers believing in them was a reason they flourished in high school and beyond. Educators need to realize the power in their words, look inward at their implicitly held biases, and be open to learning to support students with cultural awareness and empathy.

Fourth, this inquiry showed the participants received racism from other students, so school leaders need to address racism between students through education and intervention. Culturally relevant teaching might support in reducing racism by giving voice to those learners likely to be excluded in lessons that are geared toward reaching only dominant culture students. Unlearning ideas that are racist is an ongoing process but could help validate these immigrants' culture and improve their learning experiences and outcomes (Fay, 2019). Shelton's (2019) findings indicated that discrimination from fellow students is a substantial barrier to academic success that needs to be ameliorated for immigrant students. Educators can help by engaging all students in rich, rigorous learning experiences that explore these issues within a diverse school. Teachers need to address racism in the classroom and not avoid this topic. The key is to deal with racism head-on and promote rich discussion in the school to create allied relations as we fight racism together.

Fifth, school leaders and teachers need to support the empowerment of Salvadoran students by providing higher education support such as programs that help immigrants prepare for college or different career paths. The testimonios included pride in speaking about El Salvador, their home country, as beautiful and suggest that creating an empowerment program for Salvadorans within U.S. public schools would be beneficial to their sense of acceptance, worth, and value. These are cultural assets that can be used to the benefit of Salvadoran and other Latinx students. In order to empower these students, Rendón et al. (2018) proposed culturally validating Latinx student success through a framework for postsecondary institutions. Latinx

students can succeed employing their own cultural assets, working toward supporting interactions with those that validate them by participating in programs geared for their success. Similar to Rendón et al.'s guidance, I suggest the training for educators needs to be focused on generating understanding about Latinx cultural wealth, leveraging Latinx students' assets, becoming validating agents for Latinx students' culture and language, and designing culturally holistic practices that consider issues of their culture within the context of the curricula and cocurricular activities.

Immigrant voices can generate knowledge for others (Pentón Herrera, & Obregón, 2020) which can be empowering. Both Angelica's and Marcos's faces appeared to show smiles and joy when they discussed El Salvador, and perhaps, they felt empowered because I gave them the opportunity to speak about their origins. They wanted people to know how amazing their country is even though people's first thoughts tend to involve El Salvador as a lawless land riddled with gangs and violence. Educators need to empower immigrant students to share the rich, beautiful aspects of their origin countries, from which not only fellow students can learn but also educators can learn. Indeed, both participants stated that United States school administrators could learn from El Salvador schools in which teachers had more power in the classrooms. U.S. teachers need more power in the classroom to manage discipline and curriculum choices. An empowerment program would be an excellent platform for Salvadoran students to have a voice to teach others. Immigrants need to be seen by educators and classmates as assets with strengths and capabilities rather than as deficits with weakness and lack of intelligence (Player et al., 2016; Rendón et al., 2018).

Finally, international collaboration between school systems of different countries could be used to improve educational practices in the United States. Educators in El Salvador are

portrayed as having greater empowerment in their educational practices than United States teachers in these two testimonios. Because of the participants' discussions about their Salvadoran teachers having greater classroom autonomy and being valued more highly by their communities, it is possible that the structure and culture of classroom management and respect for teachers in the United States could benefit from collaborations between educational leaders of the two countries. Educators in the United States could gain empowerment and garner needed support for ensuring students, regardless of immigration status, achieve their educational goals.

Recommendations for Future Research

There is much to learn from Angelica's and Marcos's testimonios of their high school journeys, barriers, and supports in U.S. high schools. Several recommendations for future study emerged from the findings and limitations. The recommendations are the following:

1. Future researchers should continue collecting and analyzing the rich stories of Salvadorans for using testimonios and hearing their voices. Future researchers should seek to broaden the understanding of the Salvadoran immigrant experience in the United States by increasing the volume of available stories, such as by focusing on undocumented immigrants' experiences specifically.
2. Future researchers are encouraged to explore why Salvadoran parents support high school education and not postsecondary education. This recommendation is based on the theme of family ties and because the testimonios of Angelica and Marcos suggested support for finishing high school was more substantial than support for postsecondary education.
3. Future researchers could compare the values held by Salvadoran immigrant students and their parents to understand differences in valuing specific levels of educational attainment. This recommendation is based on the theme of importance of school found in

Angelica's and Marcos's testimonios. Understanding the mindset toward school in both parents and students will increase practical knowledge about how to empower Salvadoran students to flourish in high school and higher education.

