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DePaul University

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Promoting Access and Choice: **A Strategic Plan Serving First-generation Immigrant College Students of Color at Four-Year Postsecondary Institutions**

A Capstone in Education with a Concentration in Educational Leadership

By Phil J. Verpil

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Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Education

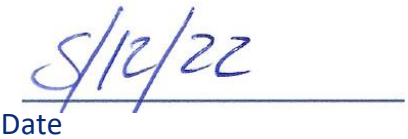
June 2022

DePaul University

College of Education

I approve the capstone of Phil J. Verpil

Andrea Kayne
Associate Professor and Director, Educational Leadership
DePaul University
Capstone Advisor



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Certification of Authorship

I certify that I am the sole author of this capstone. Any assistance received in the preparation of this capstone has been acknowledged and disclosed within it. Any sources utilized, including the use of data, ideas and words, those quoted directly or paraphrased, have been cited. I certify that I have prepared this capstone according to program guidelines as directed.

Author Signature _____ Date 05/08/22

Executive Summary

Literature exploring first-generation college students is evolving to include the often-missed lived postsecondary experiences of first-generation immigrant college students of color. Research delving further into the nuanced postsecondary aspirations and experiences of those college students of color who are both first-generation and from an immigrant background is limited. College students of color whose parents did not complete a four-year postsecondary degree *and* are part of an immigrant family have historically pursued U.S. higher education as low-income and marginalized while balancing personal and family aspirations of social mobility. Research has shown that a leading catalyst in pursuing higher education for this population of students is the hope, or American dream, that higher education may improve their entire family's socioeconomic status.

This study will expand the scholarship that addresses access and choice for first-generation immigrant college students of color to four-year postsecondary institutions by developing an applied strategic plan supporting their four-year postsecondary pursuits. Contemporary studies have recognized the need to forge new models for evaluating and supporting college choice, recognizing the need to intentionally undertake the varying layers that influence the postsecondary decision-making of students of color who inhabit the space of first-generation and immigrant.

This strategic plan will incorporate theoretical models that draw upon integrated economic and sociological perspectives that consider postsecondary decisions to be determined by a system of values and beliefs, anchored in race, ethnicity, and class, shaping a student's views and interpretations. This study also seeks to provide a comprehensive strategic model for growing the enrollment and affinity for first-generation immigrant students of color to attend four-year postsecondary institutions.

Table of Contents

List of Tables vii
List of Figures viii

INTRODUCTION 1

Definition of Terms 1
Background and Purpose 2
Research Questions 3
Significance and Rationale 4
Researcher Portrait and Assumptions 5

LITERATURE REVIEW 6

College Choice Models 7
Contextual Layers 10
Sociological and Econometric Perspectives 12
Aspirations 13
Challenges in Postsecondary Aspirations 16
Academic Achievement 17
Social Network 17
Parental Education 19
Institutional Factors 19

PROCESS 22

Project Design 24
Limitations 24
Data Analysis 25

APPLICATION 30

Recommendations 30
Contextual Layers 32

CONCLUSIONS 33

REFERENCES 35

TABLES 43

Table 1. Socio-economic status by education and time in the United States 43

TABLE 2. MULTI-GENERATIONAL MEXICAN-AMERICAN SOCIOECONOMIC ATTAINMENT DATA 44
TABLE 3. EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT BY NATIVITY AND PARENTAL NATIVITY FOR THE POPULATION AGED 25 AND OLDER: 2007 TO 2016 45
TABLE 4. DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS AND POSTSECONDARY ENROLLMENT FOR FIRST-GENERATION COLLEGE STUDENTS 46

APPENDIX 47

ARTIFACT A: SAMPLE - INSTITUTIONAL STAKEHOLDER SURVEYS 47
ARTIFACT B: SAMPLE - INSTITUTIONAL ACADEMIC CATALOG: 49
ARTIFACT C: SAMPLE - HISTORICAL INSTITUTIONAL STRATEGIC PLANNING GUIDES: 50
ARTIFACT D: SAMPLE - INSTITUTIONAL ENROLLMENT DATA: 51

List of Tables

TABLE 1. SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS BY EDUCATION AND TIME IN THE UNITED STATES 43

TABLE 2. MULTI-GENERATIONAL MEXICAN-AMERICAN SOCIOECONOMIC ATTAINMENT DATA 44

TABLE 3. EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT BY NATIVITY AND PARENTAL NATIVITY FOR THE POPULATION AGED 25 AND OLDER: 2007 TO 2016 45

TABLE 4. DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS AND POSTSECONDARY ENROLLMENT FOR FIRST-GENERATION COLLEGE STUDENTS 46

List of Figures

FIGURE 1 EARLY COLLEGE CHOICE MODELS 7
FIGURE 2. CONCEPTUAL MODEL OF COLLEGE CHOICE 9
FIGURE 3 PRELIMINARY MODEL OF INSTITUTIONAL ACTION 21
FIGURE 4 PROCESS OF INSTITUTIONAL STRATEGY AND THE TOWS ANALYSIS 23
FIGURE 5. INPUTS FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING 26
FIGURE 6. TOWS – OPERATIONAL ANALYSIS 28
FIGURE 7. STRATEGIES, TACTICS AND ACTIONS 29
FIGURE 8. CONTEXTUAL RECOMMENDATIONS 30

Introduction

Reeves (2017) argued that college entry may be considered as “the single most important transition, and the tightest bottleneck in the opportunity structure" (p. 86). Reflecting upon my pursuit of postsecondary education, I have acknowledged that my path to obtaining a bachelor’s degree was much more precarious than I realized. My aspirations for a college degree seemed a given, but *why* and *how* these goals may be actualized for other first-generation immigrant college students are leading motivators for this review. As a child of Haitian immigrants who each did not earn a four-year postsecondary degree, I adopted an American dream ideology in pursuing higher education through the strong encouragement of my family. I was the first person in my family to experience K-12 education in the US, and the first to attend a four-year university and graduate with a bachelor’s degree. The phenomenon of navigating post-secondary education here in the U.S. from the foundation of an immigrant and historically marginalized background was unique.

In my current professional role within college admissions and enrollment management, this study and the development of a strategic plan that supports first-generation immigrant college students of color, serves as an applied study that supports my professional aims, the aims of four-year universities, and adds to the body of literature surrounding college choice and access for this population. For students who traverse being a student of color, first-generation and immigrant, they are inhabiting a space where scholarly attention is limited, and a complex set of contextual layers. First-generation and immigrant postsecondary paths are complex and are a phenomenon that scholars have found to be historically inequitable (Feliciano & Lanuza, 2017; Griffin et al., 2012; Hauhart & Birkenstein, 2013). Reeves (2017) argued that postsecondary access and degree attainment are lauded resources, and studies have shown that college-going has escalated to one of the premier contentious experiences (Hurwitz, 2011; Jillson, 2004; Smith, 2012). Postsecondary access and student decision-making are a well-studied phenomenon that explores the various elements of the journey students undertake in pursuing their postsecondary aspirations and selection (Horvat, 1996; Nunez, A.N. & Cuccaro-Alamin, S., 1998; Paulsen, 1990; Seron, 1967).

Definition of Terms

First-generation and immigrant college student: The National Center for First-Generation Student Success (2022) considers first-generation college students as those whose parents did not complete a 4-year degree. The Center (2022) found that, “the term ‘first-generation’ implies the possibility that a student may lack the critical cultural capital necessary for college success because their parents did not attend college” (para 4). Immigrant is a term that will include students who reside in the US and were born either abroad or domestically, or have parents who are foreign-born. In this study and the prevailing literature, referencing students from an

immigrant background includes both examples of foreign or US-born students with foreign-born parents (Mwangi, 2014; North, 2009; Richards Chew, 2020).

Students of color: Within this study, the term will predominantly include students from Black and African-American, Latinx, and Asian descent, as these ethnic groupings serve as the largest ethnic groupings that inhabit first-generation immigrant scholarly discourse surrounding postsecondary access and choice. Considering the current landscape of the term, The University of Wisconsin-Madison (2022) stated that, "students of color intentionally includes students who may identify as Black, African-American, Asian, South Asian, Middle Eastern, Pacific Islander, Latinx, Chicanx, Native American, and multiracial" (para 3-4).

Access: Access includes the process of students being recruited, admitted, and enrolled at a post-secondary institution.

Choice: Choice or 'college choice' is a construct that is part of a long-standing discourse that has considered a student's predisposition, their search process, and choice or selection of an institution to encompass the construct of postsecondary choice and selection (Hossler & Gallagher, 1987; Jackson, 1982; Perna, 2006; Perna, 2015).

Background and Purpose

In addition to the personal relevance of this study, there are a few factors and considerations that bring attention to this population and their pursuit of a postsecondary degree. It has been widely reported that the total number of high school graduates in the US will sharply decline by more than15% by 2025 (Jordan, 2020; NSCRC, 2020; WICHE, 2020). The Western Institute Commission for Higher Education (2020) reported that there will be nearly three and a half million fewer total U.S, high school graduates, with steady declines between now and 2037. The U.S. workforce is also set to undergo significant changes in the coming years as a result of broader demographic trends in the country. Research shows that declining fertility and population aging, on the one hand, and the strong growth of the immigrant-origin population mean that all net labor force growth in the United States over the next 15 years is expected to come from immigrant-origin workers (Mwangi, 2014; NSCRC, 2020; USCB, 2017). The literature finds that the face of US higher education is changing. Students are more likely to come from immigrant families than in the past, and they are more likely to be racial and ethnic minorities, primarily from Asian, Latinx, and Black and African-American backgrounds. First-generation immigrant students of color are arguably a segment of the college-going demographic that cannot be overlooked by universities. As an example, students from immigrant families make up >15% of college enrollment in 21 states In California, they make up 50% (NSCRC, 2020; WICHE, 2016).

Black (41%) and Hispanic or Latinx (61%) undergraduate students serve as the majority of first-generation college students on campuses across the country (USDOE, 2020). Researchers have found that Black and Hispanic first-generation immigrant college students have the following postsecondary lived experiences and outcomes: choosing lower quality institutions, highest risk for dropping out, completing bachelor degrees at a lower rate than other racial groups or

continuing-education students, and ultimately earning less in their careers (Rothwell, 2015; Thomas, 1981; USDOE, 2020).

Children of immigrants in the U.S. are earning their postsecondary degrees at a larger volume than just a decade before (USCB, 2020). Studies exploring the postsecondary aspirations of first-generation and immigrant college students of color have shown marked increases in degree attainment, while still acknowledging circumstances that serve as barriers for this population (Deenanath, 2014; Fortuny et al., 2009; Kao, 2013). With the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic squarely impacting PK-16 education, this past spring served as an indicator of an unprecedented acceleration of enrollment decline across the United States. Neitzel (2021) reported that, "Overall college enrollment fell to 16.9 million this past spring. That one-year decline is the largest spring semester enrollment decrease since 2011" (p.1). Four-year universities are in the cross-hairs of meeting the fiscal demands of their institutions while managing critical aspects of recruitment and retention in the midst of the pandemic. WICHE (2020) also reported an increase in the diversification of the high school graduate pool. By 2036, students of color will make up 57% of the total high school graduating class (WICHE, 2020, p.2.). These trends alongside the devastating impacts of the pandemic, have placed a spotlight on how postsecondary institutions are supporting low-income students of color in achieving access and degree attainment. WICHE (2020) suggested that university administrators and educators must respond in the face of these challenges, as first-generation immigrant students of color represent a growing segment of the overall population as well as future high school graduates. This study will contribute to the emerging data and discourse advancing enrollment and retention at four-year institutions for first-generation immigrant students of color.

Research on Latinx, Black, or Asian first-generation and immigrant college students is limited. The attention, experiences, and outcomes of first-generation immigrant students of color are often merged with their pan-ethnic counterparts (e.g. African-American, Asian-American, Hispanic or Mexican-American), and thus shrouding their nuanced experiences and identities (Mwangi, 2014; Richards Chew, 2020; Rooney, 2008). This study will include emerging data on the combined characteristics of first-generation and immigrant college students, while also drawing from studies that highlight first-generation college students, immigrant college students, and students of color for context. Much of the scholarly focus on understanding first-generation and immigrant choice when applying to postsecondary institutions urges the need to contextualize student aspirations in familial background, rooted in race and class (Feliciano & Lanuza, 2017; Fortuny et al., 2009; Garcia & Mireles-Rios, 2019). Parental education, parental involvement, and aspiration development in various settings, serve as some of the leading themes that have surfaced from the prevailing scholarship (Mwangi, 2014; Palardy, 2015; Rooney, 2008).

Research Questions

Studies have shown that postsecondary aspirations are influenced by a complex set of factors, led by parental involvement and socioeconomic status (Kim, 2014; Mwangi, 2014; Richards Chew, 2020). For first-generation and immigrant college students of color, limited research exists that

delves into nuances that include racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic factors. For example, Kim (2014) reported that Chinese and Korean Americans were likely to pursue highly selective institutions, compared to other Asian groups. This suggests that socioeconomic status and ethnicity demonstrate some variability in postsecondary aspiration formation, opportunities, and decisions among Asian groups.

Richards Chew (2020) remarked that children of immigrants have disparate aspects of their being compared to U.S.-born and non-immigrant individuals by stating, "they are caught between two worlds, that of their parent's home country and that of the new country in which they were born" (p. 3). The vast majority of research on this group of students tends to focus on Latinx and Asian or Asian-American groups, as they hold the largest segments of the first-generation and immigrant cohort (MPI, 2021; NCES, 2018). This study will include literature and findings from the experiences of Black, Hispanic, and Asian immigrants as the emerging literature in this field recognizes these groups as historically marginalized populations that currently demonstrate higher rates of enrollment and degree attainment than their U.S.-origin counterparts (Griffin et al., 2012; Richards Chew, 2020; Rooney, 2008). As an example, Black first-generation immigrant college students have been shown to persist in colleges at a lower rate than Black U.S. – origin students (Feliciano & Lanuza, 2017; Griffin et al., 2012; Mwangi, 2014).

