2017

Los Recién Llegados: Construyendo Collaborative Relationships between Recently Arrived Salvadoran Parents and Educators in the Nation's Capital

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LOS RECIÉN LLEGADOS: CONSTRUYENDO COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN RECENTLY ARRIVED SALVADORAN PARENTS AND EDUCATORS IN THE NATION'S CAPITAL

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

PROGRAM IN CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

BY

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CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

MAY 2017

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Por medio de este logro académico, quiero reconocer muy especialmente a todas las personas que me han apoyado durante toda esta trayectoria. Y quiero comenzar rindiéndole un tributo a las mujeres que han impactado mi vida, que me han inspirado a ser la mujer que soy, y que me han motivado a alcanzar todas mis metas educativas. Pero sobre todo, para celebrarlas y agradecerles por todo lo que han hecho ya que han dejado un legado qué valió la pena.

Comenzando por mi abue, Tanchito, la mamá de mi mamá, que aunque no tuvo una educación formal, ella crió a sus dos hijas sola, sin ningún hombre a su lado, y las sacó adelante con mucha dignidad y respeto hacia sí misma. Mi abue siempre apoyó a mi mamá y tia Delmi en todo para que siguieran sus metas educacionales y se prepararan para sus futuros. Los sacrificios de mi abue fueron muchos, desde vendiendo dulces hechos por ella en la plaza de El Sauce, La Unión, hasta también cuidarnos a mis hermanos y a mí cuando mis papás estaban trabajando. ¡Gracias abue!

Mi abuelita Celia, la mamá de mi papá, fue también una mujer admirable, no solamente porque fue una maestra, como yo, pero también por la decisión que tomó por su bienestar y la de sus hijos en divorciarse de mi abuelo en aquellos tiempos donde la mujer era mucho más juzgada que ahora por tomar esas decisiones. Mi abuelita Celia tuvo el valor de ser uno de los primeros divorcios en El Salvador y criar a sus hijos,

sin ningún hombre a su lado, y los sacó adelante con mucha dignidad y respeto hacia sí misma. ¡Gracias abuelita!

Mi mami, como le digo desde chiquita, te admiro porque siempre has sido una mujer que nunca se ha dado por vencida y que ha enfrentado los retos más difíciles con la frente en alto y una sonrisa. Mami, gracias por ser una mujer que cuando hay problemas que se ven que no tienen solución, tú siempre estás dispuesta a encontrar una forma diferente para resolverlos. Y aunque hay problemas, tú todavía tienes el tiempo de servir a los demás y ofrecer tú apoyo a otros. Tú amor por servir a los demás en todos los aspectos, incluyendo estando activa políticamente, y por siempre pelear por los oprimidos y los más necesitados sin esperar nada a cambio, es admirable. Yo siempre recuerdo tú lema "siempre en todo lo mejor, mi reina," en todo lo que hago. ¡Gracias mami!

Mi hermana, Tifa, que aunque ya es toda una gran mujer, siempre llamaré, mi niña preciosa. Tifa, gracias porque siempre me has enseñado a ser independiente y diferente. Tú siempre has seguido lo que quieres hacer y lo has logrado. Tifa, gracias por ser mi mejor amiga y mi inspiración a ser auténtica y sin pedir disculpas. Tú amor por conocer el mundo, aprender, y dialogar con personas de diferentes puntos de vista es notable. Tú siempre me has retado a considerar diferentes perspectivas. Como también quiero agradecerte muchisimo por ser mi editora durante todos estos años y por todo tú tiempo que me has dedicado sin esperar nada a cambio. Muchas gracias por siempre estar disponible para apoyarme con tanto cariño, paciencia, y respeto. ¡Gracias Tifa!

Mi papi, como también lo he llamado desde niña, fue un hombre que tomó el ejemplo de mi abuelita Celia y tomó el papel de apoyar a sus dos hermanas cuando mi abuelo ya no estaba con ellos. Y aunque fue criado en un tiempo mucho más machista

que el actual y lleno de muchas injusticias contra la mujer, mi papá fue un feminista. Siempre recordaré su consejo cuando me convertí en una adolescente y que me influyó significativamente al seleccionar mi pareja. Mi papi siempre me dijo "que las mujeres siempre deben de prepararse educacionalmente al mismo nivel que los hombres o hasta más arriba que ellos, porque si ellos se van y dejan a las mujeres solas y a veces con hijos, las mujeres pueden salir adelante sin necesidad de los hombres." Sus consejos siempre me han motivado a seguir mis metas y prepararme para sobresalir en cualquier circunstancia. Papi, muchisimas gracias por dejarme claro con su ejemplo, que aunque la vida sea difícil, hay que disfrutarla y no sufrirla. ¡Gracias papi!

Llegar a este punto no ha sido fácil, especialmente como una inmigrante en este país. Pero, gracias a todo el apoyo de varios miembros de familia, pudimos sobresalir. Y me queda claro, que llegar hasta acá se debe a muchos. Primeramente, la oportunidad de venir a este país fue gracias a la hermana mayor de mi papá, Roxana, con quien siempre estaré muy agradecida y también con su familia por toda su ayuda y hospitalidad que nos ofrecieron cuando estábamos recién llegados de El Salvador. Como también es importante reconocer la hospitalidad de una de las hermanas de mi mamá, mi tia Elsita, y de su familia por ayudarnos en la transición que estábamos viviendo cuando acabábamos de llegar a este país. Igualmente siempre estaré muy agradecida por todo el apoyo que recibimos de otros familiares y amigos que nos ayudaron cuando no sabíamos nada sobre la vida en los Estados Unidos. Al mismo tiempo, cuando nosotros ya estábamos aquí, en este país, quiero agradecer a mi tía Delmi por todo el apoyo que nos ha dado desde El Salvador. Gracias tía Delmi porque siempre ha estado pendiente por el bienestar de

nuestra familia. Y también, muchísimas gracias a mi tía Ana María quién siempre ha estado ahí apoyándonos, en las buenas y en las malas ¡Gracias familia!

Y ahora necesito agradecer con mucho cariño a mi comité de supervisión para este estudio. Gracias a estas 3 mujeres poderosas y admirables: Dr. Amy J. Heineke, Dra. Aurora Chang, y Dr. Sarah L. Cohen, pude finalizar este estudio exitosamente.

Dr. Amy J. Heineke, muchísimas gracias por haberme dado la oportunidad de tenerla como la líder de mi estudio. Le agradezco muchísimo su dedicación y apoyo constante hacia mi estudio. Su comunicación rápida y productiva fue admirable. Muchas gracias no solo por haber sido mi profesora en varias clases durante mi doctorado y haber sido la directora de mi comité, pero también por haberme dado el honor de colaborar con usted en la publicación de mi primer artículo académico. Siempre estaré muy agradecida con usted, Dr. Heineke, por toda su ayuda y por siempre creer en mi.

Dra. Aurora Chang, muchísimas gracias por haber impactado significativamente mi aprendizaje y desarrollo como mujerista, educadora, y escritora académica. Su clase durante mi doctorado, me hizo entender y confirmar mucho más la responsabilidad que tengo como Latina de expresar y hacer que mi voz se escuche. Usted me enseñó que mi identidad y experiencias son fundamentales en el campo educativo. Como también quiero agradecerle por darme la oportunidad de escribir un artículo académico con usted y por siempre tener metas altas para todos sus estudiantes. Muchas gracias por ser mi comadre, mentora, y colega. Sus enseñanzas siempre las llevaré conmigo y estarán presentes en mi futuro.

Dr. Sarah L. Cohen, Sarita, muchísimas gracias por haber sido parte de mi comité y por su linda amistad. Desde el primer día que la conocí supe que íbamos a ser más que

colegas enseñando la misma clase. Quiero que sepa que admiro mucho su trabajo, experiencias, y sobre todo su pasión por la educación bilingüe en este país. Gracias por celebrar la cultura Latina con tanto respeto como usted lo hace.

To Dr. Ann Marie Ryan, I want to thank you for all of your support throughout my doctorate. Since the first time I met you at an info session when I was just thinking about applying to the doctoral program at Loyola, you have always welcomed me with a smile. Thank you for always mentoring me and advocating for me to gain as many experiences as a doctoral student, graduate assistant, and adjunct professor. I am truly grateful.

To mi amiga súper especial, Dr. Kelly N. Ferguson, thank you for all of the smiles, laughs, and dreams. We dreamt together to get to this point and now we are finally here. Thank you for all of your support and for being an inspiration to our communities. Your genuine passion to serve is admirable. Our friendship will go beyond our doctorates.

Este estudio fue inspirado y dedicado a todos los inmigrantes Salvadoreños que vienen a este país a mejorar sus vidas. Agradezco a mis 6 participantes por haberme dado su tiempo y por haber compartido sus perspectivas sobre la educación que quieren para sus hijos. Estoy sumamente agradecida con ustedes y les prometo seguir representándolos con el respeto que se merecen. Prometo seguir colaborando con ustedes, trabajando juntos para mejorar la prosperidad de sus familias. Especialmente en esta nueva administración presidencial donde todos los Latinx inmigrantes nos sentimos asustados y preocupados por nuestros futuros.