4. Additional research is needed that examines the racism, implicit bias, and stereotypes held by teachers toward Salvadoran students. This recommendation is based on the theme of racism in schools and testimonials from Angelica and Marcos. Administering a cultural awareness or empathy instrument along with an implicit bias instrument and offering ongoing interventions to reduce the role of racism and increase the likelihood of culturally responsive educational practices could benefit both teachers and immigrant students and contribute to the evolution of resilience theory. Further, a mixed method study could include interviews with teachers to learn about underlying biases they may have regarding Salvadoran students.
5. Based on the testimonios involving racism between students of different Latinx groups toward the Salvadoran students, an ethnographic study of Latinx high school students' behaviors and cultural subgroups could influence educational policy regarding how immigrant students integrate into high school culture.
6. More research is needed for understanding the rationale for educators to group all immigrant groups together in classes. It would be helpful to understand if this grouping rationale is based on the belief that all English language learners share the same characteristics regardless of their first language or based on assumptions that students who speak the same language such as Spanish can support each other. This type of study could bring awareness about ways schools address the needs of a great variety of immigrants who speak multiple languages as English language learners. Further, using

data regarding the outcomes for English language learners who may speak multiple native languages could suggest a need to move away from grouping students simply based on English language learner status alone. A mix method study could include interviews with educators and data on academic outcomes for students being grouped together by language alone. This recommendation is based on the theme of racism in schools and testimonials from Angelica and Marcos.

7. A study of English language learning immigrants who have been grouped together for their high school courses could benefit the rationale for this type of grouping of students. A case study could include interviews with immigrants from different Spanish speaking countries, interviews with students native to the United States for whom English is their first language, and data on the academic outcomes for students who have been grouped together by language alone. Educators need to listen to the students to learn how to provide more opportunities that promote high school graduation among immigrants by empathizing with the students from the perspectives or testimonios of the students the educators are charged to serve. This recommendation is based theme of racism in schools and testimonios from Angelica and Marcos.

Conclusion

Angelica and Marcos wanted their voices to be heard. They wanted to tell their stories. They wanted to succeed, help others along the way, and to use every opportunity to succeed in the United States. The purpose of providing their testimonios from the lens of resilience and self-efficacy was to empower their voices, afford an opportunity for empathy, and enable educators to better serve Salvadoran students. The themes supported these observations I made. The themes suggested Angelica and Marcos were indeed resilient and inspiring for future Salvadoran

immigrants. They displayed great resilience in successfully navigating between their Salvadoran values and the culture of their U.S. school experiences. Their testimonios clearly added value to the body of knowledge about Latinx immigrants attending U.S. public schools and postsecondary institutions. This testimonios study filled a gap in the literature, but more needs to be done to prepare teachers to meet immigrant students' needs and empower them so future Salvadoran immigrant students can flourish, such as through a culturally validating approach (Player et al., 2016; Rendón et al., 2018).

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Appendix A: Participation Invitation Letter

Dear Invitee,

My name is Leticia Guzman Ingram. I am a doctoral student at Abilene Christian University's education program. I am kindly requesting your participation in a doctoral research study that I am conducting titled: Testimonios of Salvadoran Immigrants Who Graduated from a Public High School in the United States and are Currently Pursuing Further Education or a Career.

The purpose of this qualitative study is to explore your past experiences as Salvadoran immigrants who graduated from a public high school in the United States because you are currently pursuing further education or a career. I will use your stories of your experiences to understand how immigrant youth, like you in the United States, learn to flourish or thrive in high school and beyond. I am asking you to consent to doing two interviews with me so I can tell your story as fully and richly as possible. The first interview will be guided by open-ended and follow-up questions to help you begin the story. The second interview will be unstructured to allow you to elaborate on the details of your experiences and to provide new stories after having time between the interviews to reflect.

I will protect your identity and use pseudonyms for your name and any places you mention in your stories. Your participation is completely voluntary, and you may withdraw from the study at any time, and before our first interview, I will need your signed consent to participate. If you would like to participate in the study, email me at xxxxx@acu.edu, and I will send you the Informed Consent letter that you can sign before our interviews. I am happy to answer any questions you have about participating in my study. Your participation in the research will be of great importance to assist school administrators and educators about the approaches and strategies they need to provide to adequately support to Salvadoran immigrants like you to succeed in and after high school.

Thank you for your consideration of my request, and I look forward to hearing back from you.

Sincerely,
Leticia Guzman Ingram, M.A., M.S.
Current Doctoral Student, Abilene Christian University

Appendix B: Informed Consent Letter

You may be able to take part in a research study. This form provides important information about that study, including the risks and benefits to you as a potential participant. Please read this form carefully and ask the researcher any questions that you may have about the study. You can ask about research activities and any risks or benefits you may experience. You may also wish to discuss your participation with other people, such as your family doctor or a family member.

Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary. You may refuse to participate or stop your participation at any time and for any reason without any penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

Purpose and Description

The purpose of this qualitative study is to explore your past experiences as Salvadoran immigrants who graduated from a public high school in the United States because you are currently pursuing further education or a career. I will use the stories of your experiences to understand how immigrant youth, like you in the United States, learn to flourish or thrive in high school and beyond.