The research questions that will guide this study are:

RQ1: How can we develop a strategic plan supporting the postsecondary access and selection of 4-year research universities for FGIS of color based on Perna's (2006) Framework for College Choice?

RQ2: Can situational analysis (SWOT) provide useful data that address Perna's (2006) four contextual layers of college choice for first-generation immigrant student of color?

Significance and Rationale

There continues to be a gap in the literature and emphasis in practice devoted to first-generation immigrant students of color. The decision-making and postsecondary paths of first-generation immigrant students of color are often intertwined and positioned within the larger context of first-generation postsecondary research. For students and families that bring both a first-generation and immigrant status, their lived experiences highlight nuances in how they engage an American dream of social mobility via postsecondary education. The emerging data surrounding first-generation immigrant college students of color highlight inequities in access and degree attainment through postsecondary paths (Dondero & Humphries, 2016; Feliciano & Lanuza, 2017; Mwangi, 2014). More research is needed in order to highlight contemporary narratives of first-generation college students of color and their families who have been historically marginalized in the realm of college choice (Dondero & Humphries, 2016; Hill &

Torres, 2010; Kao et al., 2013). Few studies have sought to disaggregate data on first-generation and immigrant populations, notably considering nativity, ethnicity, and generational status. Additionally, developing a strategic plan derived from a systematized analysis of a comprehensive four-year university, offers a recommendation for utilizing campus resources and strategy to inform practice that seeks to assist the access and post-secondary choices of first-generation immigrant students of color. The purpose of the study is thus to develop a strategic plan supporting the college choice and access for first-generation immigrant students of color at a comprehensive four-year postsecondary institution.

Perna (2006) highlighted that the increase in research attending to racial/ethnic group differences in college choice over the past 15 years is showing differences in outcomes and processes. Speaking to best practices in helping low-income and first-generation student access and degree attainment, Perna (2015) shared, "Attention only to the nation's overall average attainment masks the considerably lower rates of attainment for students from low-income families, students who are first in their families to attend or complete college, and students from racial and ethnic groups" (p.1). For students that occupy the identity of low-income, first-generation, and having immigrant and racial/ethnic status, their lived experiences necessitate inquiry that may support their access and degree attainment. Studies have found first-generation and immigrant college students of color to have high levels of motivation for social mobility through postsecondary education and work (Griffin et al., 2012; North, 2009; Rooney, 2008). Scholars have noted that the choice of students attending a 2-year institution rather than a 4-year institution decreases the chance of attaining a baccalaureate degree (Acevedo, 2021; Jordan, 2020; Livingston & Heckman, 2017). Their college choice decision has a direct impact on their future earnings and opportunities. The personal, economic, and societal benefits of earning a bachelor's degree for first-generation immigrant college students of color makes this issue of access to four-year institutions one of increasing importance in higher education and society, especially given the changing landscape of our nation's high school graduates. For four-year institutions that boast the capacity to help students meet the educational needs of the labor market, as well as the fastest opportunity for upward social mobility, this study and others that explore this phenomenon are arguably part of what Perna (2015) described as, "one of the most important challenges facing our nation" (p.1).

Researcher Portrait and Assumptions

Hertz (1997) stated, "Unless the researcher knows what the researcher's attributes mean to the people being studied, the researcher (and reader) cannot understand the phenomenon" (p.4). Reflecting upon my postsecondary pursuits, I am aware that my success was not a given, and the educational achievement of future first-generation immigrants of color at four-year institutions has also shown to not be a given (Amido, 2018; NCES, 2018; Peters, 2009). Recent research has shown that the overwhelming sentiment for first-generation college students from immigrant families is that they expect to attend college in the face of challenges and barriers (Griffin et al., 2012; Orchowski, 2008; Perez, 2009). Parents and family members may not be understanding of the intricacies in American postsecondary education, furthering the need to better understand

how these families influence the aspirations of first-generation and immigrant college students of color. Mwangi (2014) found that, "As more children of immigrants enter the educational pipeline, it will be important to consider how a family-centric focus may be impacting their choices about higher education" (p.16).

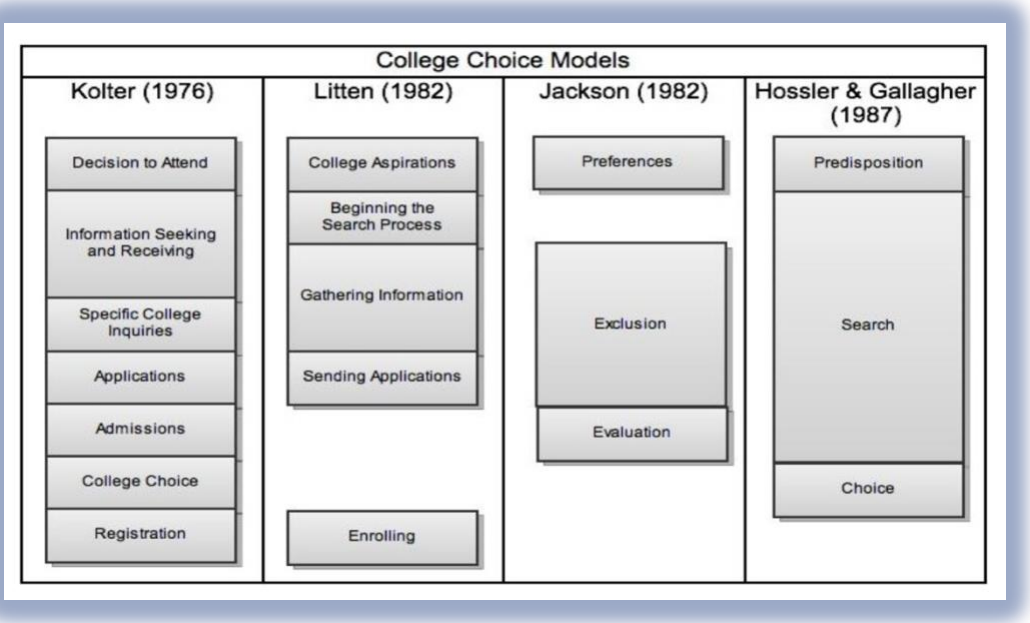
The continued disparities in college achievement and socioeconomic mobility for first-generation and immigrant college students of color, in comparison to their native and continuing-generation peers, warrants further research. To improve access to a college degree for first-generation and immigrant college students of color, and their further generations, more can be gleaned from understanding the predispositions, search considerations, and selection process for these students. Perna (2006) found that college enrollment processes are not universal, and stated, "policy interventions will not effectively close gaps in enrollment and choice without recognizing the culture and circumstances of particular groups" (p.12). For the first-generation and immigrant college students of color in this proposed study, I propose to explore shared themes of experience within the stories that surround aspects of confronting demand and desire for higher education within the various social and cultural settings that first-generation and immigrant college students of color inhabit. In addition, family background, and how the student and their family engage their historical, cultural, generational, and socioeconomic settings will be invaluable in interpreting their postsecondary aspirations.

Literature Review

Hossler and Gallagher's (1987) college choice model has become a landmark design for analyzing and making sense of how students and postsecondary institutions may better understand the process by which students consider and decide upon their postsecondary options. Hossler et al. (1989) advanced the Hossler and Gallagher model (1982) defining college choice as "a complex, multistage process during which an individual develops aspirations to continue formal education beyond high school" (p. 234). The study marked a shift in analysis, as it sought to explain how historical variables of college choice interact with one another to influence the attitudes for college attendance and college choice. The phases (see Fig. 1) have been defined as college aspiration formation (predisposition), college search and application (search), then the college selection and attendance phase (choice) (Hossler and Gallagher, 1987). Researchers note that this model provides a more expansive look at the search phase of the process, compared to the other leading models (Furukawa, 2011; Paulsen, 1990; Rooney, 2008).

Figure 1

Early college choice models



Furukawa, D. T. (2011). College choice influences among high-achieving students: An exploratory case study of college freshmen, p.8.

College Choice Models

As a foundational theoretical framework, the Hossler and Gallagher (1982) college choice model has been utilized widely for its simplicity and its thoughtful interpretation of the interaction between students and educational institutions with which they engage. While recognizing its usefulness within the overarching body of literature surrounding the topic, contemporary scholars have been critical of the Hossler and Gallagher model for a number of factors (Acevedo, 2021; Deenanath, 2014l; Mwangi, 2014; Peters, 2009). In analyzing Latinx first-generation and immigrant students, Acevedo (2021) states, "traditional frameworks do not take the educational inequities experienced by students of color into account" (p. 467). Similarly, Mwangi (2014) explains, "while the Hossler and Gallagher model was useful, findings reveal a much more rich and complex college choice process that reflects the developments of a college-going culture" (p. ii). Mwangi's (2014) research, among others, illustrates the dynamic experiences, interactions, and pathways that first-generation immigrant students of color have during their postsecondary journey. Contemporary discourse seems to suggest college choice to be a non-linear process that relies on the development of social and cultural capital through necessary interactions in various spaces that are inter-related to the student's culture and community setting. As a result, much of the emerging research that seeks to encompass both first-generation and immigrant postsecondary aspiration development will present a culture-specific model/theory or utilize a combination of various theoretical lenses to make sense of the complex nature of this phenomenon (Mwangi, 2014; Peters, 2009; Richards Chew, 2020).

Laura Perna, Professor and current Vice Provost at Penn, is considered to be one of the leading scholars on postsecondary access, choice, and equity in higher education. Perna (2015) shared, "Attention only to the nation's overall average attainment masks the considerably lower rates of attainment for students from low-income families, students who are first in their families to attend or complete college, and students from racial and ethnic groups" (p.1). Perna's Conceptual Model for College Choice model (Table 2) serves as the principal theoretical framework for this study. Perna's (2006) conceptual model of college choice will serve as a cornerstone for this proposed study in that it captures the need for a multilayered understanding for the college choice process as a specific group across racial/ethnic and socioeconomic lines. Perna's (2006) model was devised out of a recognized insufficiency in models that center on generalized economic or sociological themes for understanding postsecondary decision making. Perna (2006) offers that, "students' educational decisions are determined, at least in part, by their habitus, or system of values and beliefs that shape their views and interpretations" (p.115).

Lauderdale and Heckman (2017) studied the phenomenon of an "immigrant advantage", in where a national longitudinal study of youth from 1997-2013 found that children with at least one immigrant parent had a higher likelihood of postsecondary attainment (p.328). Lauderdale and Heckman (2017) utilized Perna's (2006) proposed conceptual model of student college choice, and found Perna's model to be appropriate in consideration of such a complex phenomenon associated with children of immigrants and postsecondary attainment. Perna's model (2006) incorporates both sociological and economic factors that consider demographic characteristics. Lauderdale and Heckman (2017) state, "the importance of considering both economic and sociological approaches may be critical when studying children of immigrants [and] college choice; others suggest Perna's theory can be helpful in examining college persistence and attainment" (p.328).

Perna's model (2006) for student college choice outlines four contextual layers that shape an individual's college choice decisions: the individual's habitus, school and community context, the higher education context, and the broader social, economic, and policy context. Scholars have found Perna's model to be appropriate in consideration of such a complex phenomenon associated with children of immigrants and postsecondary attainment (Conefrey, 2021; Kezar & Kitchen, 2020). Habitus serves as a foundational element within Perna's model as scholars have found habitus to be agency or practice within a specific field or contextual layer (Griffin et al., 2012; Hilgers & Manguez, 2014; Nora, 2004). Represented in the model, a person's habitus may be informed by each contextual layer. Bourdieu (1992) refers to habitus as apparent durable patterns of thought, behavior (or practice) and taste that people acquire that link social structures, like class position to action. Perna's model (2006) suggests that a network or system of values and beliefs are in play with an individual's "situated context". This framework serves as the underpinning for addressing Perna's contextual layers in order to develop a comprehensive plan to support the access and choice of first-generation students of color.

The model illustrates varying factors that shape student's decisions across four contextual layers of engagement, including: A student's habitus, school and community, higher education, and broader social, economic, and policy context.