También quiero agradecer al Sr. Abel Núñez de el Central American Resource Center, CARECEN por haberme referido con el Sr. Cesar E. Watts del Centro Nia quién me ayudó a conocer más a la comunidad de Washington, D.C. y que por su ayuda pude conocer a varios Salvadoreños. Les agradezco muchísimo su tiempo y atención.

Y quiero finalizar estos reconocimientos con un agradecimiento muy especial a mi compañero, amigo, y esposo, Fernando R. Colón. Es muy bonito saber que de los 20 años que he estado en este país, 15 de esos años los he pasado contigo. Te agradezco mucho porque en todos estos años, hemos cumplido **todas** nuestras metas educacionales. Desde que nos conocimos, siempre tuvimos nuestras propias metas y las hemos cumplido paso a paso juntos. Te agradezco por siempre apoyarme en todo lo que quiero hacer para prepararme intelectualmente. Como también, muchisimas gracias por todo el tiempo y respeto que me has dedicado como mi editor en este estudio tan importante y en otros proyectos durante todos estos años. Y no solo hemos cumplido todas nuestras metas educacionales, pero también hemos crecido y madurado juntos. Te agradezco por aceptar y celebrar todas mis etapas y continua evolución como mujer. Gracias por todas nuestras conversaciones intelectuales y por compartir conmigo nuestra pasión por la justicia social y por luchar contra las inequidades y desigualdades que existen en esta sociedad. Gracias por continuar dándome razones para admirarte. Y sobre todo ¡Gracias por caminar a mi lado y triunfar juntos!

También, agradezco a tus padres, mis suegros, Sra. Rafaela Rodríguez y Sr. Reynaldo Colón, por siempre apoyarme y celebrar mis éxitos, y a todos los demás miembros de tu bella familia que desde que los conocí me han recibido siempre con los brazos abiertos. ¡Los quiero a todos muchísimo!

DEDICATION

Yo dedico este estudio a mis 6 participantes,

a todos los inmigrantes Salvadoreños

que han vivido los muchos y diferentes retos de

ser recién llegados en los Estados Unidos,

y a mi mami y papi,

CARMEN E. ROMERO DE TAMAYO y ROLANDO A. TAMAYO MAYEN,

porque por ellos, he llegado hasta donde estoy.

I cling to my culture because it is my memory, and what is a poet
without memory? I cling to my culture because it is my skin,
because it is my heart, because it is my voice, because it breathes
my mother's mother's mother into me. My culture is the genesis and
the center of my writing, the most authentic space I have to write from.
I am blind without the lenses of my culture.

-Benjamin Alire Sáenz

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative study explored recently arrived Salvadoran parents in Washington, D.C. The primary purpose of this dissertation was to learn the perspectives that recently arrived Salvadoran parents have about their children's education to build and sustain collaborative relationships in schools. This study holds implications for schools, school administrators, teachers, teacher preparation programs, policy makers, and educational researchers serving recently arrived Salvadoran immigrants. Specifically, this dissertation calls for educators and stakeholders to directly learn from recently arrived Salvadoran parents to identify and address the unique needs of their children in U.S. schools.

This dissertation examined the following question: What perspectives do recently arrived Salvadoran parents have about their children's education? In addition, it addressed the following sub-questions: How do recently arrived Salvadoran parents define their role in their children's education? What educational practices do recently arrived Salvadoran parents describe doing at home to support their children's learning, development, and achievement?

The design methods, grounded in intersectionality theory, Latino/a families' epistemology, and *testimonios* methodology included: (1) semi-structured interviews of recently arrived Salvadoran parents; (2) field notes; and (3) data analysis using *reflexión.*

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Wrap their babies in the American flag,
feed them mashed hot dogs and apple pie,
name them Bill and Daisy,
buy them blonde dolls that blink blue
eyes or a football and tiny cleats
before the baby can even walk,
speak to them in thick English,
hallo, babee, hallo,
whisper in Spanish or Polish
when the babies sleep, whisper
in a dark parent bed, that dark
parent fear, "Will they like
our boy, our girl, our fine American
boy, our fine American girl?

-Pat Mora, *Immigrants*

In the United States (U.S.), Latin American[1] immigrants represent 53% of all immigrants (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010) and form a significant part of the unique diversity of this country. Latin American immigrants come to the U.S. for different reasons, such as seeking safety and better opportunities for themselves and their families. However, the process of immigrating to the U.S. often separates families across borders, and Latin American immigrant parents bring their children to the U.S. in different ways (Suárez-Orozco & Todorova, 2003). Some immigrant parents decide not to bring their children with them until they get to the U.S. first and then are able to send for their

[1]In this study, I use the terms Latin America/n in reference to the countries and people from Mexico, Central and South America including the Caribbean countries of Cuba, Dominican Republic, and the U.S. territory, Puerto Rico.

children to protect them from any hardships during their traveling journeys (Menjívar & Abrego, 2009). Other immigrant parents decide to bring their children with them because their children may be experiencing dangerous threats from gangs and drug violence (Moodie, 2010). Most recently, some parents send their children unaccompanied to the southern border of the U.S. due to dangerous and threatening environments in their home countries (De Avila, 2014; González-Barrera, Krogstad, & López, 2014). In fact, according to the Migration Policy Institute (2015), between October 1, 2013 and August 31, 2015, more than 102,000 unaccompanied children coming from Central America and Mexico were detained at the U.S.-Mexico border. Although unaccompanied children in the U.S. are eligible to attend public schools, the process of enrolling in U.S. schools is not always easy due to their unauthorized status, and they do not have access to all public services, such as health care and legal representation (Migration Policy Institute, 2015).

Overall, immigrants experience challenges during their journeys to the U.S., and also experience strenuous adversity once they get here. Regardless of whether immigrants come here documented (i.e., U.S. visa, work permit, U.S. residency, etc.) or undocumented, immigrants particularly from Latin American countries, experience xenophobia and anti-immigrant discrimination that makes life living in the U.S. challenging (Castro-Salazar & Bagley, 2010; Gurrola, Ayón & Moya Salas, 2016). For example, immigrants experience what Barrera (1976) refers to as internal colonialism. Barrera (1979) explained that internal colonialism is "a form of colonialism in which the dominant and subordinate populations are intermingled, so that there is no geographically distinct 'metropolis' separate from the 'colony'" (p. 194). Castro-Salazar and Bagley

(2010) argued that internal colonialism includes both a clear discrimination toward vulnerable populations (e.g., immigrants) and a not so obvious institutionalized racism.

Immigrants experience institutionalized racism in U.S. institutions such as schools (Castro-Salazar & Bagley, 2010; Gurrola et al., 2016). Institutionalized racism in schools affecting immigrants underscores a hegemony or domination of power by one group over another (Giroux, 1988; Sheets, 2005). People who belong to the mainstream European American culture dominates and influences school structures (Sheets, 2005). This mainstream European American culture is based on white, able-bodied, heterosexual, middle class, male-privileged norms, and the English language (Banks, 2008; Campbell, 2010; Enriquez, 2011; Sheets, 2005; Shevalier & McKenzie, 2012).

Due to school structures designed to reinforce patterns for a privileged group of people (Noguera & Wing, 2006) who belong to the mainstream European American culture, the training available for teachers serving linguistically and culturally diverse students is also impacted. Balderrama (2001) explained that this is because teaching preparation programs are based on ideologies that "perpetuate social and economic subordination, including institutionalized racism" (p. 266). These societal ideologies may influence the way teachers unconsciously deliver their instruction and the types of interactions they have with their students (Balderrama, 2001; Sheets, 2005). As a result, many immigrant students fail academically and their parents do not feel welcomed or supported in schools (Doucet, 2011; Olivos & Quintana de Valladolid, 2005).

Challenges for Recently Arrived Immigrant Students in U.S. Schools

The European American culture in U.S. schools poses challenges for recently arrived immigrant[2] students. For example, the valuing of the English language in schools over other languages demonstrates the emphasis on assimilating recently arrived immigrant students to the mainstream European American culture. Sheets (2005) explained that the process of assimilation consists of adopting the dominant culture to become accepted. Under this process of assimilation, it is assumed that if recently arrived immigrant students understand and speak English, their educational mobility opportunities will increase (Bacallao & Smokowki, 2013; Peguero, 2009). In other words, assimilation in schools sends the message to recently arrived immigrant students that they must learn the English language and abandon their home language to succeed in this country.