If you volunteer for participation, you will be asked to attend two interviews through the Zoom web conferencing platform over the course of 1 month. Each interview is expected to take 45 to 60 minutes. During the course of these two interviews, you will be asked to participate in the following procedures:

First, I will share the interview guide with you before the first interview so you can see the questions beforehand and remember past experiences while sharing your story. The first interview will have open-ended questions and I may ask follow-up questions. Examples of the initial questions you will be asked follow: “Share with me where you came from”; “Tell me what you recall about your home in El Salvador;” “Only share what you are comfortable talking about.” The second interview will be unstructured to allow you to add or give more details of your experiences. For the second interview, I will ask open-ended follow-up questions based on the information you shared in the first interview, such as “What additional experiences or details would you like to share?”

After each interview, I will transcribe your answers and give you a copy of all your words so you can look them over and make sure what I transcribed is correct. You will be able to call me or ask for a third Zoom-powered meeting if you choose to add anything else to your stories. All methods of interaction, meeting times, and follow-up conversations will be agreed upon between us. Given your permission, interviews will be videoed and audio-recorded in the Zoom platform. Also, your story will be co-created which means that you and I will create it together so that your voice is heard.

Following the last Zoom meeting, I will create the final research narrative. I will give you a final copy of the story to make sure it reflects your voice.

Your participation may be terminated early by the researcher under the following conditions:

- you no longer meet the eligibility criteria

- it is no longer in your best interest to continue the study
- you do not follow the instructions provided by the researcher, or
- the study is discontinued.

You will be contacted by the researcher and given instructions if any of the above happens.

Risks and Benefits

Potential Risks: There are minimal risks to taking part in this research study. Below is a list of the foreseeable risks, including the seriousness of those risks and how likely they are to occur: Psychological distress: While sharing your story, you may encounter minor psychological distress. This risk, given the means of this study being an interview where you choose what you want to share with me, is less likely.

Confidentiality: This study is intended to protect your confidentiality and identity with pseudonyms. This risk, given the means of this stud being an interview where you choose what you want to share with me, is less likely.

The researcher has taken measures to minimize the risks correlated with this study. However, if you do experience any problems, you may contact the researcher. Abilene Christian University or the researcher does not plan to pay for any issues you may experience due to your participation.

Potential Benefits: There are potential benefits to participating in this study. Such benefits may include your own story giving voice to the experiences of Salvadoran immigrants in U.S. high schools that can be used to help others and inform educators and policymakers. The researcher cannot guarantee that you will experience any personal benefits from participating in this study. However, your participation in the research will be of great importance to assist school administrators and educators in the approaches and strategies they need to provide to adequately support Salvadoran immigrants like you to succeed in and after high school.

Privacy and Confidentiality

Any information you provide will be confidential to the extent allowable by law. Some identifiable data may have to be shared with individuals outside of the study team, such as members of the ACU Institutional Review Board.

Besides these required acknowledgments, the researcher will protect confidentiality with:

1. Pseudonyms will be used on all records.
2. Stored electronic data on the computer will be protected by a password and stored in a home office.
3. All paper data be in a locked safe in a home office.
4. Recordings will be digitally shredded after the thorough, multistep process of transcribing
5. Your participation is voluntary. At any time you do not feel comfortable, you may stop participating.

Contacts

If you have questions, complaints, or concerns about the research study, the researcher is Leticia Guzman Ingram, a doctoral student in Organizational Leadership emphasizing Emerging

Technology, at Abilene Christian University. She may be contacted at xxx-xxx-xxxx or xxxxx@acu.edu. If you are unable to reach the researcher or wish to speak to someone other than the researcher you may contact her faculty advisor, Dr. Peter Williams, at xxx-xxx-xxxx or xxxxx@acu.edu. If you have concerns about this study, believe you may have been injured because of this study, or have general questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact ACU's Chair of the Institutional Review Board and Executive Director of Research, Megan Roth, Ph.D. Dr. Roth may be reached at

(xxx) xxx-xxxx
xxxxxxx@acu.edu
320 Hardin Administration Bldg, ACU Box 29103
Abilene, TX 79699

Consent Signature Section

Please sign this form if you voluntarily agree to participate in this study. Sign only after you have read all of the information provided and your questions have been answered to your satisfaction. You should receive a copy of this signed consent form. You do not waive any legal rights by signing this form.