Figure 2

Conceptual model of college choice

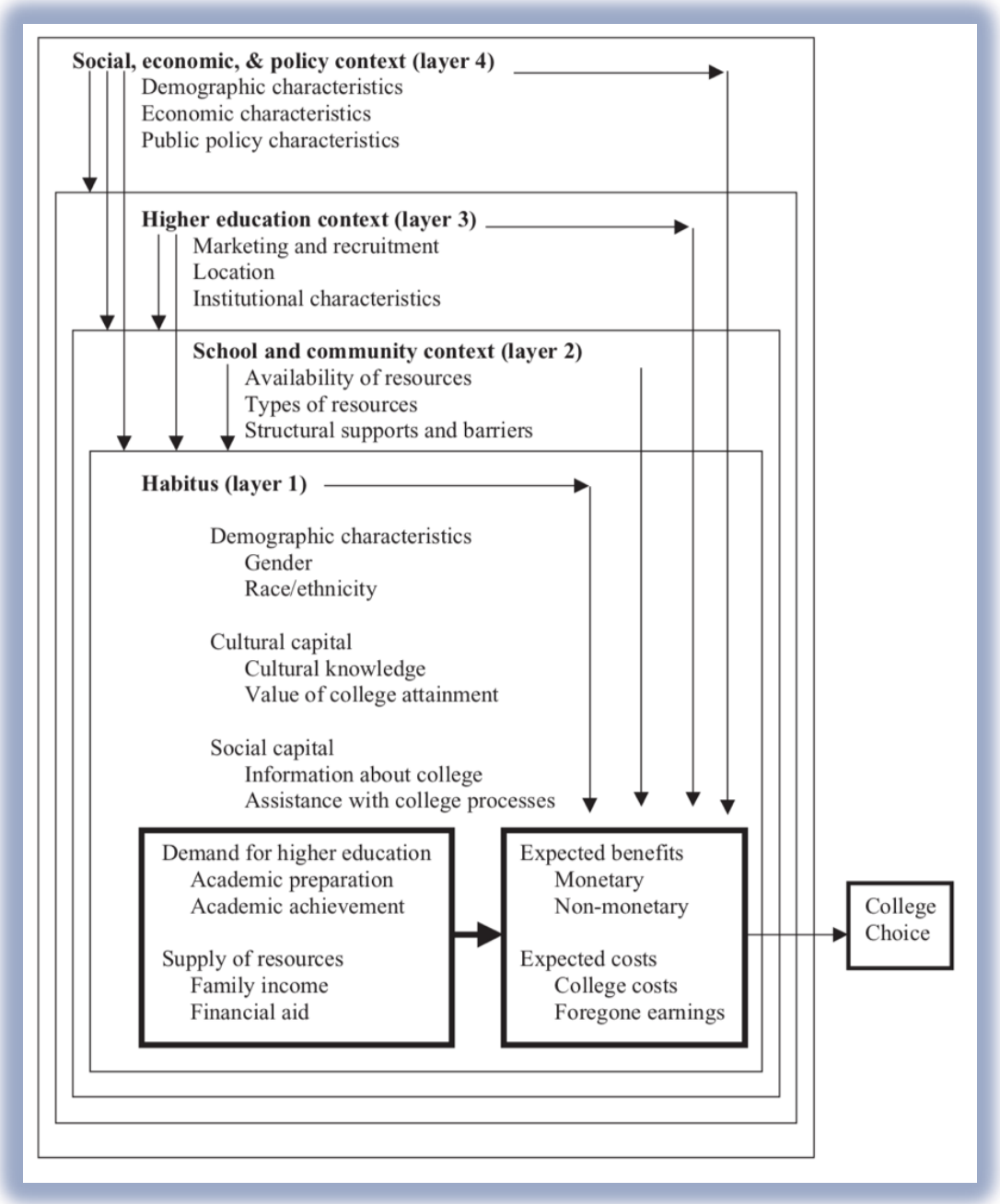


Fig. 2 Conceptual model of college choice. Perna (2006).

Contextual Layers

Lastly, how students interact in space, environment, and organizations to influence their postsecondary aspirations is central to Perna's (2006) conceptual model. Perna's (2015) model assumed that college choice decisions are shaped by four contextual layers: "(1) the individual's habitus; (2) school and community context; (3) the higher education context; and (4) the broader social, economic, and policy context" (p.116). Though widely used, habitus is a concept and framework that has received criticism in its scholarly application towards the study of college choice and postsecondary aspirations. Reay (2004) found that Bourdieu utilized habitus as central to his theory of transcending dualisms of agency-structure, object-structure, and micro-macro. Reay (2004) stated, "Although, in common with cultural capital, there is an increasing tendency for habitus to be sprayed throughout academic texts like intellectual hairspray" (p. 432). Reay (2004) argued that habitus has a long-standing history dating back to Aristotle, and habitus is thus a theoretical construct of great depth. Reay's critiques notwithstanding, habitus is a complex concept that has taken various shapes in Bourdieu's writings. Habitus and its themes of derived or developed agency within various settings has been used in contemporary scholarly discourse surrounding first-generation and immigrant postsecondary pursuits (Burkitt, 1999; Palardy, 2015; Urrieta, 2007). Bourdieu (1992) sees habitus as an embodiment of being that is expressed in durable ways "of standing, speaking, walking, and thereby of feeling and thinking" (Bourdieu, 1998, p.81). Although this study and strategic plan does not address the embodiment of habitus for individuals in the college choice process, some studies do highlight learned dispositions that result from the relationships that first-generation immigrant college students have with various settings (Griffin et al, 2012; Horvat, 1996; Palardy, 2015; Perna, 2015).

Perna's (2006) proposed conceptual model allows for an analysis of benefits and costs in relation to an individual's dispositions and ways social and cultural being that are in constant construction by their family, school, community, and postsecondary institution. As outlined earlier, the lived experiences of first-generation college students of color are complex. These students and their families occupy racial, ethnic, historical, generational, disparate, and structurally marginalized spaces. Perna's (2006) proposed model supports an analysis that seeks to provide nuanced inquiry into the postsecondary aspirations of the complex and dynamic population of first-generation immigrant college students of color. Perna (2006) proposed that this model may be notably useful in analyzing specialized groups in college-choice outcomes, as it acknowledges multiple layers of influence throughout the postsecondary journey of students.

Kim (2014) found that, in studying first-generation and immigrant populations of color, deciding to attend college "involves not only the college aspirants themselves, but also parents, families, communities, and school personnel" (p.321). Perna's model (2006) suggests that a network or system of values and beliefs are in play with an individual's "situated context" (p.116). Similar to previous models, Perna (2006) draws upon an economic model of human capital investment where students navigate the cost of their decision based upon the expected benefits. Perna (2006) places human capital investment at the center of the model, ingrained within each layer. Layer 1 of the model focuses upon habitus, and the belief system of individuals that is acquired

or formed by their environment. Layer 2 adds school and community systems of influence, while layer 3 focuses on the external influences of postsecondary institutions. Finally, layer 4 ties in overarching social demographics changes, such as SES, or economic conditions and public policies. Perna (2006) states, "the proposed model recognizes differences across students in the resources that shape college choice" (p.116). For this proposed study of first-generation and immigrant students of color, Perna's model (2006) provides a comprehensive theory that allows for the complexity of the lived experiences of the participants within this study to be framed theoretically in a manner that demonstrates that variability of their lives and possibly their nonlinear paths to postsecondary access and degree attainment.

Acevedo (2021) utilizes Latin-American-centric "college-*conocimiento"* and "cooling out" frameworks (Acevedo, 2021) in combination to analyze college choice amongst first-generation and immigrant Latin-American students. College-*conocimiento* is a framework developed by Acevedo (2021) that entails seven cyclical stages that Latin-American students navigate in relation to their aspirations, their family, their peers, and the school settings they encompass. Acevedo (2021) remarked that the framework is included within the developing scholarship that identifies that Latin-American students in this process experience a cyclical postsecondary journey that is "non-sequential with limited guidance and information" (p. 467). In a like manner, the cooling out framework, established by Clark (1960), revealed that community college counselors either warmed up students for transferring to four-year institutions, or cooled out students by lowering their aspirations to move them away from transfer aspirations. Clark's (1960) study has found recent renewal as scholars recognize that many of the traditional college choice frameworks consider traditional postsecondary pathways, exclusively, and do not speak to the lived realities of first-generation and immigrant students of color who navigate poverty, under-resourced schools, limited cultural capital, parental expectations, and postsecondary recruitment in a manner that vastly contrasts the experiences of their domestic and continuing generation counterparts. Similar to the aims of this study, researchers such as Acevedo (2021) have sought to combat the reproduction of inequitable outcomes for first-generation immigrant college students through their research promoting access and success to postsecondary pathways.

Returning to the Hossler and Gallagher (1987) model, several elements have been identified to contribute to the understanding of enrollment behavior. The most widely studied considerations include, but are not limited to: socioeconomic status, parental education, parental expectations, teacher/counselor encouragement, high school and postsecondary curriculum and environment, academic ability, neighborhood, and academic ability (Jackson, 1982; Paulsen, 1990; Peters, 2009; Richards Chew, 2020; USNWR, 2019). Hossler and Gallagher (1987) offered that, "in addition to the individual factors that influence the college choice process, there are organizational factors which interact with the individual student factors to influence student college choice" (p. 211). As I will discuss later, those organizations include the family home, the high school, and colleges or universities. Though not directly speaking to first-generation and immigrant populations, this framework established the foundation for the contemporary discourse surrounding college choice, and its involvement of habitus and social fields of influence (Griffin et al., 2012; Hossler and Gallagher, 1987; Paulsen, 1990; Richards Chew, 2020).

Kiyama and Harper (2018) argued that postsecondary institutions must be committed to forging connections for first-generation and immigrant college students of color between their worlds of school, home, and the community. Kiyama and Harper (2018) highlight Latino families who are low-income, first-generation, and immigrant in stating that "they may experience dissonance between these worlds and their families as they acquire new knowledge in postsecondary institutions" (p.6). In consideration of this, Perna's (2006) model draws upon the widely considered human capital investment theory that students will make postsecondary decisions in consideration of monetary and nonmonetary benefits. This cost-benefit deliberation includes, among other factors, the benefits of proximity, college experience, academic major, social enhancement, and community versus the costs of tuition, distance from family, time, and leisure time, among others.

Sociological and Econometric Perspectives

Researchers have distinguished considerations for college choice that fall within what some have termed sociological or econometric models (Malveaux, 2003; Paulsen, 1990; Peters, 2009; Rooney, 2008). These elements focus on individual, cultural, and social factors that lead to educational attainment. Rooney (2008) identified four conceptual lenses that spur additional research in this field: "econometric models, status attainment (sociological) models, combined models, and an integrated cost-benefit model" (p.18). The econometric aspect to the models considers how the student weighs their options in a manner to determine advantages. Hossler et al. (1989) classify three econometric models that incorporate the push and pull of factors for students throughout this process: college or non-college choice, choice among colleges, and consumer model of choice (p. 234). Each model thus demonstrates the need for students to weigh their options based on the perception of benefit among options as it relates to the student's postsecondary education predisposition and aspirations. Malveaux (2003) continued the econometric ideal for postsecondary education by labeling it as a "knowledge economy" (p. 1). Malveaux (2003) argued that higher education should be considered as a public good that provides those who pursue it the promise or prospect of social and economic mobility. For Malveaux (2003), postsecondary aspirations aligned with a student's perception of an institution's ability to advance the student and their family's socioeconomic status.

Perez and McDonough (2008) also found Hossler and Gallagher's model (1982) to be inadequate for members of underrepresented groups as "traditional models of college choice are [most] helpful in understanding the college choice processes for majority students who have access to more and varied resources" (p. 261). Perez and McDonough (2008) recognized that institutions that recruited Latin-American students focusing primarily or solely on financial aid information were unsuccessful in their efforts. Within their study, they drew from two theoretical lenses: chain migration theory and a social capital framework. Perez and McDonough (2008) found that Latin-American first-generation and immigrant students cited parents, siblings, relatives, peers, school counselors, and other school staff as the most influential in their college planning. For the student participants of their study, strong social networks were found to be invaluable to the

student in their decision-making process. Of equal note, extended family were sought out for college information during the predisposition and search phases of this process. An important aspect of this study will be the exploration of the development of postsecondary aspirations through relationships between first-generation and immigrant students of color and trusted members of their social networks. For first-generation and immigrant students of color, their identities are intricately tied to cultural, socioeconomic, and intergenerational conflicts that scholars have noted as factors these students grapple with (Acevedo, 2021; Deenanath, 2014; Rooney, 2008). In similar studies, theoretical models that have incorporated a sociological lens have primarily focused on the development of a student's aspirations to attend postsecondary education (Deenanath, 2014; Paulsen, 1990; Rooney, 2008).

Contemporary research surrounding college choice models has focused on how sociological constructs of social and cultural capital influence postsecondary decisions (Nora, 2024; Hill & Torres, 2010; Perna, 2006; Richards Chew, 2020). Perna (2006) found that cultural capital is a resource of attributes such as language skills or cultural knowledge, acquired in part from a student's parents and help define the student's class status. Perna (2006) also saw social capital as a construct where social networks have the capability to access, gain, and sustain various forms of capital. Mechanisms that work to ensure the transformation and reproduction of various social structures have been widely considered within other various studies (Bourdieu, 1992; Griffin et al, 2012; Reay, D, 2004). Social capital may be seen as the manner in which dominant groups maintain their status and longevity, while disadvantaging other groups. Reeves (2017) argued that higher education, and especially that at leading four-year universities, have become the most important site for class reproduction. Speaking to how parents of high social class may consider the legacy of their children/family, Reeves stated (2017), "We will work hard to put a glass door under our children, to prevent them from falling down a chute. Inequality and immobility thus become self-reinforcing" (p.10).

Aspirations

Several studies of college choice for first-generation and immigrant students of color view aspirations, or the time in which students contemplate, develop, and form desires or the lack thereof for postsecondary education, as a leading contributor to how these students actualize their decisions (Acevedo, 2021; Deenanath, 2014; Peters, 2009). Personal and familial attributes that first-generation and immigrant college students and their families possess help inform their aspirations and their subsequent college choice. Horvat (1996) found that individual initiative played a determining role in the college choice process for students of color, including those from first-generation and immigrant backgrounds. She states, "At Springfield, students and parents alike believe that 'it's on you', meaning it is your responsibility, to do something about attending college" (p. 24). Over a decade before, Thomas (1981) argued that first-generation Black students move up through self-reliance while their White counterparts are assisted by the institutional machinery of their setting.

> “these families notably use proactive strategies such as familial and culturally based resources to socialize children into a college-going culture as well as to navigate the college-choice process”
> (Mwangi, 2014, p. 2).