The process of assimilation for recently arrived immigrants associated with learning English is prevalent in U.S. schools because the English language has reached a hegemonic status (Shannon, 1995). In this country, the English language is assumed to be the official language, even though the U.S. Constitution does not indicate an official language (Wright, 2010). Shannon (1995) explained that the founding and official documents of the U.S. (e.g., the Declaration of Independence; the Bill of Rights, the Constitution) are in the English language and exclude the languages from other European colonists that were involved in the founding of this country.

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[2]For the purpose of this study, I refer to recently arrived immigrant/s (e.g., students and parents) for immigrants from Latin American countries that have been living in the U.S. for no longer than one year.

In addition to the above-mentioned challenge of assimilating to the mainstream European American culture in U.S. schools, recently arrived immigrant students are also affected by the challenges that their parents face. For example, Darden (2014) discussed that recently arrived immigrant students often have to move in and out of schools because their parents are searching for work in different locations. Moreover, recently arrived immigrant parents may have to work multiple jobs to survive financially (Suárez-Orozco & Todorova, 2003). Although these multiple jobs help their families financially, they also cause parents to be away from home and unavailable for school activities because they need to provide for their families (Suárez-Orozco & Todorova, 2003). Further, some recently arrived undocumented immigrant parents get deported and are separated from their families affecting their children's academic success in schools (Darden, 2014; Menjívar & Abrego, 2009).

Existing literature about the challenges that recently arrived immigrant students from Latin America encounter in U.S. schools addresses the difficulties they face in a mainstream European American culture (Banks, 2008; Campbell, 2010; Enriquez, 2011; de Jong, 2011; Nieto, 2002; Shannon, 1995; Sheets, 2005; Wright, 2010). Schools that only value the mainstream European American culture tend not to offer services to better serve recently arrived immigrant students (Castro-Salazar & Bagley, 2010; Enriquez, 2011; McDonnell & Hill, 1993).

Moreover, teaching preparation programs are still lacking effective training to prepare future teachers to work with a diverse student body and their families (Banks, Cochran-Smith, Moll, Zeichner, & LePage, 2005; Goodwin, Smith, Souto-Manning,

Cheruvu, Tan, Reed, & Taveras, 2014; Ladson-Billings, 1994, 2001; Merryfield, 2000; Rios, Montecinos & van Olphen, 2007). In-service teachers may have negative stereotypes about immigrants, especially towards those who have just arrived (Enriquez, 2011; Gurrola et al., 2016; Jiménez-Castellanos & Gonzalez, 2012; Viramontez Anguiano & Lopez, 2012). For example, Jiménez-Castellanos and Gonzalez (2012) asserted that "Latino[3] parents have been perceived as uneducated, poor, and lacking parenting skills" (p. 205).

Therefore, the emphasis of U.S. schools to assimilate students into the mainstream European American culture and the negative stereotypes of some teachers working with recently arrived immigrant students and their parents often leads to school environments that do not value the rich resources that newcomer immigrants bring to schools (Gutiérrez & Rogoff, 2003; Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 1992; Pacheco & Gutiérrez, 2009). Further, the different obstacles that recently arrived immigrants face in the U.S. create conflicts with the expectations that schools have for the education of their children (Quiñones & Marquez Kiyana, 2014). Schools often assume that all parents are able to take on certain responsibilities in their children's education. However, recently arrived immigrant parents are not always able to take on these responsibilities, such as the expected amount of time that parents need to dedicate at home and in schools, to support their children academically (Gallo & Wortham, 2012). This includes the traditional parent involvement expectations in schools, such as joining parent-teacher organizations, participating in bake sales, volunteering during special events or other activities that are

[3]The terms Latina/o will be used if the cited author/s utilized the term in the quoted work.

expected for parents to do (Doucet, 2011), but that only reflect the mainstream European American culture and that working immigrant parents are not always able to do. Consequently, only some recently arrived immigrant students are able to overcome these challenges while others fail (Suárez-Orozco &Todorova, 2003).

The Need for Services in Washington, D.C. Schools for Recently Arrived Salvadoran Students

To address the challenges that the European American culture in U.S. schools poses to recently arrived immigrants, teachers and schools can provide the necessary resources for immigrant students to overcome the obstacles they face (Enriquez, 2011). The existing literature about the educational services that recently arrived immigrants need suggests that teachers are important for the educational experiences of immigrant students to be positive (Castro-Salazar & Bagley, 2010; Enriquez, 2011; Suárez-Orozco & Todorova, 2003; Valenzuela, 1999). Moreover, according to Suárez-Orozco and Todorova (2003), recently arrived immigrants benefit from effective social support networks to facilitate their transition into life in an unknown culture.

School services that are specifically developed for recently arrived immigrant students and their parents provides them with the resources to succeed in their new culture. These services are needed because in the U.S. Latinxs[4] are the strongest ethnic minority group of people living in the nation (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). Out of this

[4]I use the term Latinx/s as an inclusive term to represent women, men, and those who identify as agender, gender non-binary, gender non-conformist, genderqueer, trans, and any other gender fluid identity from Latin America (e.g., Cuban, Dominican, Puerto Rican, Mexican, Central or South American) regardless of race (Scharrón-del Río & Aja, 2015).

population, among Central American[5] Latinxs, people from El Salvador are the largest group with a population of 1.6 million living across the nation (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). El Salvador is the smallest country in Central America, comparable in size to the state of Massachusetts (Flaitz, 2006). The country is divided into 14 *departamentos,*[6] departments, which are grouped into three regions: the western region, central region, and eastern region. El Salvador borders the Pacific Ocean on the south and Guatemala and Honduras on the north.

The Salvadoran[7] population keeps growing significantly. The U.S. Census Bureau (2010) showed that the Salvadoran community increased by 152% between 2000 and 2010. Salvadorans have established their communities throughout the U.S., predominantly in California, Texas, New York, Virginia, and Maryland alongside other Latinxs. However, in the nation's capital Salvadorans are the largest group of the Latinx population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). After the city of Los Angeles, Washington, D.C. is the area that represents the strongest Salvadoran community (Benitez, 2005).

According to Repak (1995), Salvadorans began immigrating to Washington, D.C. between the 1960s and 1980s when women came from Central America to work as housekeepers for families of diplomats. Within this group of Central American women, the new wave of immigrants from El Salvador emerged. Benitez (2005) explained that

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[5]I use the terms Central American/s in reference to the countries and people from Belize, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Panamá, and other people who identify as Central American from Indian groups.

[6]I italicize and translate words in Spanish only the first time I use them. Subsequently, I do not continue translating those words in Spanish to English. This is because I strongly believe that my bilingualism and biliteracy are a big part of my identity and I want to resist from writing to please a monolingual audience (Urrieta & Villenas, 2013).

[7]I refer to Salvadoran/s as a person or a group of people who were born in El Salvador or who were born in the U.S. of parents from El Salvador and who identify themselves as being from El Salvador.

the Salvadorans who initially came to Washington, D.C. were from the *departamento* of La Unión located in the Eastern region of El Salvador. More specifically, they came from the municipalities of Intipucá and Chirilagua (Benitez, 2005). In the 1980s, however, Salvadorans came from all over El Salvador to the U.S. escaping a barbaric and long civil war (Flaitz, 2006).

To this day, the effects of the civil war in El Salvador still influence Salvadorans to come to the U.S. (Moodie, 2010). Salvadorans come to the U.S. seeking safety, work, and better opportunities. Recently, however, Salvadorans leave their home country because of an increase in gang violence (González-Barrera et al., 2014). These social issues put the most vulnerable Salvadoran citizens at risk. Salvadorans immigrate to Washington, D.C. where the largest population of Salvadorans in the U.S. resides, and where social networks are already established. This study was necessary because the Salvadoran population continues to grow at high rates in Washington, D.C. and in other parts of the country. Moreover, this study uncovered resources that recently arrived Salvadoran students and their parents need to overcome the obstacles they face when they first arrive.

Intent to Better Serve Recently Arrived Salvadoran Students in Washington D.C.

Latinx parents can teach us about the services their children need to succeed in U.S. schools (Cavanagh, Vigil, & Garcia, 2014; Durand, 2011; Gallo & Wortham, 2012; Jasis & Ordoñez-Jasis, 2012; Mulhern, 1997; Olivos, 2004; Olivos & Quintana de Valladolid, 2005; Pacheco & Gutiérrez, 2009; Quiñones & Marquez Kiyana, 2014;

Villalba, Brunelli, Lewis & Orfanedes, 2007; Zentella, 2005). Although recently arrived immigrant parents rely on extended family members to help raise their children, such as *abuela/os*, grandparents, *tia/os*, aunts and uncles, and even sometimes close friends (Hidalgo, 2005; Suárez-Orozco & Todorova, 2003), for the purpose of this study, I only focused on biological parents (i.e., birth mothers and birth fathers). Thus, I explored the perspectives that recently arrived Salvadoran parents have about the education of their children to inform educators on how to collaborate more effectively with this community. I contend that learning from recently arrived Salvadoran parents about the education of their children can inform how educators and stakeholders shape these parents' and students' experiences in this country.