If you wish to have a copy of this consent form, you may print it now. You do not waive any legal rights by consenting to this study. **Please note: Electronic signatures are now considered an acceptable form of documentation. You may use an electronic signature on the document.**

_____	_____	_____
Printed Name of Participant	Signature of Participant	Date
_____	_____	_____
Printed Name of Person Obtaining Consent	Signature of Person Obtaining Consent	Date

Appendix C: IRB Approval Letter

ABILENE CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY
Educating Students for Christian Service and Leadership Throughout the World

Office of Research and Sponsored Programs
320 Hardin Administration Building, ACU Box 29103, Abilene, Texas 79699-9103
325-674-2885

January 14, 2021

Leticia Guzman Ingram
Department of Education/Bible
Abilene Christian University

Dear Leticia,

On behalf of the Institutional Review Board, I am pleased to inform you that your project titled "Testimonios of Salvadoran Immigrants Who Graduated from a Public High School in the United States and are Currently Pursuing Further Education or a Career",

was approved by expedited review (Category 6 & 7) on 1/14/2021 (IRB # 21-003). Upon completion of this study, please submit the Inactivation Request Form within 30 days of study completion.

If you wish to make any changes to this study, including but not limited to changes in study personnel, number of participants recruited, changes to the consent form or process, and/or changes in overall methodology, please complete the Study Amendment Request Form.

If any problems develop with the study, including any unanticipated events that may change the risk profile of your study or if there were any unapproved changes in your protocol, please inform the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs and the IRB promptly using the Unanticipated Events/Noncompliance Form.

I wish you well with your work.

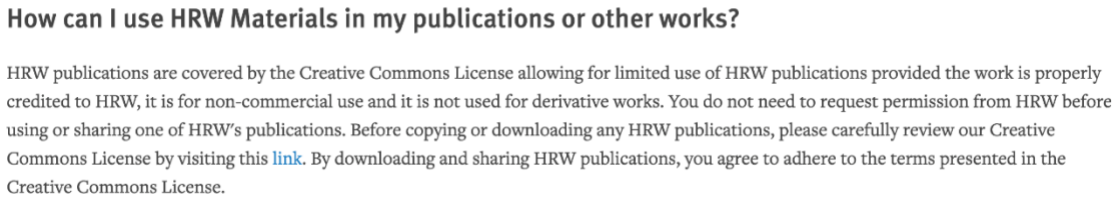
Sincerely,

Megan Roth

Megan Roth, Ph.D.
Director of Research and Sponsored Programs

Appendix D: Copyright Permissions and Creative Commons Information

Figure 1



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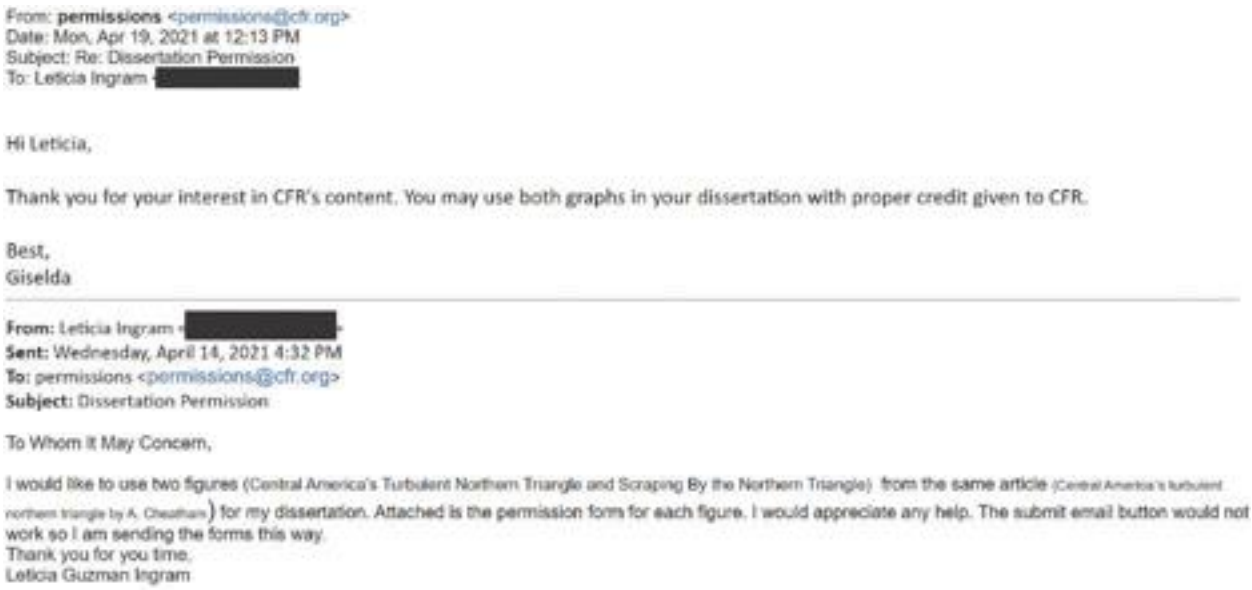

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Thank you for you time.
Leticia Guzman Ingram

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