Mwangi (2014) identifies these studies as part of a “funds of knowledge” perspective (p. 44). She states that the “funds of knowledge [perspective] incorporates familial background into the educational experience, acknowledging that students’ homes and communities contain rich and cultural and cognitive resources” (p. 44). Mwangi (2014) found that these interactions of social networks, academic ability, and socioeconomic status have the capacity to drive educational aspirations and achievement. Distinctly, for Black immigrant first-generation students and their families, Mwangi (2014) expanded this framework by stating, “these families notably use proactive strategies such as familial and culturally based resources to socialize children into a college-going culture as well as to navigate the college-choice process” (p. 2). Mwangi’s (2014) research expresses the contemporary consideration for the involvement of the family as a unit in the development of aspirations for postsecondary education. For low-income and immigrant families of color, the extension of the family, relationally or geographically, is often wide-spread and not bound to the construct or ideology of an American nuclear family. Mwangi (2014) referred to the family structure in this college-going process as “Baobab Families” (p. 2). She (2014) stated, “The baobab tree represents endurance, conservation, creativity, ingenuity and dialogue” (p.250). Baobab trees are large, resilient, generational African trees that are nicknamed the “upside-down tree” as their branches are located at the top of the tree growing upward and outward (National Research Council, 2008). Mwangi (2014) considered baobab families as those who engaged college-going as a family unit, and presented college-going as a culture within the homes and communities of African immigrants and their families. Mwangi (2014) incorporated an ecocultural theory that included a cross-cultural framework to approach the study of ethnic immigrant populations in such a way that accounts for the social construction of their lives in the U.S., in relation to their cultural backgrounds and niche features of their family.

Similar to the Perez and McDonough (2008) study, Mwangi (2014) found that aspirations were formed within the interactions of students and their familial networks, augmenting the information received from their school setting. According to Mwangi (2014), African immigrant students and families would seek out information from siblings and relatives both within the United States and their home country, who had had experience and knowledge traversing the United States K-12 system. For first-generation and immigrant students, Mwangi’s (2014) study emphasized how this population develops a college-going expectation “from the root” (p. 299). For first-generation and immigrant families, the process of seeking out information from family members would reinforce either strong or weak sentiments towards college-going, based on the family’s postsecondary capital. First-generation and immigrant college students develop their

postsecondary aspirations and subsequent decisions for college-going, in large part alongside their social networks. Considering limited education within the family, limited school resources, and limited access to higher education professionals, research shows gaps of knowledge and social capital in supporting postsecondary access for this population.

Burkitt's (1999) study reaffirmed that learned dispositions have a durable and enduring quality that become difficult to change for people, even when they become conscious of those dispositions. As studies surrounding university enrollment and student success have evolved to consider the role of the university in supporting these efforts, so has the consideration for how institutions are implicated in engaging systems that influence and dictate behavior. Palardy's (2015) study showed how socioeconomic composition with college choice process as a systematic function of these learned dispositions. Palardy (2015) highlighted learned dispositions through organizations as a factor through which socioeconomic status influences college choice. Schools and families have been shown to provide the attributes that form predispositions at the search and selection stages of college choice for students (Burkitt, 1999; Griffin et al., 2012; Horvat, 1996).

Urrieta's (2007) study on Chicana/o educational mobility and social class highlighted that race, gender, class, and other variables are inherently woven into the lived experiences of this population. Urrieta (2007) shared that earlier research compartmentalizes variables of influence, when, according to Urrieta, they are "mutually dependent and informing" (p.114). Urrieta (2007) also urged scholars of color to combat the images of minorities as wholly or solely disadvantaged or as "cultures of poverty" (p. 114). Urrieta's (2007) scholarship contextualizes habitus as historical and reproductive of cultural practices. Accordingly, elements of oppression, marginalization, and dominance historically tied to immigrants of color should not be omitted. Urrieta (2017) goes on to cite Blackledge (2002), stating, "In whitestream U.S. society however, it is safe to say that groups that have alternative systems of habitus may have little opportunity for public participation, unless they learn to practice the practices of the secondary whitestream habitus" (p.70).

Perna's (2015) consideration of demographic characteristics, highlight how individuals of first-generation and immigrant backgrounds have brought their lived experience of a feeling of being between two-worlds (Acevedo, 2021; Perez & McDonough, 2008; Urrieta, 2007). When referencing generational learned dispositions of Chicanas/os within the U.S., Urrieta (2007) stated that this, "hybridity [implies] that Chicanas/os have multiple essences, *ni de aquí ni de allá*, 'not from here nor from there', Mexico or the U.S." (p.121). First-generation and immigrant college students have a distinctive lived experience where aspirations are entangled with social mobility in the midst of holding onto familial and generational learned dispositions, while striving to be a part of a postsecondary environment. Essentially, there is an inherent struggle. Urrieta (2007) references a Chicana author who "expresses the ability to exist in the contradiction of being everything and nothing simultaneously" (p. 120).

Challenges in Postsecondary Aspirations

Heller (1971) researched the prospect of social mobility for first-generation Latinx students and their immigrant families. Heller's (1971) research included working with Mexican-American teenage males who displayed exceptionally high levels of motivation and ambition for social mobility. She notes that achievement, in relation to social mobility, may only be actualized through the following three avenues: the environment for achievement is open; that one is motivated for reaching the goal; and that one has the requisite resources, cognitive or material. Within the same study, Heller (1971) offered another possible influence on social mobility through the narrative of an undocumented Mexican-American student who looked back on his college-going experience by recalling:

> "I was either in my freshman or sophomore year when I first thought of going to college. Everybody just said, well we are going to go to college; that's it, because you can't do without a college education. And eventually some of my friends started saying: "Well, I don't think I'm going to even make high school. I just want to make high school." And suddenly high school became the reaching point instead of college. I think we all tend to start pretty big and get cut down as time goes along" (p. 142).

This participant suggests that, for him, the milestone of college and its pursuit may be stunted by the perception of peers. He even implies that, for his peers, there begins a "cutting down" (in Heller, 1971, p. 13) over time of the aspirations of first-generation and immigrant Mexican-American students; a collective collapse that resonates amongst a given social circle.

For first-generation and immigrant college students, the immigrant stories of their parents have shown to serve as motivation in going against the parent education barrier narrative (Amido, 2018; Richards Chew, 2020; Rooney, 2008). Rooney (2008) references the work of Ceja (2004) in speaking to this contrasting phenomenon for Latin-American immigrant parents and the postsecondary aspirations of their daughters stating, "although parents may have not experienced a college education themselves, they are still able to convey clear messages about the value of a college education to their children. This, in turn, resulted in the development of strong college aspirations for the group of low-income and first-generation students in this study" (p.48). In self-reflecting on her own postsecondary journey, Amido (2018) reflects Rooney's research in sharing, "my mother's experiences as an immigrant have had a tremendous impact on my life in more ways than one. She always emphasized the importance of attending a four-year university, even though that wasn't a possibility for her or my father" (p.38). This form of motivation within the immigrant family network develops a set of learned practices and methods of behavior.

Bourdieu (1992) refers to habitus as apparent durable patterns of thought, behavior (or practice) and taste that people acquire that link social structures, like class position to action. In speaking to her study of Black first-generation immigrant college students, Richards Chew (2020) found that participants within her study grew up with a habitus of achievement that came from the family pursuing the American Dream. For her participants, Chew found that, "that same habitus

that got them into college also got them through college. They had to persist and graduate because they wanted to be able to give back to their families and communities" (p. ii).

Academic Achievement

Academic achievement has been linked to several factors beyond individual prowess, including but not limited to school setting and resources, school curriculum, family socioeconomic status, and family educational attainment (Deenanath, 2014; Hill and Torres, 2010; Richards Chew, 2020). Studies have found that academic achievement is highly correlated with student aspirations (Jackson, 1982; Paulson, 1990; Richards Chew, 2020). Similar to the impact of parent education, studies have demonstrated the nuance with this consideration of academic achievement and student aspirations for first-generation and immigrant populations (Deenanath, 2014; Horvat, 1996; Richards Chew, 2020). Highlighting the influence of a highly resourced and college-focused college counseling office for high school students, Jackson (1982) shared the mission and vision for an all-female college preparatory high school and its community. He (1982) states, "The college choice process at Hadley is a ritualized and shared rite of passage. The parents of the students at this school expect that their daughters will attend college. What makes the Hadley experience different is that college preparation is the exclusive or dominant mission of the school" (p. 16).

Griffin et al (2012) found that, for first-generation Black college students from immigrant families, education attainment was seen as a measure of success for each of their research participants. The respondents noted how education was critical for their lives as well as for the ultimate success of their families. Perez (2009) had similar sentiments from one participant who saw education as a pathway to financial stability. One participant from Griffin et al.'s (2012) study highlighted the expectations and aspirations of the family, in sharing, "if you can come out of this country and, you know, have a good education, have a good job, provide for your family, that's like the ultimate dream" (p.102). Arendt (1993), in her discussion of the concept of natality, or the human condition of being born into, spoke of children of immigrants as seeking the prospect of a new life, new world, and a new order providing the promise of longevity for all stakeholders (p. 172). Orchowski (2008) noted, "the issue of immigration is a core American issue. It touches our people's most basic beliefs about our freedom to move to new opportunities, about our national identity and sovereignty" (p. 5). First-generation students from immigrant families are raised with the ideal of work supporting their sovereignty and pursuit of new opportunities.

Social Network

Evidenced by this excerpt, and through other studies, aspiration development and its factors that include career interest, and aptitude for social mobility, are part of a network of influences that have the ability to advantage and disadvantage first-generation and immigrant students (Horvat, 1996; Jackson, 1982; Paulson, 1990). Horvat (1996) situated college choice for first-generation African-American college students as a process replete with inequities at the secondary level that are rooted in race and class, ultimately limiting the postsecondary opportunity structure. She

finds that Black students from public schools are limited in their college choices, both self-perceived and real. Conversely, Black students from private schools had higher social status and opportunities as a result of their high school setting (Horvat, 1996). Horvat's study highlights how aspects of race, class, access, and school environments may serve as contributing elements to the college-choice process for first-generation college students from immigrant families.

First-generation and immigrant college students are more likely to come from family backgrounds with limited financial resources (NCES, 2018; WICHE, 2016). Horvat states, "it is important to note that this [choice] is limited or bounded for each student by the realities surrounding their lives" (p. 28). Perez (2009) considered that for first-generation and immigrant students, their college choice experiences were "portraits of resilience and survival in a social and educational world that continuously places barriers in [their] paths" (p. vii). Hirudayaraj's (2011) study on issues of employability in a knowledge-based economy concludes that first-generation college students from immigrant families are more likely, due to such limited parental support, to drop out of high school and/or college, take longer to complete their programs, choose careers they are unfamiliar with, or end up in unemployment (p. 5). The aspirations of first-generation college students and their immigrant families interact with constraints of academic achievement, academic networks, financial resources, geography, and others to shape the aspirations of college choice (Neuman, 2016; North, 2009; Truax, 2015). As an example of how aspirations and preferences are formed, a student in Perez's study (2009) stated: "Because of my status, I understand what I can't do, and because of that I take the things that I can do more seriously. I can go to school. I can get good grades. I take pride in being able to do that" (p. 77). Other student participants in Perez's (2009) study reflect the opposite sentiment; they are aware of their *inability* to further their schooling beyond high school, or of the challenges before them in that regard. Consequently, they lower their aspirations for pursuing higher education.

Aligned with Perna's (2006) work, Horvat (1996) also found that families and schools offer settings for the transmission of social and cultural capital; mechanisms that advantage, reproduce and reinforce power structures. Horvat's (1996) study examines race and class through school environments, and the influence those settings have on the postsecondary aspirations of three Black female students. The students are from a range of socioeconomic statuses and high school environments, and Horvat's study highlights how both family and school environments help construct postsecondary aspirations of the students. Families and schools are both settings in which race and class are constantly shaping behavior, preferences, dispositions, and interactions (Horvat, 1996). Richards Chew (2020) found similar findings in her study of Black students of immigrant origins. Specifically, her study looked at the accumulation of cultural capital alongside the participants' worldviews in shaping their postsecondary aspirations and success. She also found that the family, school, and community helped participants shape a common mantra of, "I have no choice but to achieve," a form of educational entitlement constructed by reinforcing belief in the American Dream (Richards Chew, 2020, p. 55). Richards Chew (2020) also found aspirations and habitus to be shaped along racial lines, as her participants proclaimed, "I have to prove myself" (p. 55), due to a cultural idiom known as the Black tax: "the belief that one has to work harder than others for the same result" (p. 55).

Parental Education

Earlier studies have found that the strongest correlate of high school students' aspirations was academic achievement as well as parental education (Coleman, 1973; Jackson, 1982). Current studies support these findings and have found nuance involved in consideration of first-generation immigrant populations specifically (Acevedo, 2021; Amido, 2018; Garcia & Mireles-Rios, 2019; Richards Chew, 2020). Figures 2-4 highlight studies presenting evidence that parental education promotes higher levels of educational attainment, as well as career earnings (CIS, 2010; CIS, 2018; USDOE, 2017). Conversely, the lack of parental education for first-generation and immigrant college students can be a regenerative phenomenon for inequities in access and degree attainment at four-year postsecondary institutions (Horvat, 1996; Nunez & Cuccaro-Alamin, 1998; USNWR, 2019). Much of the literature that considers first-generation and immigrant college students of color and their postsecondary aspirations does so with a look into how aspects of culture, race, and gender are essential in providing a legitimate analysis of the college-going experiences of this population. For a majority of first-generation and immigrant college-going students, parent education, and the lack thereof, have shown to be significant influences of everything from postsecondary aspirations, to high school course choices, to career earnings (NCES, 2018).