In this study, I sought to learn from recently arrived Salvadoran parents with children enrolled in Washington, D.C. public schools. A grasp of recently arrived Salvadoran parents' perspectives about their children's education creates a foundation for educators and stakeholders to modify their interactions and the services schools need to offer. The purpose of this study was to examine how recently arrived Salvadoran parents understand their children's education as well as to determine how educators can learn from them to build and sustain collaborative relationships in schools with large Salvadoran populations. The overarching research question guiding this study was: What perspectives do recently arrived Salvadoran parents have about their children's education? To respond to this broader question, I explored the following sub-questions: How do recently arrived Salvadoran parents define their role in their children's

education? What educational practices do recently arrived Salvadoran parents describe doing at home to support their children's learning, development, and achievement?

Contributions to the Field

According to the U.S. Census (2010), the Salvadoran community continues to grow at faster rates than other Central American Latinxs. Mainly due to the effects of the civil war in El Salvador (e.g., gang violence, extortions), Salvadorans keep coming to the U.S. seeking safety, work, and better opportunities. Recently arrived Salvadorans represent a significant group that contributes to the increasing numbers of Salvadorans in the U.S. Although there may be resources already in schools that can help Latinx students and parents navigate schools' expectations, recently arrived Salvadorans need specific resources to facilitate their transition to a new culture in the U.S.

For recently arrived Salvadoran parents, their reasons for leaving El Salvador can explain the unique resources they may need. For example, many Salvadorans are coming to the U.S. to escape dangerous and threatening environments that resulted from the twelve-year long civil war that El Salvador experienced (González-Barrera et al., 2014; Moodie, 2010). This group of Salvadoran children and their parents may need counseling to help them overcome those realities and start a new life. Mitchell (2015) quoted a realization from a veteran teacher who has been working in Washington, D.C. since 1987 and who has been serving young Salvadoran refugees escaping the traces of the civil war, "when I read their journal entries, I realized this is where they feel safe and comfortable" (p.12). This teacher's understanding of Salvadoran immigrants' experiences represents the individual attention they need to transition successfully into U.S. schools.

In contrast, other recently arrived Salvadorans may come to the U.S. under different circumstances, such as to learn a second language and a new culture. Schools and teachers must recognize that not all recently arrived Salvadorans immigrate to the U.S. for the same reasons. Studies suggest that some educators do not recognize the diversity of immigrants, such as their socio-economic backgrounds, prior schooling, and other factors and experiences, attending U.S. schools (Gallo & Wortham, 2012; Ramirez, 2014; Suárez-Orozco & Todorova, 2003). Thus, it is important to get to know recently arrived Salvadorans and to directly learn from each of them to avoid making generalizations.

To better serve the needs of recently arrived Salvadoran students and their parents in mainstream European American culture school environments, I sought to determine the perspectives recently arrived Salvadoran parents have about their children's education. These perspectives can help educators make a positive impact in the lives of underserved communities (Duncan-Andrade, 2009; Valenzuela, 1999), such as recently arrived immigrant students and parents. In other words, it is critical for educators to build personal relationships with recently arrived immigrant parents to create the *respeto y confianza,* respect and trust that is necessary for effective schools' interventions and practices (Tschannen-Moran, 2001; Zentella, 2005).

This study has direct implications for further development of collaborative relationships between recently arrived Salvadoran parents and schools. Research consistently shows that effective collaboration between parents and schools can be achieved by redefining parent involvement in schools, which means that the knowledge

and resources that parents bring are recognized and valued (Doucet, 2011; Gutiérrez & Rogoff, 2003; Moll et al., 1992; Pacheco & Gutiérrez, 2009). In other words, linguistically and culturally diverse parents take the role of the experts in schools and challenge the views from some educators who undermine their educational knowledge.

This study can serve as a resource for schools, school administrators, teachers, teacher preparation programs, policy makers, and educational researchers. For schools, school administrators and teachers, this study can be used as a resource that provides the perspectives from recently arrived Salvadoran parents about their children's education to better serve their needs in U.S. schools. Moreover, the recently arrived Salvadoran parents in this study provided insights on what educational practices they did at home to support their children's learning, development, and achievement that can help educators build collaborative relationships with them to better support their children.

For teacher preparation programs, this study can suggest practices that are based on the knowledge shared by recently arrived Salvadoran parents about their children's education that can better prepare teacher candidates working with this community. This study can also offer an outlook of the unique preparation of teachers that is necessary to serve recently arrived Salvadoran students in Washington, D.C. and in other well established areas (e.g., California, Texas, New York) where the Salvadoran community has expanded (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010).

For policy makers, this study can provide insights into the challenges that recently arrived Salvadoran students experience in U.S. schools due to the emphasis of assimilating to the European American culture (de Jong, 2011; Nieto, 2002; Shannon,

1995; Sheets, 2005; Wright, 2010). For example, speaking in Spanish may be reprimanded in some school environments (Sheets, 2005). However, not all recently arrived immigrant students are able to thrive in these assimilative environments in schools (Suárez-Orozco & Todorova, 2003). This study can inform policy makers about the services that are needed to better serve recently arrived Salvadoran students and their parents.

For educational researchers, this study opens the door for further research to better serve the expanding Salvadoran community. Studies have examined the understandings Mexican immigrant parents have about their children's education (Gallo & Wortham, 2012; Gurrola et al., 2016; Moll et al., 1992; Mulhern, 1997; Zentella, 2005). However, studies have not directly examined the understandings recently arrived Salvadoran parents have about their children's education. This study's findings provide implications to continue documenting the distinct history and perspectives of recently arrived Salvadoran immigrants in relation to the education of their children in Washington, D.C. Furthermore, it points to the need for more studies like this one to augment and contribute to the research about the diverse experiences of Latinx parents and students.

Most importantly, this dissertation holds significance for recently arrived Salvadoran parents, their children, and educators in Washington, D.C. Every time parents and educators form a strong collaborative relationship to improve the education of their students they empower schools and the communities they serve (Cavanagh et al., 2014; Durand, 2011; Jasis & Ordoñez-Jasis, 2012; Olivos, 2004; Olivos & Quintana de

Valladolid, 2005). These partnerships may help erase school environments where recently arrived Salvadoran students and their parents experience anti-immigrant discrimination (Castro-Salazar & Bagley, 2010; Gurrola et al., 2016; Viramontez Anguiano & Lopez, 2012). El Salvador is well known as *el país de la sonrisa*, the country of the smile, to describe "its friendly and outgoing people" (Flaitz, 2006, p. 4). My hope is that this dissertation inspires more genuine and welcoming *sonrisas* from all educators in U.S. schools serving recently arrived Salvadoran students and their parents.

Personal Relevance-*Mis Experiencias*

Mis experiencias, my experiences, are central for this study because they provide the context that is necessary to understand my positionality as a researcher. I drew from Chicana feminist epistemology (e.g., Anzaldúa, 1981, 1987; Delgado Bernal, 1998; Moraga, 2002; Sandoval, 1991; Torres, 2003), to write about myself in this study. Chicana feminist epistemologies give me the "permission to include myself in the text without fear, without shame" (Davalos, 2008, p. 151). Furthermore, my role as a researcher in this study was deeply rooted in my personal connections with the participants. My memories from my childhood in El Salvador and my experiences as an immigrant in the U.S. have empowered me to advocate for the growing community of recently arrived Salvadorans. In addition, the complexities that I encountered in learning a new language and culture inspired me to want to work with students who encounter similar situations as I did when I came to the U.S.

I was born in the early 1980s during the most turbulent period in El Salvador's history, where rampant violence almost destroyed the country and displaced many of its

citizens. I vividly remember growing up during the twelve-year long civil war and how our lives were impacted by the adversities that my country went through and the pain that all Salvadorans felt. *Yo tuve suerte*, I was lucky, because my parents shielded us from the war going on outside our home and worked hard to create a safe home environment for my younger brother, sister, and I. But, the soldiers walking past our home, the distant shelling, and the mandatory *toques de queda,* government curfews, prompted us to ask our parents questions to try to understand what was going on. Even when they tried to answer our questions about what we were experiencing, now I understand that their responses were omitting what was really happening in El Salvador. They tried to make us feel like nothing was going to hurt us while many tragedies were happening beyond their control. This is how Salvadorans learned to live their lives, as normally as they could during this long civil war.

My childhood in El Salvador was full of endearing and happy moments. But not until I became an adult and learned more about the history of the war that I realized how much my memories have so many *rastros de la guerra*, traces of war. I remember while my parents were working, it was *mi abue,*[8] my grandmother, and *mi tia*, my aunt, who took care of us during the day. On a typical day during the war, *mi abue* would watch my brother and I play in our *patiecito del frente*, small front patio, while heavily armed soldiers walked through our neighborhood. *Mi abue* would try to distract us as best she could from these images by singing *coritos*, religious songs, to lift our spirits and to not let those soldiers notice how scared we were of their guns and their threatening presence.