Institutional Factors

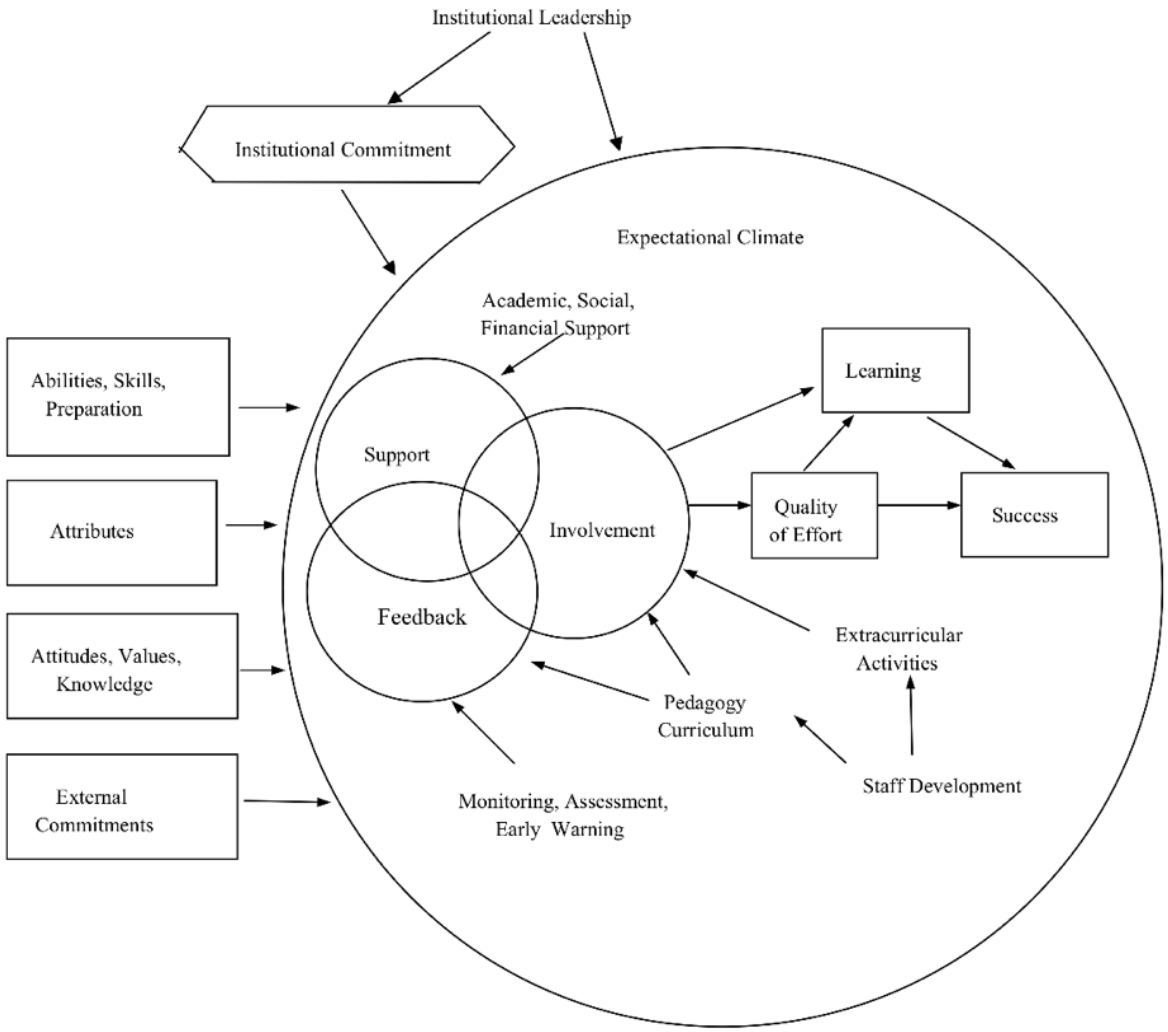
In addition to aspects of race, culture, gender, and parental education, institutional factors also have a major influence on immigrant and first-generation students' college-going aspirations. These factors include but are not limited to: academic offerings, student population, academic reputation, and location to name a few (Fitzgerald & Delaney, 2002; Kao et al., 2013; WICHE, 2016). Considering academic offerings from high school and their influence on how first-generation immigrant students of color transition to postsecondary education, NCES (2016) showed that Latin-American first-generation immigrant students earned developmental or remedial course credit in high school at a rate of 14% higher than the overall undergraduate prospective population. This same population of Latin-American first-generation immigrant students had the highest rate of enrollment into public two-year institutions, and conversely, the lowest rate of enrollment at public four-year institutions (NCES, 2016). Asian and Asian-American first-generation immigrant students held the highest rate of enrollment into public four-year institutions within the study, as well as the highest enrollment rate into private non-profit institutions (NCES, 2016). Immigrants and U.S.-born children of immigrants represented 85% of all Asian and Asian-American students, and 63% of Latin-American students in 2018 (Jordan, 2020). Perna (2006) noted that postsecondary institutions influence prospective students and their families through such methods as: enrollment information, marketing, their attributes, their selectivity, and availability or perceived availability to enroll. Perna (2006) stated, "An excess demand for higher education may cause increased tuition and/or increased competition for available slots, and actions that are likely to have the greatest negative impact" (p.118).

In addition to Perna, other scholars have found that postsecondary institutions may bridge critical gaps in cultural capital for first-generation immigrant students of color and their families (Paulsen, 1990; Perna, 2006; Perna, 2015; Reeves, 2015). As this population is comprised largely of students and families from low-income and low SES, their understanding of financial aid is limited. Perna (2005) found that more research is needed to better support institutions with providing these families a better understanding of the design, operations, and marketing. Studies have highlighted that parental involvement for first-generation immigrant students of color is often limited due to real or perceived barriers (Amido, 2016; Ceja, 2004; Perna, 2005).

Assimilation and integration into postsecondary institutions has been highlighted by the work of Tinto (2006) and Tierney (1999). Tierney (1999) found that Tinto's model for student integration overemphasized the importance for students, like first-generation immigrant students of color, to dissociate themselves from their family or friend networks to be incorporated into the university and courses. In speaking of students who are first-generation immigrant students of color, Tierney (1999) referencing a concept called cultural suicide – this would be the degree to which a student breaks ties from their family and home communities, thus committing cultural suicide, through academic and social integration, influences a student's decision-making and interest in attending or remaining at a university. Interestingly, the authors sit on both sides of how an institution should consider student attributes and their family's cultural background, yet both see the role of the institution necessitating a commitment to supporting the student comprehensively across the various facets of their experience.

Figure 3

Preliminary model of institutional action



Tinto, V., & Pusser, B. (2006). Structure of a preliminary model of institutional action.

What resides within each argument is the complexity at which students are entering postsecondary spaces based on their social and cultural selves. Tinto (2006) found that institutional commitments are not fixed, but are multilayered, similar to Perna's (2006) model. Tinto (2006) posits that, "the effect of actions upon student success at the level of the organization is largely indirect that such actions serve to influence the behaviors of faculty and staff whose actions directly impinge upon student lives" (p.11). Tierney (1999) found that institutions must consider supporting students in maintaining cultural integrity, engaging students' racial/ethnic backgrounds in a positive manner.

Lastly, it has been documented that for students of color from first-generation immigrant and low-income backgrounds, their high schools are often not best equipped to provide sufficient admissions or financial aid resources (i.e. personnel, materials, and curriculum). Scholars have highlighted school culture as an indicator of the focus of teachers or counselors, and how their postsecondary expectations (Acevedo, 2021; Mwangi, 2014; Perna, 2005). From her study on "cooling" postsecondary aspirations, Acevedo (2021) argued that, "the inequities experienced by Latinx students with college guidance align with the notion of staff in high poverty schools reproducing college choice attitudes that reduce the likelihood of students attending college" (p.466). The above studies highlight institutional involvement and influence that are both direct and indirect for first-generation immigrant students of color. The need for involvement is evident as well as the need for a multipronged approach that considers the various layers outlined in Perna's (2006) model.

Process

This section presents the study's use of situational analysis to support the development of an applied strategic plan for four-year postsecondary institutions that addresses Perna's (2006) contextual framework for college choice, considering first-generation immigrant college students of color. Readers will find the use of the TOWS/SWOT Matrix (Weihrich, 1982), a strategy that matches external threats and opportunities to an institution with the institution's internal weaknesses and strengths.

As a practitioner seeking to reduce gaps in equity of degree attainment among first-generation immigrant college student populations, I see myself as an active participant within this research process. The strategic plan allows for an assessment of a comprehensive four-year postsecondary institution's resources and capabilities in the current external environment. Madsen (2016) highlighted that, "SWOT analysis is one of the most widely used strategy tools among managers in the process of decision making" (p.1). This study will allow for me to serve as a vehicle for presenting data that informs practice as well as contributing to the literature on college choice, and the postsecondary aspirations first-generation immigrant college students of color.

Within this study, and represented in other strategic plans utilizing the TOWS Matrix (Figure 4), this plan utilizes the strengths of a comprehensive four-year postsecondary institution to take advantage of opportunities, while also considering weaknesses to the organization, and how an institution may employ its strengths in combatting threats to the organization.

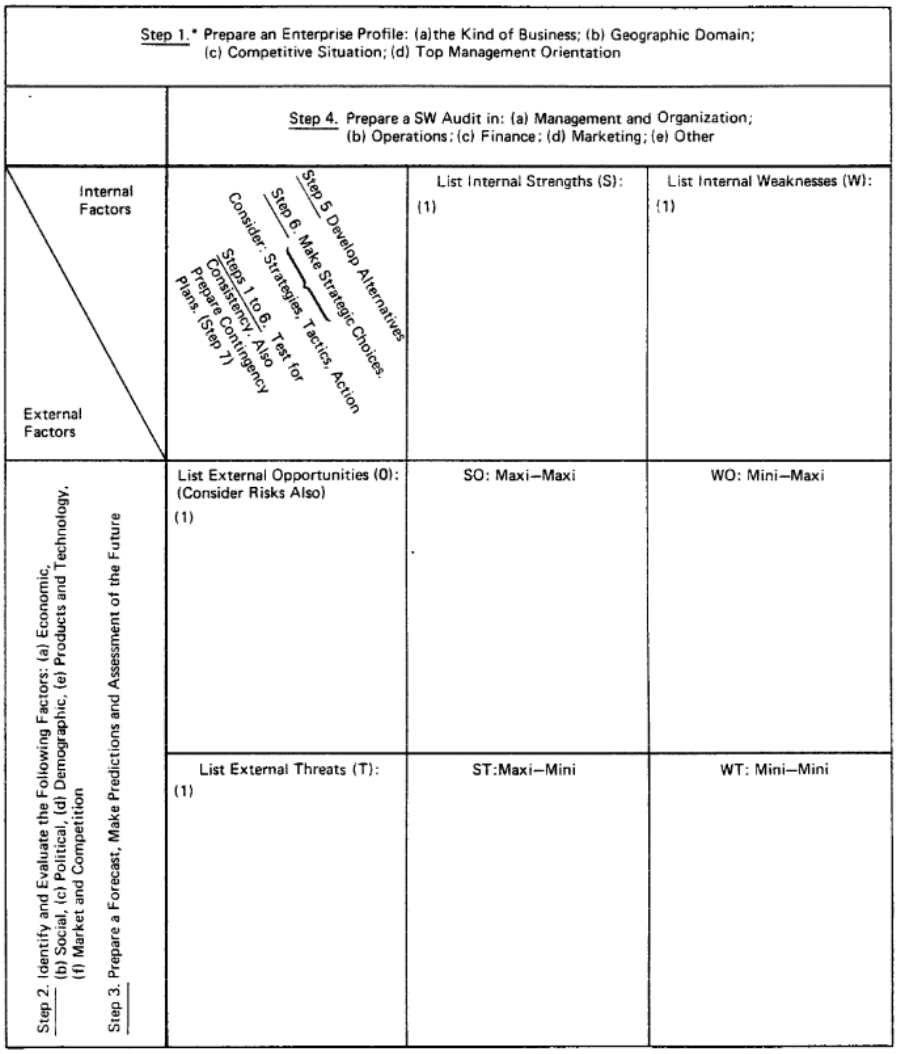
Situational Analysis is a study anchored by the notable practice of executing a SWOT analysis, evaluating the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of an institution. Weihrich's (1982) matrix of analysis known as the TOWS matrix allowed for a systematic method of identifying relationships between factors and basing strategies on them. The analysis facilitates matching the external threats and opportunities with the internal weaknesses and strengths of the organization.

Weihrich (1982) outlines the following 7 stages of analysis to formalize the TOWS Matrix:

- Preparation of the enterprise profile
- Identification of the present external environment
- Preparation of a forecast with predictions of the future environment
- Preparation of a resource audit with emphasis on the company's internal weaknesses and strengths
- Development of alternative strategies, tactics and other actions
- Evaluation and choice of strategies
- Preparation of contingency plans

Figure 4

Process of institutional strategy and the TOWS analysis



Weihrich, H. (1982). The TOWS matrix – A tool for situational analysis. Long Range Planning, 15(2), 54-66.

Project Design

Weihrich (1982) outlines a systematized analysis of an institutions external opportunities and threats matched alongside the internal strengths and opportunities of the organization. In development of this strategic plan, sample data from a comprehensive four-year postsecondary institution was utilized to provide the data for analysis.