[8]Short for *abuelita*, grandmother.

Immediately after, *mi abue* will tell us to go inside to have our *cafecito con pan dulce*, coffee and sweet bread that we enjoyed together every afternoon. As we finished our *cafecito* it would get dark outside and *el toque de queda* would start. I remember worrying about my parents not being at home from work by 6 o'clock in the evening because of *el toque de queda.* As soon as *el toque de queda* was in place, shellings and gunshots became louder and closer than during the day. It was comforting to know that we had a home to shelter us during the *tiroteos*, gun battles.

Despite the civil war, time passed by and my parents continued working, my siblings and I continued our education, and we became accustomed to living in the middle of the war. The war finally ended in 1992 and I did not see any more soldiers walking by my neighborhood, the *toque de queda* was lifted, and bombs and shootings were not heard as often. However, other issues arose in El Salvador soon after the war ended which still affect the country today. High poverty rates, unemployment, and crime created *desesperación en la gente*, despair in people, after the war. I now understand that the *rastros de la guerra* I experienced do not compare to the many tragic and devastating stories that other Salvadorans lived and are currently experiencing, however, I want to share how my memories of growing up during the civil war in El Salvador have greatly influenced my view of the world and the idea of social justice.

Experiences as an Emergent Bilingual

> I know that it is not the English language that hurts me, but what the oppressors do with it, how they shape it to become a territory that limits and defines, how they make it a weapon that can shame, humiliate, colonize.
>
> -bell hooks, *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*

In the aftermath of the civil war in El Salvador came an opportunity to begin a new life for our family. For over ten years, my family waited for the results of a family based petition for the U.S. residency submitted by a *tia* who had escaped the war. After being granted residency, we immediately left the country and eventually settled in the most unlikely of places, Las Vegas, Nevada. There, another *tia* who came to the U.S. many years before invited us to stay with her until my parents were able to get jobs and our own place to live. In a matter of weeks, I went from attending a school in El Salvador to being a new freshman in a U.S. high school. Not knowing a word of English and with the school year already underway, I had to start school immediately.

I was quickly and categorically labeled an English as a Second Language (ESL) student and immersed in an unknown culture. On my first day of school, I was unceremoniously ushered through the hallway by my school counselor who was one of the very few school staff who spoke Spanish. I was placed in an ESL classroom where one teacher taught all academic subjects to fifteen students of all different grade levels and who all spoke only Spanish, like me. Unlike my school back home, the ESL teacher appeared to be overwhelmed and unprepared. When the bell rang about an hour into my school day, I quickly noticed that we were not going anywhere, while the entire school seemingly mobilized outside our classroom, switching from class to class. I did not raise my hand to ask any questions, I instead kept trying to come up with my own explanation for what felt different. I wondered, why did they separate us? Why were we not allowed in the hallways to interact with everyone else in the school? Was it to protect us or to belittle us because we did not speak English? As much as I would like to believe that the

school wanted to offer us a non-intimidating environment for us to have an easier transition to the school culture in the U.S., I would be naive to assume that we needed to be isolated from the rest of the student body in the school and be denied to receive a rigorous academic curriculum for us to be successful.

This is why, after a week of school, I decided to meet with my school counselor to switch from ESL classes to English-language speaking classrooms. I remember her asking me why I wanted to move and I told her that it was because I felt that I was not learning any academic content or the English language. It would have been easier for me to stay in the ESL classroom and my counselor assured me of that, warning me how difficult it would be to go to classes where everything is taught in English and try to keep up. The warnings did not stop me. It was difficult and alienating to learn a new language without any support, but I needed to advocate for myself to get better educational experiences than those I was receiving in the ESL classroom.

My goal, reinforced by my parents, everyday was to maintain the Spanish language but to also learn English to become bilingual and biliterate. The goal of ESL instruction is to help students learning the English language acquire the abilities of listening, speaking, reading, and writing to succeed in English-language classrooms (Wright, 2010). Yet, my experience in an ESL classroom did not offer me the tools to acquire a second language. For example, my ESL teacher did not expose me to the value of using my first language as a tool to learn a second language or expose me to any other strategies that could have facilitated my second language acquisition. Instead, I experienced low academic expectations and alienation for all of us who were recently

arrived immigrant students and I felt that there was no urgency to help us learn the English language or to succeed academically and socially.

After I left the ESL classroom, I struggled in English-language speaking classrooms where the academic instruction was delivered only in English without any supports for emergent bilinguals.[9] But, that was the only option available for me to learn English and grow academically and socially. Unfortunately, my high school did not offer any programs to support students to learn a second language effectively. Instead, they only offered one ESL classroom where students were ignored and pre-destined to achieve less than English speakers. Although I clearly remember being ignored by my teachers and classmates in English-language speaking classrooms because I did not speak English, I eventually graduated from high school with a full-ride scholarship to complete my undergraduate education. When it came time for me to choose a career in college, I decided to become a teacher and advocate for emergent bilinguals like me. Through my experiences learning English, I gained a different perspective and can relate to the challenges of recently arrived students learning a new language and culture.

[9]I use the term emergent bilingual/s to describe students for whom English is not their first language and to underscore their potential in becoming bilingual due to their linguistic strengths and resources (García, 2009).

Experiences Working with Emergent Bilinguals

My voice is in the prison
of my own history
I never know
am I being too spanish
or not enough english?
…
you laugh at my accent
maybe,
maybe just one too many times

-Juanita M. Sánchez, *from "voz en una cárcel," Tongue Tied: The Lives of Multilingual Children in Public Education*

My interest in pursuing an educational doctorate in Curriculum and Instruction developed out of my own experiences as an emergent bilingual and then from my work as a teacher in a Spanish/English dual language elementary school. The goal of a Spanish/English dual language program is to foster bilingualism and biliteracy as well as cross-cultural understandings between English native and Spanish native students (de Jong, 2011; Wright, 2010). In a successful dual language program, students learn to read and write in both languages simultaneously (Diaz, Esquierdo, & Whitacre, 2013). While teaching in this dual language program, I reflected on how much I had needed a program like this one when I came to the U.S.

I am, however, thankful for the obstacles throughout my educational experiences learning a new language and culture, including negative interactions with English speakers. I have experienced criticism because of my accent, mispronunciation of certain words, and the mixing of English and Spanish during conversations. Despite these challenges as an emergent bilingual, I now believe that those criticisms come from people who do not understand how it feels to move to a new country and try to learn and become

fluent in a second language. Through my experiences as an emergent bilingual and my role as an educator, I have striven to help meet the needs of recently arrived students and their families.

Throughout *mis experiencias* as a teacher I realized the great value of learning from parents to better serve their children in my classroom. Considering that "immigrant families do not have a strong influence over on how their children are treated, taught and valued in U.S. schools" (Adair, 2014), and that Salvadorans are a predominant group of Latinxs in Washington, D.C., in this study I wanted to learn the perspectives from recently arrived Salvadoran parents about their children's education and how to build and sustain collaborative relationships with them in schools.

Research Delimitations

This study was conducted during the summer of 2016 in Washington, D.C. The settings were selected based on Salvadoran participants' gatherings. The study included six recently arrived Salvadoran participants who have biological children between the ages of 4-17 years old enrolled in Washington, D.C. public schools and were interested in sharing their perspectives about their children's education to help educators to better serve their needs. The main source of data and focus of this study were the participants' *testimonios* that were collected through one-time interviews. During the interviews, field notes were taken to record important moments, questions, and additional notes.

Organization of the Dissertation

The rest of this dissertation is arranged in the following order. Chapter II consists of two sections. The first section provides a review of the literature on the understandings

and misunderstandings that Latinx parents and teachers have about education. The second section describes the theoretical framework grounded in intersectionality theory (Baca Zinn & Thornton Dill, 1996; Collins, 2000; Crenshaw, 1991), and Latino/a[10] families' epistemology (Hidalgo, 1999, 2005). Chapter III discusses the research methodology, a description of the research design, a description of the community where this study was conducted, and an explanation of qualitative methods that include data gathering and analysis methods. Chapter IV presents a description of the participants and the findings divided into themes that answer each research question. Chapter V provides a discussion about findings' contributions to the extant literature, and findings' relation to the theoretical framework of this study, conclusions, implications, and recommendations for future research. Additionally, this dissertation concludes with remarks and *reflexiones* on my research as a Salvadoran educator living in Washington, D.C.

[10]While recognizing the masculine gendered nature of the term Latino, the term Latino/a will be used to refer to the Latino/a families' epistemology as it is called and explained by Hidalgo (1999, 2005).

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The current literature explores approaches to enhance Latinx parent-teacher relationships in U.S. schools (Cavanagh et al., 2014; Durand, 2011; Gallo & Wortham, 2012; Jasis & Ordoñez-Jasis, 2012; Mulhern, 1997; Olivos, 2004; Olivos & Quintana de Valladolid, 2005; Pacheco & Gutiérrez, 2009; Quiñones & Marquez Kiyana, 2014; Ryan, Casas, Kelly-Vance, & Ryalls, 2010; Villalba et al., 2007; Zentella, 2005). Latinx parents and teachers have engaged in a dialog on ways to improve their collaboration to help students succeed in the classroom. For instance, studies have examined the educational understandings that Mexican immigrant parents have for their children's education (Gallo & Wortham, 2012; Moll et al., 1992; Mulhern, 1997; Zentella, 2005). But, the field of study has yet to directly examine the understandings that recently arrived Salvadoran parents have about their children's education.

This chapter is divided into two sections: the literature review and theoretical framework. The literature review is based on the following question: What perspectives do recently arrived Salvadoran parents have about their children's education? Additionally, it addresses the following sub-questions: How do recently arrived Salvadoran parents define their role in their children's education? What educational practices do recently arrived Salvadoran parents describe doing at home to support their children's learning, development, and achievement? To answer these questions, I

identified literature concerning the following sections: (1) clarifying understandings and misunderstandings between Latinx parents and teachers, and (2) rethinking Latinx parent-teacher collaboration.

I begin with an overview of the literature that explains the understandings and misunderstandings that exist between Latinx parents and teachers in U.S. schools. Then, I summarize the research that suggests ways of re-defining Latinx parent-teacher collaboration that support students' learning, development, and achievement. The second section of this chapter provides a description of my theoretical framework, which draws on intersectionality theory (Baca Zinn & Thornton Dill, 1996; Collins, 2000; Crenshaw, 1991), and Latino/a families' epistemology (Hidalgo, 1999, 2005).

Literature Review

Clarifying Understandings and Misunderstandings between Latinx Parents and Teachers

Societal ideologies or beliefs against the diversity that Latinx immigrants bring to U.S. schools may unconsciously influence misunderstandings in teachers (Balderrama, 2001). This is because the foundation of U.S. schools is based on the dominant and mainstream European American culture that influences "rules, strategies, curricula, methods of evaluation, and systems of discipline derive primarily from teachers who belong to this culture" (Campbell, 2010, p. 51). For example, societal ideologies opposed to linguistically and culturally diverse students can suggest that students who do not follow the European American culture "complicate educational processes and drain resources" (Shevalier & McKenzie, 2012, p. 1087).

Societal ideologies in school structures that privilege the majority or dominant group of people in the U.S. may influence teachers to replace the students' cultural values learned at home with the mainstream European American culture (Banks, 2008; Campbell, 2010; Enriquez, 2011; Sheets, 2005). This replacement of cultural values from the home is what Valenzuela (1999) calls "subtractive schooling" in public education (p. 6). Valenzuela (1999) defined subtractive schooling as the loss of linguistic and cultural values from the home that students experience at school. For example, de Jong (2011) explained that because "language plays an important role in socializing children into the linguistic and cultural norms of a community" (p.30), the English language became the language spoken at school, which explicitly sends the message to students and parents of what is worth learning and in what language. Societal ideologies that are against the linguistic diversity that immigrants bring to the U.S. use the English language as a way to discriminate against groups who speak other languages (Valdes, 2000).

Societal ideologies can also impact the relationships between teachers and Latinx parents because there may be differences in their views on education that create misunderstandings and inhibit the success of students (Quiñones & Marquez Kiyana, 2014; Olivos, 2004). The literature underscores two significant issues that create misunderstandings between Latinx parents and teachers: (1) Latinx parents and teachers' roles in education; and (2) traditional parent involvement in schools.

Latinx parents and teachers' roles in education. According to the literature, Latinx parents and teachers view their roles in the education of children differently (Cavanagh et al., 2014; Ryan et al., 2010; Villalba et al., 2007; Zentella, 2005). Villalba,

Brunelli, Lewis, and Orfanedes (2007) conducted an insightful study in which Latinx parents were asked about the experiences of their children in elementary school. Nine participants perceived that the schools their children attended provided a range of positive and negative experiences. They described that the positive experiences in schools included special programs such as after-school classes and the hiring of bilingual staff. However, they also described negative experiences, such as the ways teachers disrespect children when they do not value their cultural heritage. Participants explained that *valores,* family values and good manners, are important for their children to maintain, confirming the need to incorporate the *valores* of Latinx families in the classroom.

Zentella (2005) described that commonly, Latinx parents consider their children's teachers as second parents who maintain and extend their home values to schools. Latinx parents want the education of their children to focus on academic skills, cultural norms and moral values (Gallo & Wortham, 2012; Sheets, 2005). For example, Sheets (2005) argued that Latinx children who are considered *los mal educados*, the badly educated, does not necessarily mean that they do not have any academic knowledge; instead, it refers to instances when children are "disrespectful of self, family, and others" (p. 206). Thus, parents expect teachers to reinforce the same cultural values from the home (Zentella, 2005).

Another issue that inhibits understanding between parents and teachers is that Latinx parents perceive teachers as having the role of the experts in academic decisions (Gallo & Wortham, 2012; Zentella, 2005). Gonzales (2010) argued that this issue may be the result of Latinx students surpassing their parents in academic accomplishments,

especially for students whose parents did not have the opportunity to further their education in their native country or in the U.S. Similarly, in their project of Latinx perspectives about schools, Gallo and Wortham (2012) explained that out of the dozen Mexican immigrant parents who participated "most have no formal schooling in English and have not mastered the phonological complexities of the language" (p. 8). Despite the parents' lack of a formal education in the English language, teachers expect that they extend the learning experiences that children are having at school by assisting them with their homework assignments (Durand, 2010; Gallo & Wortham, 2012; Zentella, 2005).

Even when homework assignments and notes sent home are translated into Spanish, parents can face challenges at home such as not understanding the expectations that teachers have for assignments. Additionally, Gallo and Wortham (2012) explained that teachers needed support to understand that parents care about their children's homework but might submit incomplete work due to linguistic challenges. This suggests that communication is missing between Latinx parents and teachers about their roles in the education of their children that affects their collaborative relationships in schools. In the following section, I explore the understandings and misunderstandings created by traditional parent involvement in schools.

Traditional parent involvement in schools. Traditional parent involvement in schools immerses parents and students in the mainstream European American culture (Doucet, 2011). For example, traditional parent involvement activities include attending parent-teacher conferences and belonging to parent organizations. Nonetheless, Doucet suggested that schools need to take a different approach to parent involvement and move

towards validating parental educational practices. For example, teachers can learn the ways parents help their children with their homework. In other words, schools can positively modify the relationships with diverse families by including their home and school practices instead of dictating the acceptable forms of parent involvement that marginalizes and pushes parents away from schools (Doucet, 2011).

This need for a different approach to parent involvement aligns with what Gutiérrez and Rogoff (2003) called a cultural repertoires approach. Gutiérrez and Rogoff argued that groups who historically have been underserved have cultural repertoires, or collections of experiences, that teachers can use to increase parents' participation in schools. They describe these repertoires as the cultural and historical knowledge that communities have as they relate to practices in education. For example, deHaan (2001) conducted a study of the indigenous Mazahua children in Mexico, and found that Mazahua parents treat their children as responsible collaborators and leaders in home activities. The leadership skills that Mazahua parents teach their children are not only important at home for their everyday survival but they can also be valuable skills in the classroom. However, teachers continue to hold a deficit view of the educational practices of parents from different cultures (Doucet, 2011; Gonzalez, 2010).

In contrast to this deficit perspective from teachers, Moll et al. (1992) argued that underscoring the historical and cultural knowledge, skills, and resources found in households from working-class Mexican communities leads to collaborative improvements in schools with these families and students. Funds of knowledge are the social and cultural resources that families use in their households to support themselves

(Pacheco & Gutiérrez, 2009). Moll and colleagues (1992) also explained that funds of knowledge help families overcome changes and financial challenges in their lives. For example, they found that Mexican families had knowledge about farming due to their rural backgrounds. This knowledge and skills about farming not only helps these families sustain themselves, but also relates to school curriculum concepts that are taught in math such as numbers, time, and money. Another important skill in farming is the collaboration between family members and other members of the community that is needed to become successful farmers.

Examples of these funds of knowledge confirm the expertise and substantial resources that Latinx families have to support their children's learning, development, and achievement in their households that are often denied in education (Doucet, 2011; Gonzalez, 2010; Gutiérrez & Rogoff, 2003; Moll et al., 1992; Pacheco & Gutiérrez, 2009). Furthermore, understanding these resources can help clarify the misunderstandings that teachers have about Latinx parents lacking the knowledge to support their children's education. To better understand the collaboration between Latinx parents and teachers that is needed in schools, parent involvement must be redefined by incorporating the knowledge, skills, and resources from Latinx parents (Doucet, 2011; Gutiérrez & Rogoff, 2003; Moll et al., 1992; Pacheco & Gutiérrez, 2009). A re-definition of parent involvement for improving Latinx parent-teacher collaboration is clearly needed. In the following section, I address approaches to better serve Latinx families.