The following data was collected to showcase varying data sets that highlighted institutional stakeholders, policies, as well as internal and external data:

Artifact A: Institutional stakeholder surveys: addresses campus culture, safety, and overall satisfaction with the institution

Artifact B: Institutional academic catalog: addresses institutional course offerings, policies, and availability of academic resources

Artifact C: Historical institutional strategic planning guides: addresses institutional mission, vision, goals, and resources

Artifact D: Institutional enrollment data: addresses geography, competitors, and new markets

Weihrich (1982) urges researchers to identify threats and opportunities within the following categories, including: economic, social, political and demographic factors, products and services, technology, markets, and competition. Conversely, within strengths and weaknesses, the following factors are considered: management and organization, operations, finance, marketing, and other critical factors to the institution.

The TOWS Matrix (1982) systematically identifies relationships between these elements and developing preliminary decision-making processes. This strategy falls in line with a long-standing approach by universities to engage in market-oriented studies to better attract students. The strategic plan allows for a targeted and long-term analysis on how best to position the university and its resources in meeting its goals of supporting first-generation immigrant college students of color.

Limitations

The limitations of this study include providing a strategic plan based upon data from a single comprehensive four-year university. The strategic plan outlined here cannot serve as a plan for all four-year institutions or two-year institutions. The plan thus provides an example of how a

four-year institution may address access and choice under Perna's (2006) framework for the segmented population of first-generation immigrant students of color.

This study also focuses intentionally upon a sub-population of first-generation students and does not serve as a universal guide for supporting all first-generation students, or all college-going students at-large. This is by design, as much of the prevailing data lumps together first-generation immigrant students of color into large pan-ethnic and pan-national identities. The study does not include live or recorded interview data, limiting the ability to gather qualitative lived experience narratives from active participants within the study.

This study is also limited in scope as the strategic plan serves as a basis for recommendations to be applied. The recommendations will not outline a comprehensive action plan or progression of changes to policy.

Finally, this study serves as an opportunity to advance the understanding of how first-generation immigrant students of color navigate their postsecondary aspirations. The study will provide qualitative data from the shared lived experiences of three first-generation and immigrant college students of color that contributes to the scholarly discourse surrounding student success and access for first-generation and immigrant college students of color.

Data Analysis

Employing the analysis protocol for the TOWS Matrix, the findings for each of the initial steps of the analysis are below, comprising a review of the data sets:

Figure 5

Inputs for strategic planning

Step 1 – Enterprise Profile

- Postsecondary education, four-year research comprehensive institution
- Geographic domain: Midwest
- Competitive situation: Enrollment among competing state, regional, and national peer institutions
- Institutional goals: Growth in enrollment, national academic prestige, and securing elite faculty talent

Step 2 – Identify & Evaluate

- Tuition dependency totals 85%, with recent increase in total institutional assets
- Increase in the enrollment of students of color, adjusting campus culture
- Historical legacy as predominantly white institution (PWI)
- Percentage of first-generation immigrant students of color, change in enrollment over time, retention, and grad rate of first-generation students of color
- Identifying target population through internal database: First-generation, domestic high school, students of color, parent birthplace
- Products & Technology: Customer relationship management software, College Board SEARCH, Data sourcing (Ruffalo Noel Levitz – enrollment and fundraising management)
- Market & Competition: Two-year institutions, private two-year non-profit 69%; private four-year institutions 72%; private two-year for-profit 70%

Step 3 - Forecast

- Undergraduate enrollment growth needed to support increase in faculty and staff salary increases to meet national salary rates
- Overall decline in state and national HS graduates
- Key market areas: Florida, Texas, and California
- Institutional interest to expand international enrollment to support overall growth in enrollment
- Enrollment of the target population will increase over the upcoming years

Step 4 - Strengths/Weaknesses Audit
▪ Management & Organization - new leadership; multiple campuses; unified strategic plan and goals; institutional goal for improving hiring of faculty and staff talent ▪ Operations: Large comprehensive university with significant resources ▪ Finance: increase in operation cost ▪ National brand recognition and academic reputation
Step 5 - Alternatives
▪ Alternative scholarship streams or models ▪ Consider strategic placement of personnel in high concentration location areas; regional employees ▪ Develop agreements with local and regional community-based organizations that promote engagement, access, and thus choice ▪ Increased strategic marketing ▪ Develop pre-college programs through institutional resources and campus partners that support preparedness
Step 6 - Strategic Choices, Action Items
▪ Identify and analyze population, markets, and historical data ▪ Outline plan for personnel to engage various key markets (K-12, CBOs) ▪ Outline an annual strategic communication plan ▪ Engage campus partners to promote the engagement of this population with various and diverse organizations and opportunities ▪ Student scholarship opportunities campaign alongside advancement
Step 7 - Prepare Contingency Plans
▪ Low-cost contingency plans in marketing & communication ▪ Volume - strategic name-buys or method for student identification ▪ Time - plan that allows for multi-year approach

The following represents the TOWS Matrix (1982), identifying external factors that represent threats and opportunities, followed by internal factors that represent strengths and weaknesses of the institution derived from the acquired data sets:

Figure 6

TOWS - Operational analysis

Threats
▪ Looming national enrollment cliff
▪ Decline in HS grads (state, regional, and national)
▪ increased competition from peer/aspirant institutions
▪ Fractured community partnerships w/ K-12, CBOs, Alumni Network, and Businesses
▪ Potential impact to course enrollment, faculty loads, curricular programs

Opportunities
▪ Meeting/Exceeding institutional enrollment goals
▪ Expanding support programs, student organizations, curricular programs, facilities
▪ Forging new stakeholder partnerships (K-12, CBO, Alumni, Businesses
▪ Global reach and expansion into new markets
▪ Increased campus diversity (students, faculty, and staff)

Weaknesses
▪ Numerous stakeholders
▪ Low historical enrollment of this population
▪ Established support programs/organizations for this population
▪ Limited scholarship resources
▪ Community networks within those populations (local/regional/national/global)
▪ Pre-college programming
▪ Limited alumni base for this population

Strengths
▪ Academic reputation; Comprehensive curriculum; Admission policy; Institutional values
▪ Geographic location/diversity; Global/Alumni network
▪ Community stakeholder partnerships (K-12, businesses, CBO's, State/Local Gov't)
▪ State scholarship opportunity; Alumni giving; Personnel [students, faculty, and staff]

Finally, Weihrich (1982) offers to practitioners four conceptually distinct strategies that operationalize action based upon the threats, opportunities, weaknesses, and strengths identified. As this study seeks to spur access and choice among first-generation students of color at four-year postsecondary institutions, the utilization of both the Strengths/Threats (maxi-mini) strategy as well as the Strengths/Opportunities (maxi-maxi) strategy (Weihrich, 1982).

The maxi-mini strategy seeks to maximize the institutions strengths while minimizing threats, utilizing strengths as a diver for managing potential threats to the institution. The maxi-maxi strategy offers institutions the ability to maximize on both strengths and opportunities. Incorporating each strategy, Weihrich (1982) found that, "if [institutions] have weaknesses, they will strive to overcome them, making them strengths. If they face threats, they will cope with them so that they can focus on opportunities" (p.61). Certainly ambitious, employing these strategies (see Fig. 7) offer an institution an aggressive approach in the face of the current decline of high school graduates, and changing demographics within the nation.

Figure 7

Strategies, tactics and actions

SO
▪ Intentional outreach/communication [values, academic reputation, location, global network, comprehensive curriculum, partnerships, admissions policy]
▪ Intentional programming [family inclusive, diversity and representation, various stakeholders]
▪ Leverage scholarship and alumni giving opportunities
▪ Strategic use and placement of university and departmental personnel [campus, community, state, regional, national]
▪ Leverage admissions policy to meet demographic and economic characteristics of the community/state

ST
▪ Leverage admissions policy to market accessibility of university/admissions
▪ Leverage community stakeholder partnerships to promote accessibility, institutional values, and recruitment goals
▪ Promote visit and engagement opportunities for high percentage regions, K-12 programs, and CBOs
▪ Grow alumni network to promote diversity of engaged network
▪ Leverage personnel and resources to develop strategic model for communicating to the population in consideration of Perna's conceptual framework

Application

The following research questions guided this study and strategic plan development: RQ1: How can we develop a strategic plan supporting the postsecondary access and selection of 4-year research universities for FGIS of color based on Perna's (2006) Framework for College Choice? RQ2: Can situational analysis (SWOT) provide useful data that address Perna's (2006) four contextual layers of college choice for first-generation immigrant student of color? Each question was addressed and I was able to answer each through the systematic analysis of data within the situational analysis method. Below, are my recommendations and conclusions based on the analysis derived from the application of the TOWS Matrix.

Recommendations

Perna (2006) found that, "College choice must continue to be addressed in research, policy, and practice" (p. 105). This study allows for research to help inform practice supporting first-generation and immigrant students of color through the strengths and resources of a sample four-year university. Continuing with the four contextual layers of Perna's model as the principal framework for contextualizing this analysis specifically for first-generation immigrant students of color, I was able to draw findings from the TOWS analysis that support access and choice for our target population:

Figure 8

Contextual recommendations

Habitus - Layer 1
▪ Outline plan for personnel to engage various key markets (K-12, CBOs)
▪ Outline an annual strategic communication plan
▪ Identify and analyze population, markets, and historical data
▪ Grow alumni network to promote diversity of engaged network

School | Community - Layer 2
▪ Leverage community stakeholder partnerships to promote accessibility, institutional values, and recruitment goals
▪ Promote visit and engagement opportunities for high percentage regions, K-12 programs, and CBOs
▪ Strategic use and placement of university and departmental personnel [campus, community, state, regional, national]

Higher Ed - Layer 3
▪ Leverage admissions policy to market accessibility of university/admissions
▪ Promote visit and engagement opportunities for high percentage regions, K-12 programs, and CBOs
▪ Strategic use and placement of university and departmental personnel [campus, community, state, regional, national]
▪ Alternative scholarship streams and models

Social, Economic & Policy - Layer 4
▪ Leverage admissions policy to market accessibility of university/admissions
▪ Leverage scholarship and alumni giving opportunities
▪ Alternative scholarship streams and models
▪ Leverage community stakeholder partnerships to promote accessibility, institutional values, and recruitment goals
▪ Leverage institutional values to promote streams of support within campus partners

Postsecondary decision-making for this population is complex, but research has shown that the first-generation and immigrant characteristics present themes for how these students navigate this phenomenon, including, but not limited to: family networking, family background, pre-dispositions and habitus, and the various social motivators between home, school, postsecondary institution, and society.

Although the process for becoming predisposed toward attending or pursuing a four-year postsecondary degree is complex and varies across racial/ethnic and social class groupings, institutions are capable of playing a critical role in the development of a first-generation immigrant students of color. This strategic plan outlines a multipronged approach at addressing each of Perna's (2006) contextual layers, given the nuanced experiences of students and their families, outlined earlier. Given the scale of the grouping, the outlined recommendations as part of this strategic plan offer support at the given contextual layer, engaging students and families in this process. Each set of recommendations seeks to address the prevailing and researched barriers reported by students and their families, including, but not limited to: parental involvement, structural supports, K-12 school resources, institutional trust, academic achievement, social and/or cultural networks, policies, and finally, cultural and/or social capital.

Contextual Layers

Layer 1: The above recommendations within Perna's first contextual layer of the student's habitus provide the institution the vantage of interfering or intruding into cultural, racial/ethnic, and social spaces that allow for dialogue with students and their families as they navigate conversations. The sample enrollment data (Artifact D) demonstrated a need to be intentional about identifying key geographic areas for engagement, allowing an institution to segment communication to prospective students and their families that attempts to bridge gaps in social and cultural capital. This strategic approach also allows first-generation immigrant students and families of color to build trust within the institution via personnel who reflect the target group in race, ethnicity, or immigrant status. An institution thus finds space within the student's habitus through the strategic placement of personnel, alumni, and communication that reflect cultural and social understanding of a student's belief system and values based on their specified background.

Layer 2: For the school and community contextual layer, the recommendations outlined for this layer reflect understanding of the social structures and resources that advance or hinder student college choice for first-generation immigrant college students of color. Similar to Layer 1, these recommendations posit institutional action into a space that is not inherently their own. For all schools and communities that comprise this target population, it is imperative that four-year institutions position themselves as accessible, promoting values of increased diversity and inclusion that embraces first-generation immigrant students of color directly to the institution. Institutions may consider my recommendations here as pathways to supplementing the availability or types of resources within a given school or community that the institution can provide. As an example, if a school or community is hindered from visiting the institution due to financial constraints, the institution can develop visit or engagement opportunities virtually or on-campus, courtesy of the institution. In addition, university personnel can be leveraged to serve as a structural support for students and families within a given school or community, interfering with barriers at that layer.

Layer 3: At the institutional level, policy and practice are at the forefront of the recommendations outlined here. Perna (2006) highlighted that, "the attributes and characteristics of higher education institutions also influence student college choice" (p.118). Perna goes on to detail the affinity for students to engage or select an institution based on their perceived alignment with the characteristics and attributes that are unique to an institution. The sample survey data (Artifact A) indicated responses from current students that their selection in the institution was in part due to a sense of belonging and being sought out, culminating in an impression of being at home. Ultimately, institutions that are seeking out first-generation immigrant students of color are going beyond the scope of the traditional student, and are considering inclusivity that is representative of the changing national landscape. At this layer, an institution may consider leveraging varying scholarship streams to demonstrate a practice of increased inclusivity. For first-generation immigrant students of color who are coming from predominantly low-income homes and communities, the ability of a four-year institution marketing themselves as accessible

and demystifying the availability of the institution for this population is a powerful construct for students and families that may historically believe they may not have the availability of a seat at the institution.

Layer 4: For the outermost layer, considering social, economic, and policy context, the recommendations outlined here are designed for institutional leadership to promote and advocate the vision and institutional benefit in the suggested action items. As this layer is systemic in nature, it necessitates buy-in from various stakeholders within and around the institution to interfere with systemic barriers that may impact access and choice. Perna (2006) referenced the ability for policy to "signal" to elementary and secondary schools and their communities about the availability of an institution based on admissions policies, scholarship opportunities, appropriations to the institution, engagement within the elementary and secondary education (p.117). For marginalized communities, especially first-generation immigrant students of color and their families, the "signals" that they interpret that specifically identify them and their aims at postsecondary education and social mobility as a result allow for a profound statement based on their historical disregard.

Conclusions

According to Perna (2006), "Experts frequently assert that college attendance is essential to the nation's social progress and economic prosperity" (p.103). For first-generation immigrant students of color, the gaps in scholarly attention and their subsequent access and choice into four-year postsecondary institutions suggest that existing approaches are inadequate. For four-year institutions that are squarely within an unprecedented decline in high school graduates, first-generation immigrant students of color offer a substantial opportunity. In support of their promise and potential, North (2009), stated, "They (first-generation immigrants of color) have enough disadvantages (educational and economic) to want to change their lives, but they have the more-than-compensating advantage of the assertiveness to do something about their situation" (p.1).

This proposed study allows for the practice of research to help inform methods for supporting first-generation and immigrant students of color in policy and practice. Archer (2007) wrote, "The autonomous reflexive does not merely deliberate, he also determines what he will do. In dedicating oneself to a cluster of concerns, one takes responsibility for them and makes them one's own" (Archer, 2007, p. 87). I am reminded of Apple's (2004) call for a continuous and constructive effort in the face of such challenges. In dedicating myself to this study and its aims, I am committed to working in opposition of the gaps in access and choice of four-year institutions for first-generation immigrant students of color and their families. Postsecondary decision-making for this population is complex, but institutions have an ability to support this population in navigating this phenomenon.

I am hopeful that this study will offer an opportunity to enhance the relationship between four-year postsecondary institutions and first-generation immigrant students of color. As many of these students are navigating this phenomenon from low-income and marginalized families, it is critical to develop intentional understanding, analysis, and modes of support that challenge the historically disparate and reproductive outcomes of this cohort. The literature validates these interactions and experiences as a means for collective knowledge, support, and postsecondary access (Acevedo, 2021; Griffin et al., 2012; Hill & Torres, 2010; Jordan, 2020; Lauderdale & Heckman, 2017; Mwangi, 2014; North, 2009). For future studies, the opportunity to leverage the power of human voice or personal narratives would offer a powerful qualitative contribution towards this phenomenon. Additional research should further inform the attitudes and perceptions of the larger population of first-generation and immigrant college students of color, better understanding their complexities in navigating postsecondary aspirations for both the students and their prospective institutions.

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Tables

Table 1. Socio-economic status by education and time in the United States

Table 28. Socio-Economic Status by Education and Time in the United States

	Adults 18+					Households	
	Average Total Income	Poverty	In or Near Poverty	Without Health Insurance	Only English or Speaks It Very Well	Welfare Use	Home Ownership
All Education Levels							
Natives	$36,073	11.8%	28.7%	15.5%	98.6%	22.8%	67.5%
Immigrants	$29,152	18.9%	42.4%	34.4%	46.9%	36.3%	52.6%
Recent Immigrants ≤ 5 Yrs.	$20,463	28.3%	50.9%	44.3%	34.8%	30.6%	16.2%
Immigrants in U.S. 20 Yrs.	$31,214	17.7%	41.7%	34.3%	46.8%	42.5%	52.4%
Less than High School							
Natives	$13,746	28.6%	57.8%	22.5%	95.4%	48.1%	54.6%
Immigrants	$14,878	31.7%	66.0%	49.1%	18.9%	58.8%	44.0%
Recent Immigrants ≤ 5 Yrs.	$10,461	41.3%	70.9%	60.9%	11.8%	55.8%	12.5%
Immigrants in U.S. 20 Yrs.	$16,605	30.0%	66.2%	47.6%	19.2%	63.2%	41.5%
High School Only							
Natives	$25,631	14.0%	35.8%	19.8%	98.7%	28.2%	65.8%
Immigrants	$20,449	20.0%	46.7%	40.7%	42.2%	41.8%	48.4%
Recent Immigrants ≤ 5 Yrs.	$14,593	30.9%	57.8%	56.9%	24.3%	42.9%	13.6%
Immigrants in U.S. 20 Yrs.	$21,658	19.1%	45.1%	39.3%	43.6%	49.2%	47.5%
Some College							
Native	$30,662	10.7%	27.2%	16.0%	99.0%	23.7%	64.3%
Immigrant	$26,697	13.1%	33.0%	28.4%	63.5%	29.8%	55.5%
Recent Immigrants ≤ 5 Yrs.	$17,071	27.3%	50.3%	38.4%	46.2%	26.4%	19.8%
Immigrants in U.S. 20 Yrs.	$26,708	11.5%	31.6%	30.3%	64.5%	35.6%	54.7%
Bachelor's or More							
Native	$61,851	4.2%	11.5%	7.6%	99.3%	8.8%	76.6%
Immigrant	$55,534	7.4%	18.2%	15.8%	72.7%	16.3%	61.4%
Recent Immigrants ≤ 5 Yrs	$34,123	17.1%	31.1%	25.8%	58.9%	14.4%	17.5%
Immigrants in U.S. 20 Yrs.	$62,456	6.4%	10.4%	16.3%	73.1%	21.0%	67.1%

Source: Except for language and home ownership, all figures are from Center for Immigration Studies analysis of the March 2011 Current Population Survey (CPS) public-use file. Home ownership and language skills are based on Center for Immigration Studies analysis of the 2010 American Community Survey (ACS) public-use file. Poverty, income, and health insurance figures are for adults only. Welfare use and home ownership are based on the nativity of the household head. See Table 12 for a list of welfare programs.

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Table 2. Multi-generational Mexican-American socioeconomic attainment data

Table 2. Levels of Academic Achievement Over Three Mexican-American Generations

Variable	Generation 2	Generation 3	Generation 4
Years of Education	13.1	13.1	12.4
High School Graduate	84 %	87 %	73 %
College Graduate	13 %	14 %	6 %

Source: Edward E. Telles and Vilma Ortiz, *Generations of Exclusion: Mexican Americans, Assimilation, and Race*, Russell Sage Foundation, New York, 2008, Table 5-2. Data are based on surveys taken in 2000 of several generations of U.S.-resident-descendants of immigrants identified in the 1965 Mexican American Study Project, conducted by UCLA.

Note: In this Table and in Tables 3 and 4 the second generation are the children of immigrants, the third generation are the grandchildren, and the fourth generation consists of great-grandchildren.

Table 3. Flat Earnings over Three Generations of Descendants of Mexican Immigrants (in 2000 dollars)

Variable	Generation 2	Generation 3	Generation 4
Personal Earnings	$36,343	$37,615	$30,559
Family Income	$53,174	$53,634	$43,891
Percent Below Poverty[1]	17%	14%	21 %

Table 4. Home Ownership over Three Generations of Descendants of Mexican Immigrants

Variable	Generation 2	Generation 3	Generation 4
Owns Own Home	59 %	58 %	49 %
Owns more than One Home	14 %	12 %	10 %
Net Worth*	$48,424	$44,617	$38,364

Source: Edward E. Telles and Vilma Ortiz, *Generations of Exclusion: Mexican Americans, Assimilation, and Race*, Russell Sage Foundation, New York, 2008, Table 6-7. Data are based on surveys taken in 2000 of several generations of U.S.-resident-descendants of immigrants identified in the 1965 Mexican American Study Project, conducted by UCLA.

* According to the cited table, net worth is based on equity in home(s) and financial assets minus debts.

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Table 3. Educational attainment by nativity and parental nativity for the population aged 25 and older: 2007 to 2016