Rethinking Latinx Parent-Teacher Collaboration

In an effort to redefine parent involvement, studies have explored the collaboration between Latinx parents and teachers needed to support students' success. Tschannen-Moran (2001) promoted collaboration as a response to the needs of an evolving world in schools, believing that "collaboration provides an important mechanism for schools to work toward excellence" (p. 327). Collaboration between Latinx families and schools is necessary to create school environments with *confianza*, communication, and understanding (Tschannen-Moran, 2001; Zentella, 2005).

Teachers can develop *confianza* with Latinx parents by engaging in a quest to learning about and embracing theirs strengths. For example, Pacheco and Gutiérrez (2009) argued that families and communities provide resources at home that can be used to build on students' literacy learning in schools. This perspective shows how teachers can benefit from gathering information about their students' families. Thus, valuing and incorporating the knowledge from families of diverse backgrounds in schools can build the *confianza* that is needed to collaborate and consequently eliminate the deficit view that schools still have about them (Doucet, 2011; Pacheco & Gutiérrez, 2009; Tschannen-Moran, 2001; Zentella, 2005).

As described above, schools can use approaches that underscore the resources from Latinx parents to better implement collaborative practices with these families and build *confianza* (Tschannen-Moran, 2001; Zentella, 2005). In this section, I describe the reviewed literature about two collaborative practices between Latinx parents and teachers

that enhance these partnerships: (1) acknowledging Latinx parents' collaborative practices at home; and (2) creating school spaces for empowerment.

Acknowledging Latinx parents' collaborative practices at home. Rethinking the expectations for parent collaboration and involvement in schools can be better understood by uncovering the ways Latinx parents are already involved in their children's education (Durand, 2011; Gallo & Wortham, 2012; Mulhern, 1997; Olivos, 2004; Ryan et al., 2010). Mulhern (1997) argued that there have not been enough attempts to learn about the sociocultural practices of parent involvement that differ from U.S. approaches. Mulhern's case study about a Mexican immigrant family with a son attending kindergarten explored becoming literate at home and school. In this case study, Mulhern suggested that parents were already collaborating in meaningful ways with their child's teacher without the teacher realizing it. Both parents valued education and were proud of their son's interest in literacy. The mother supported her son by listening to and answering his questions about reading and writing. For example, she engaged in conversations with her son about his school experiences, supervised his homework completion, worked on writing and reading activities with him, and made books available for him at home.

Recognizing that Latinx families like this one are already collaborating with teachers at home to enhance their children's learning, development, and achievement shows the need for teachers to reach out to their Latinx students' parents in a search for learning about their home lives. This interest in knowing their lives, however, needs to have genuine intentions to develop the *confianza* that is essential for collaborative

relationships between Latinx parents and teachers (Tschannen-Moran, 2001; Zentella, 2005). In the following section, I provide an overview of the literature on the creation of school spaces where Latinx parents can feel empowered.

Creating school spaces for empowerment. Historically, U.S. schools have diminished the power of Latinx parents in the decision-making of the education of their children (Doucet, 2011; Olivos & Quintana de Valladolid, 2005). When Latinx parents feel disconnected from the schooling decision process, they have fewer opportunities to build partnerships with teachers (Olivos, 2004). Durand (2011) suggested that partnerships can increase by developing collaborative spaces in schools that offer welcoming environments for Latinx parents to engage in dialogs with teachers.

Aligned with Durand's (2011) suggestion, Olivos and Quintana de Valladolid (2005) argued that Latinx parents are ready to collaborate, but "often, they only need to be invited" (p. 292). However, for collaborative spaces in schools to become spaces for empowerment, it is critical for Latinx parents' voices to be included in schools' decisions. Cavanagh, Vigil, and Garcia (2014) and Jasis and Ordoñez-Jasis (2012) found that collaborative spaces for empowerment in schools must respect and include Latinx parents' voices and expertise for the education they believe is best for their children to cement stronger collaborative relationships with these families and communities. Latinx parents need school spaces for empowerment where they can feel comfortable sharing their opinions on education. Jasis and Ordoñez-Jasis (2012) suggested that the different forms of parent involvement that Latinx families bring to schools, "can mobilize transformative local resources and become powerful tools of school reform and family

and community engagement" (p. 86). Valuing the different forms of parent involvement in schools can empower Latinx parents to advocate for what they want for their children. When decision-making in schools is inclusive of Latinx parents' perspectives, stronger partnerships are created between teachers and administrators (Jasis & Ordoñez-Jasis, 2012).

On the other hand, research can also create overly generalized statements about Latinx parents in U.S. schools. Even when research recognizes essential ways to strengthen collaborative practices between Latinx parents and teachers, educators must also know that Latinx parents represent a diverse group of cultures. For example, Gallo and Wortham (2012) noted a Mexican mother's explanation on the different cultural backgrounds among Latinxs:

> Of course I would like the teachers to learn. You know that if they start to work with the Latino culture they will come to learn that we Latinos, Mexicans as well as those from other countries, have very different cultures, right? They are very beautiful cultures that I would like the teachers to learn. Or maybe they can call on us parents to say, "come and teach us something new." We will gladly go… We could be from the same country [Mexico], but we have very different cultures. (p. 12)

Thus, when considering recommendations to fortify collaborative relationships with Latinx parents (e.g., acknowledging Latinx parents' collaborative practices at home), teachers must not assume that all Latinx parents engage in the same collaborative practices that research has suggested. These assumptions continue to reinforce

misunderstandings between Latinx parents and teachers. As Gutiérrez and Rogoff (2003) explained "only when there is a sufficient body of research with different people under varying circumstances would more general statements be justified" (p. 23).

In this chapter, I presented an overview of these issues to offer the context that is necessary for this study. Studies have emerged around clarifying misunderstandings between Latinx parents and teachers. Out of these studies, researchers have identified two important issues that need to be clarified between Latinx parents and teachers to avoid misunderstandings: (1) Latinx parents and teachers' definitions of roles in education (Cavanagh et al., 2014; Gallo & Wortham, 2012; Gonzales, 2010; Ryan et al., 2010; Sheets, 2005; Villalba et al., 2007; Zentella, 2005); and (2) traditional parent involvement in schools (Doucet, 2011; Gutiérrez & Rogoff, 2003; Moll et al., 1992; Pacheco & Gutiérrez, 2009).

Related to this focus, studies have also examined ways of rethinking Latinx parent-teacher collaboration (Doucet, 2011; Pacheco & Gutiérrez, 2009; Tschannen-Moran, 2001; Zentella, 2005). When rethinking Latinx parent-teacher collaboration, studies have explored two collaborative practices between Latinx parents and teachers that may enhance these partnerships: (1) acknowledging Latinx parents' collaborative practices at home (Moll et al., 1992; Mulhern, 1997); and (2) creating school spaces for empowerment (Cavanagh et al., 2014; Durand, 2011; Jasis & Ordoñez-Jasis; 2012; Olivos & Quintana de Valladolid, 2005).

This dissertation built on the existing literature and drew from studies that identified understandings and misunderstandings between Latinx parents and teachers

and offer insights to building collaborative relationships in schools (Mulhern, 1997; Olivos, 2004; Quiñones & Marquez Kiyana, 2014). The research presented in the literature review explored the understandings and misunderstandings that may exist between Latinx parents and teachers that inhibit collaborative relationships in U.S. schools.

Previous studies have laid the foundation for this study by exploring the educational understandings that Mexican immigrant parents have for their children's education (Gallo & Wortham, 2012; Moll et al., 1992; Mulhern, 1997; Zentella, 2005). However, research that specifically focuses on examining the understandings of recently arrived Salvadoran parents about their children's education remains unexplored. This study seeks to address this gap by learning from recently arrived Salvadoran parents to promote collaborative relationships with educators.

My study contributes to the literature by examining the perspectives of recently arrived Salvadoran parents about their children's education and provides a resource for teaching preparation programs to improve the relationships between educators and the Salvadoran community. This study contributes to the literature by addressing the need for further research by educational scholars to better serve the needs of this community. Also, this study calls for policy makers to address anti-immigrant policies in U.S. schools that affect recently arrived Salvadoran students and their parents from receiving the services they need (Crawford & Krashen, 2007; Gurrola et al., 2016; McDonnell & Hill, 1993; Valdes, 2000; Viramontez Anguiano & Lopez, 2012).

In addition to filling a gap in the current literature focused on building and sustaining collaborative relationships in schools with recently arrived Salvadoran parents, I explain why I framed this study using intersectionality theory and Latino/a families' epistemology. In the following section, I close this chapter with a description of my theoretical framework to explain its connection to this study.