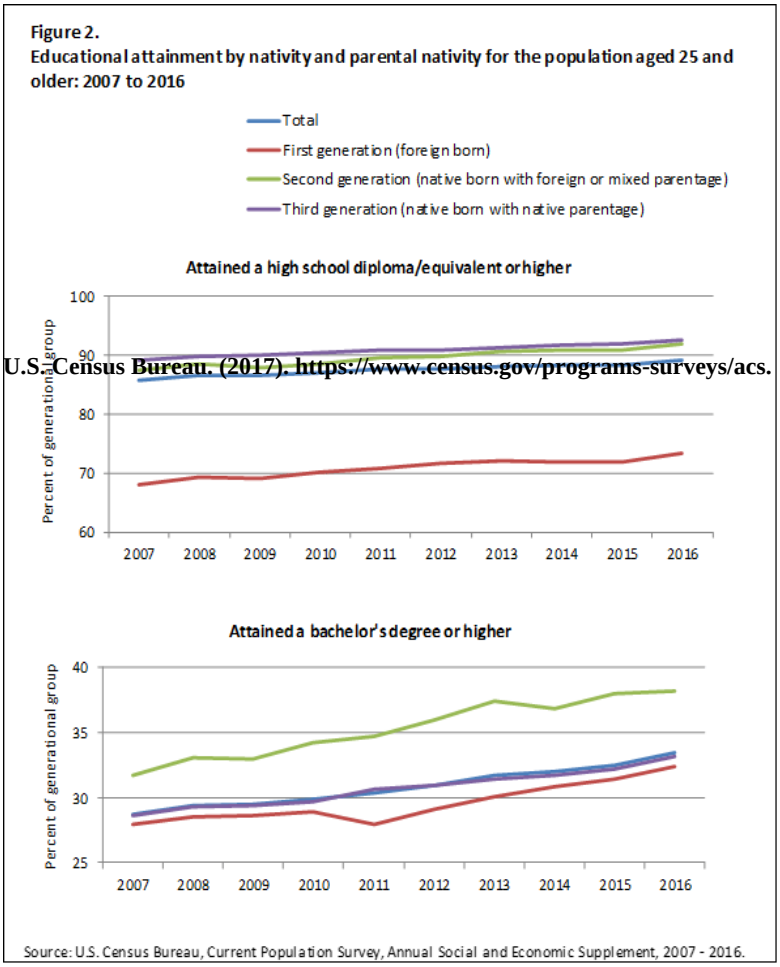

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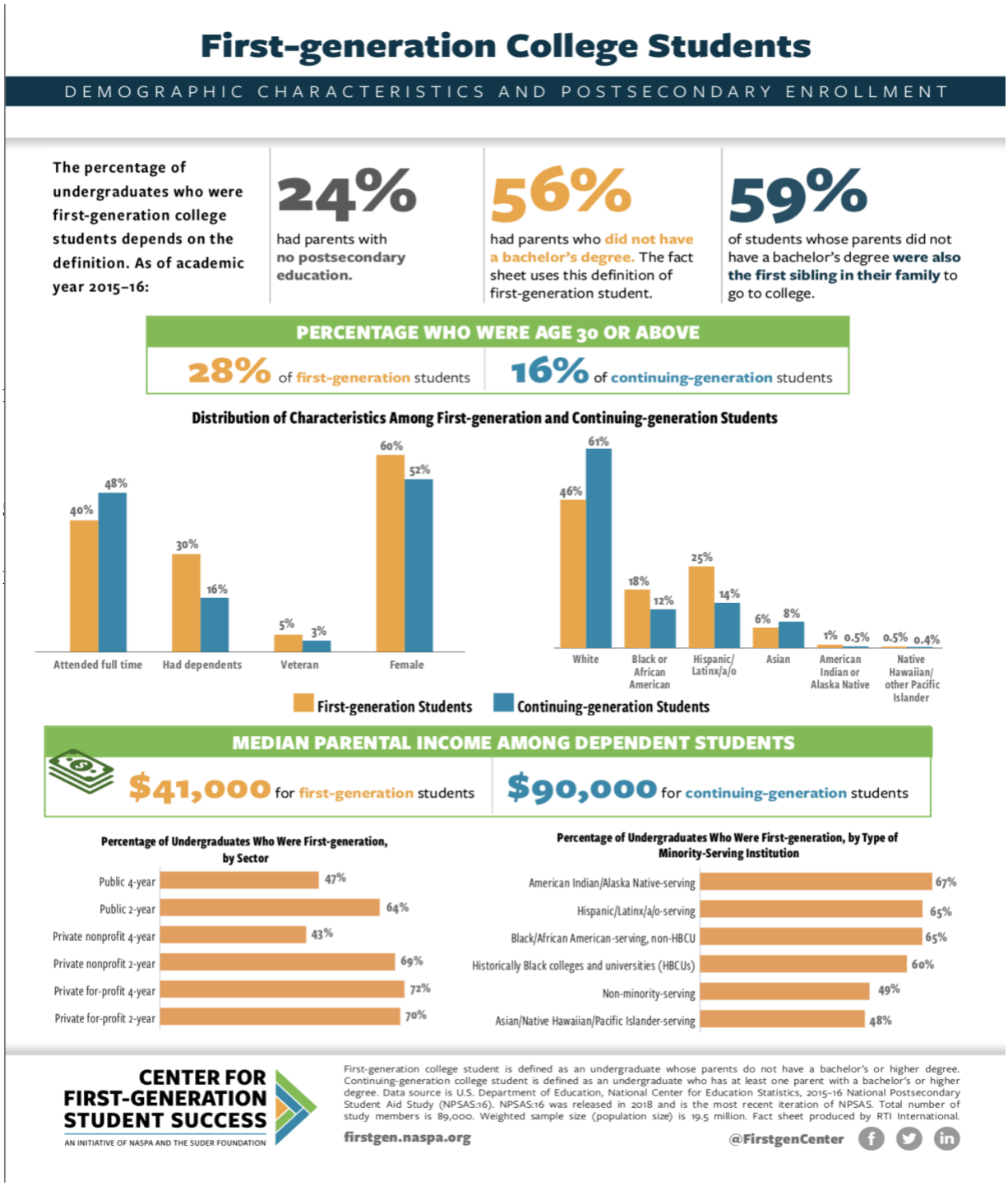
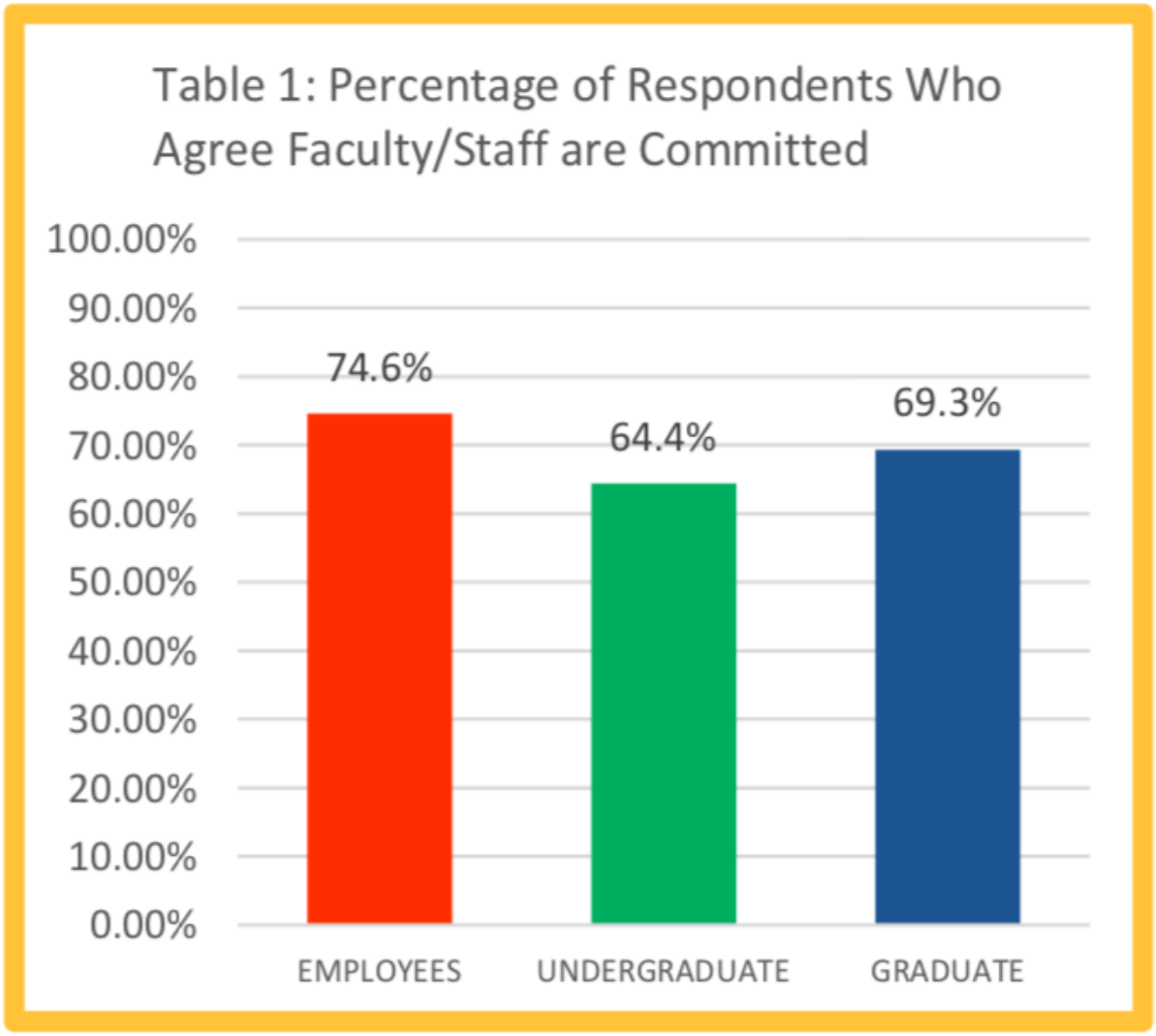
Table 4. Demographic characteristics and postsecondary enrollment for first-generation college students



Appendix

Artifact A: Sample - Institutional stakeholder surveys



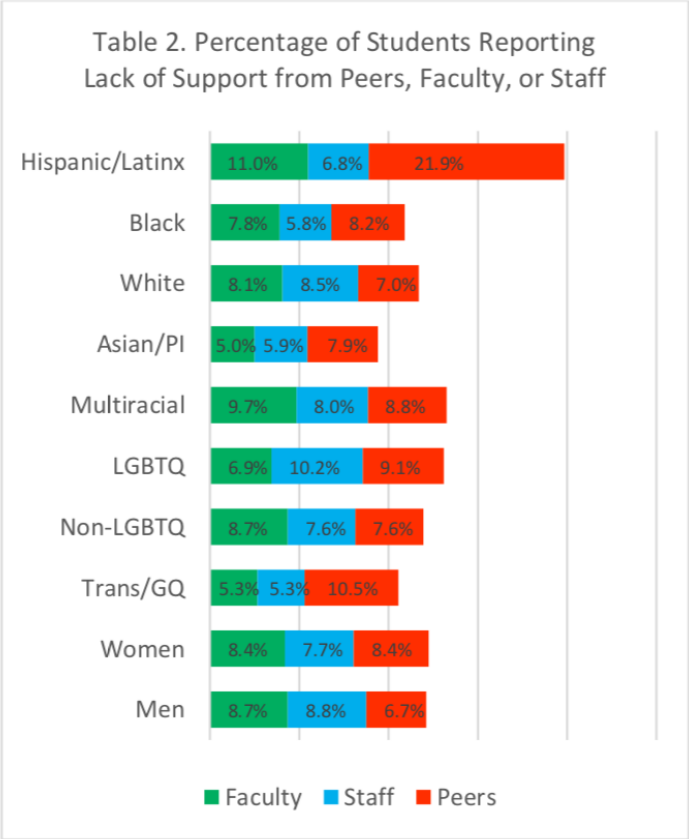


Table 2. Percentage of Students Reporting Lack of Support from Peers, Faculty, or Staff
Hispanic/Latinx
11.0%
6.8%
21.9%
Black
7.8%
5.8%
8.2%
White
8.1%
8.5%
7.0%
Asian/PI
5.0%
5.9%
7.9%
Multiracial
9.7%
8.0%
8.8%
LGBTQ
6.9%
10.2%
9.1%
Non-LGBTQ
8.7%
7.6%
7.6%
Trans/GQ
5.3%
5.3%
10.5%
Women
8.4%
7.7%
8.4%
Men
8.7%
8.8%
6.7%
Faculty
Staff
Peers

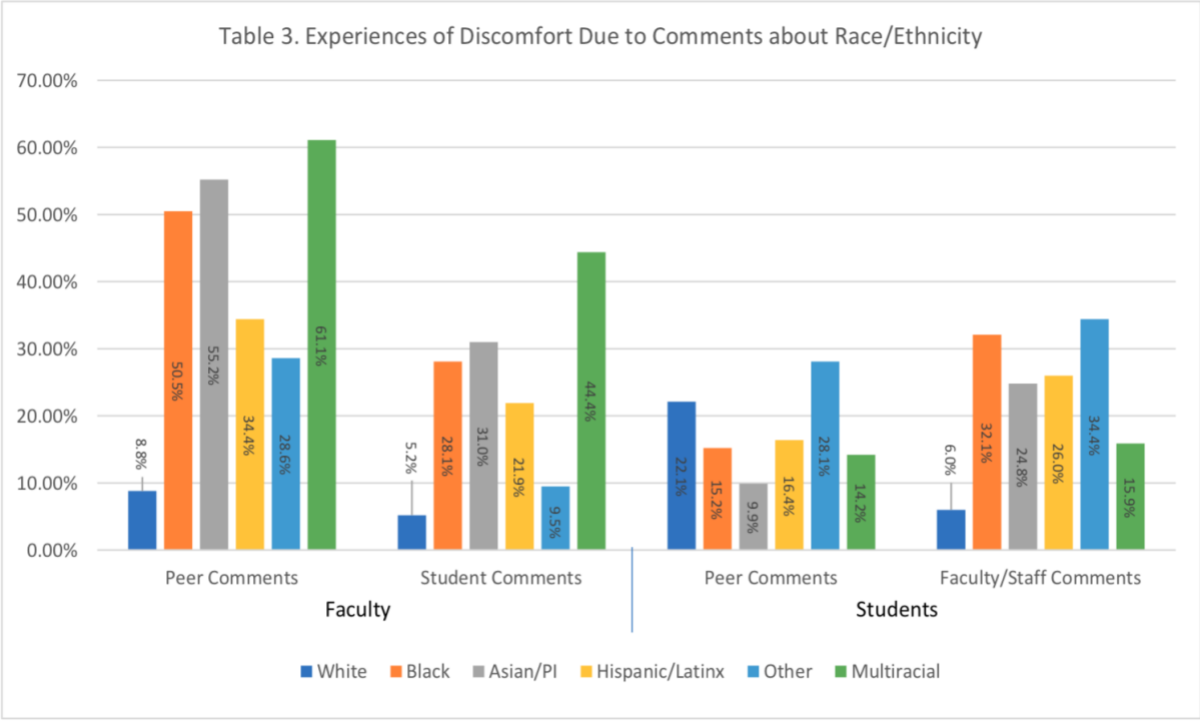


Table 3. Experiences of Discomfort Due to Comments about Race/Ethnicity
70.00%
60.00%
50.00%
40.00%
30.00%
20.00%
10.00%
0.00%
8.8%
50.5%
55.2%
34.4%
28.6%
61.1%
5.2%
28.1%
31.0%
21.9%
9.5%
44.4%
22.1%
15.2%
9.9%
16.4%
28.1%
14.2%
6.0%
32.1%
24.8%
26.0%
34.4%
15.9%
Peer Comments
Student Comments
Peer Comments
Faculty/Staff Comments
Faculty
Students
White
Black
Asian/PI
Hispanic/Latinx
Other
Multiracial

Artifact B: Sample - Institutional academic catalog:

Academic Programs

- Undergraduate Degrees
- Graduate Degrees
- Course Offerings
- Special Programs
- Artist and Lecture Series and Lectureships
- Board of Regents' Academic Policy
- Undergraduate Degree Codes
- Undergraduate Minor Codes
- Programs of Study

Artifact C: Sample - Historical institutional strategic planning guides:

GOALS

- **Stronger representation:** Create stronger mechanisms for representation
- **Resource gathering:** Identify how to most effectively hear feedback or suggestions from staff, doing so on a regular basis
- **Advocacy and impact:** Impact the greater good for staff through resolutions, amendments, and strategic initiatives
- **Communication:** Increase information sharing and resources
- **Strategic plan implementation:** Successfully implement the items drawn out in this working document

Artifact D: Sample - Institutional enrollment data:

Trend Data: Fall Enrollment

Enrollment by Race - Spreadsheet View

	Am Indian	Asian	Black	Hispanic	Nonres Alien	Pacific Ile
Fall 2021	221	1,611	5,485	2,759	1,520	39
Fall 2020	169	1,424	5,028	2,490	1,368	40
Fall 2019	119	1,344	4,239	2,179	1,599	36
Fall 2018	122	1,270	3,867	2,014	1,645	36
Fall 2017	105	1,219	3,772	1,877	1,641	35
Fall 2016	98	1,211	3,741	1,820	1,689	29
Fall 2015	97	1,214	3,703	1,767	1,704	35
Fall 2014	82	1,086	3,496	1,632	1,630	29
Fall 2013	99	962	3,319	1,439	1,597	28
Fall 2012	94	908	3,159	1,343	1,617	18
Fall 2011	110	863	2,931	1,192	1,613	14

Trend Data: Students, Admissions and Entering

Degree-Seeking New Freshman, Transfer, and Graduate Application Statistics
Fall Semesters

	New Freshman*			New Transfer*			New Graduate		
	Applied	Admitted	Enrolled	Applied	Admitted	Enrolled	Applied	Admitted	Enrolled
2021	36,561	25,907	7,045	3,195	2,189	923	2,439	2,248	1,158
2020	28,960	21,252	6,701	2,925	1,822	928	3,562	1,784	1,175
2019	24,501	18,272	6,132	1,946	1,344	724	3,893	1,817	1,123
2018	24,280	18,024	5,812	1,809	1,234	727	3,823	1,755	1,076
2017	17,907	13,236	4,917	2,098	1,285	703	3,960	1,632	1,046
2016	18,122	13,843	5,475	2,290	1,355	784	4,288	1,574	988
2015	17,429	13,480	5,624	2,732	1,613	1,046	4,575	1,758	1,074
2014	16,580	12,706	5,655	2,503	1,446	956	4,730	1,800	1,025
2013**	16,005	12,002	5,501	2,605	1,466	933	4,802	1,947	1,065
2012	16,169	12,326	5,725	2,697	1,508	902	4,884	1,834	1,034
2011	14,818	11,789	5,290	2,537	1,462	857	4,730	1,897	1,056