Theoretical Framework

In this section, I explain my stance for using intersectionality theory (Baca Zinn & Thornton Dill, 1996; Collins, 2000; Crenshaw, 1991), and Latino/a families' epistemology (Hidalgo, 1999, 2005).

Intersectionality Theory

I utilized intersectionality theory to present recently arrived Salvadoran parents as a heterogeneous and dynamic group (Paredes, 1984). Intersectionality theory stresses the diversity within racial and ethnic groups and questions homogenized representations of Latinx (Ramirez, 2014). This contrasts with what recently arrived Salvadoran parents often experience as reductionist representations about themselves that do not consider their internal diversity (e.g., levels of formal education, time living in the U.S., ability to speak English). Intersectionality theory highlights an important aspect of my study because it "heightens awareness of and sensitivity to both commonalities and differences, serving as a constant reminder of the importance of comparative study and maintaining a creative tension between diversity and universalization" (Baca Zinn & Thornton Dill, 1996, pp. 328-329). Therefore, using intersectionality theory underscores that internal differences exist within recently arrived Salvadoran parents' perspectives about their

children's education. This recognition was especially important in my study to avoid stereotypical representations of recently arrived Salvadoran parents.

Intersectionality theory also provides a space to learn about the experiences from oppressed groups of people in society (Ramirez, 2014). This is clearly rooted in the origins of intersectionality theory explored by women of color feminists (Baca Zinn & Thornton Dill, 1996; Collins, 2000; Crenshaw, 1991), who challenged theoretical frameworks that reduced social inequalities to only one kind of oppression (Collins, 2000). By contrast, intersectionality theory proposes that the categories of race, gender, and class that all people experience in society operate together and not individually (Ramirez, 2014). Critical race theorist Kimberlé Crenshaw (1995) coined the term of intersectionality. Gillborn (2015) explained that intersectionality has two key elements. First, there is an empirical component to comprehend how social inequities are developed and maintained. Second, there is an activist component to create partnerships with different groups of people to stand up against the inequities that exist in social structures (Gillborn, 2015). While intersectionality theory recognizes that stereotypical perceptions about groups of people can make them susceptible to bias, it also underscores the connections that individuals and groups share at the same time and in the same structural system of oppression (Gillborn, 2015; Ramirez, 2014). For example, recently arrived Salvadorans can experience structural inequities in schools similarly to other recently arrived Latinx.

Intersectionality encourages a deep examination of social issues that are not conventionally analyzed by vulnerable groups of people (e.g., recently arrived

Salvadoran parents) and promotes effective approaches and advocacy (Gillborn, 2015). For instance, it is argued that oppressive environments are present in systematic structures like schools where inequities are based on power (Gillborn, 2015; Hahn Tapper, 2011, 2013). Intersectionality seeks to uncover systems of oppression in schools that have been unnoticed by privileged groups (Baca Zinn & Thornton Dill, 1996).

Because intersectionality theory illustrates that groups experiencing systems of oppression are able to resist and adapt to these oppressive environments (Baca Zinn & Thornton Dill, 1996; Gillborn, 2015), I used this theoretical framework along with Latino/a families' epistemology to gain an insight from the experiences that recently arrived Salvadoran parents have in U.S. schools.

Latino/a Families' Epistemology

The goal of this study was to address the perspectives of recently arrived Salvadorans about their children's education. I used the Latino/a families' epistemology because, as Hidalgo (2005) explained, Latinx construct knowledge from their experiences adjusting to their new lives in the U.S. Hidalgo described this adjustment as "a process of accommodation, resistance, and change in response to the cultural and structural forces that shape the lived experiences of individuals and the collective groups" (p. 378). To understand this phenomenon, Latino/a families' epistemology provided a framework to learn from recently arrived Salvadoran parents on their perspectives about their children's education. Although perspectives differ from one recently arrived Salvadoran parent to another, there may be overarching views that can be applicable to the experiences of other recently arrived Salvadoran parents.

Hidalgo (1999, 2005) generated three standards that encompass an epistemology for Latino/a families: (1) collective experiences of racial oppression; (2) importance of family and shared cultural values; and (3) resistance to subjugation. The first standard involves the collective experiences of racial oppression that Latinx families experience in the U.S. and the connections they make with their colonizing history of racial mixing in Latin America. Hidalgo (2005) explained that racial issues in society are understood and constructed in relation to others. For example, El Salvador promoted the *blanqueamiento,* whitening initiative, during the 1900s, which asked people to intermarry with white people to improve the race (Benitez, 2005; PNUD, 2003). This is an example showing that for Salvadorans living in El Salvador and in the U.S. "whiteness is always at the center, whereas non-white people are marginalized as 'other'" (Hidalgo, 2005, p. 380). Hidalgo suggested that the colonial history in Latin America has influenced Latinx' collective experiences of racism in society. This first standard recognizes that Latinx' colonizing history of racism help families not only to resist but also to adapt in the U.S. (Hidalgo, 2005; Quiñones & Marquez Kiyana, 2014).

The second standard suggests that Latinx families, value and are greatly committed to family unity. Hidalgo (2005) implied that Latinx preserve history, language, and traditions to pass on to newer generations. In relation to family structure, mutual collaboration with each other is also important for family dynamics to work. Latinx maintain close relationships with extended family members to retain their cultural values and connections with their home countries (Hidalgo, 2005). This standard exemplifies how family unity and shared cultural values provide a safe space for Latinx

families to resist against an oppressive society (Hidalgo, 2005). The third standard emphasizes that Latinx families construct knowledge from their shared cultural values to resist oppression. Hidalgo (2005) explained that Latinx families validate their culture and claim the power of their knowledge to resist subjugation. This standard shows how Latinx use their cultural values to overcome oppressive situations (Quiñones & Marquez Kiyana, 2014).

Hidalgo (2005) argued that Latino/a families' epistemology has deep roots in the work of African American, Chicana, and Puerto Rican authors (Anzaldúa, 1987; Baca Zinn, 1995; Hill Collins, 1991; Mullings, 1997; Rodríguez, Sánchez-Korrol, & Alers, 1980; Sánchez-Korrol, 1980; Zambrana, 1982, 1995). In other words, this epistemology focuses on issues that are relevant to Latinx communities because it underscores experiences of oppression and resistance. The Latino/a families' epistemology is a response to qualitative research designs that are not always the best fit when working with and for Latinx communities (Hidalgo, 2005). Most importantly, the Latino/a family epistemology validates the knowledge of Latinx as a pivotal part of qualitative research (Hidalgo, 2005).

I selected the Latino/a families' epistemology to "provide a structure for making sense of experience" (Schwandt, 2007, p. 87), and to avoid simplifying the perspectives of recently arrived Salvadoran parents about education. Intersectionality theory helped to avoid generalizing the perspectives of recently arrived Salvadoran parents in this study. Additionally, Hahn Tapper (2013) underscored that intersectionality advocates for social justice because it is unusual for recently arrived Salvadoran or other Latinx parents "to

internalize that they are “victims” and that the other group are the “perpetrators” (also understood as “oppressed” and “oppressors,” respectively” (p. 422). Thus, intersectionality theory provided a space for participants to voice their perspectives in this study.

Slattery (2013) asserted that “it is a false dichotomy to assume that theory and practice do not inform each other” (p. 30). The use of intersectionality theory (Baca Zinn & Thornton Dill, 1996; Collins, 2000; Crenshaw, 1991), and Latino/a families’ epistemology (Hidalgo, 1999, 2005) appropriately informed the research question for this study: What perspectives do recently arrived Salvadoran parents have about their children’s education? It also addressed the sub-questions: How do recently arrived Salvadoran parents define their role in their children’s education? What educational practices do recently arrived Salvadoran parents describe doing at home to support their children’s learning, development, and achievement?

Complementing intersectionality theory with Latino/a families’ epistemology helped answer the research questions by learning from the ways recently arrived Salvadoran parents understand their children’s education and experience their process of resisting and adapting in the U.S. Moreover, the Latino/a families’ epistemology supported the process of analysis to answer the research questions by using Hidalgo’s (1999, 2005) three essential standards of the Latino/a families’ epistemology: (1) collective experiences of racial oppression; (2) importance of family and shared cultural values; and (3) resistance to subjugation. These standards provided a guide for a better

understanding of the resources that recently arrived Salvadoran parents and their children need to succeed in schools.

Figure 1 illustrates the way the theoretical framework (i.e., intersectionality theory and Latino/a families' epistemology) was used as a theoretical lens to answer the research questions. This study used intersectionality theory to explain that differences and commonalities exist among recently arrived Salvadoran parents. The standards from Latino/a families' epistemology provided the guide to rationalize the perspectives that recently arrived Salvadoran parents have about their children's education. However, because these perspectives cannot be concluded about all recently arrived Salvadoran parents or all Latinx, intersectionality theory served as a critical tool to avoid making generalizations.

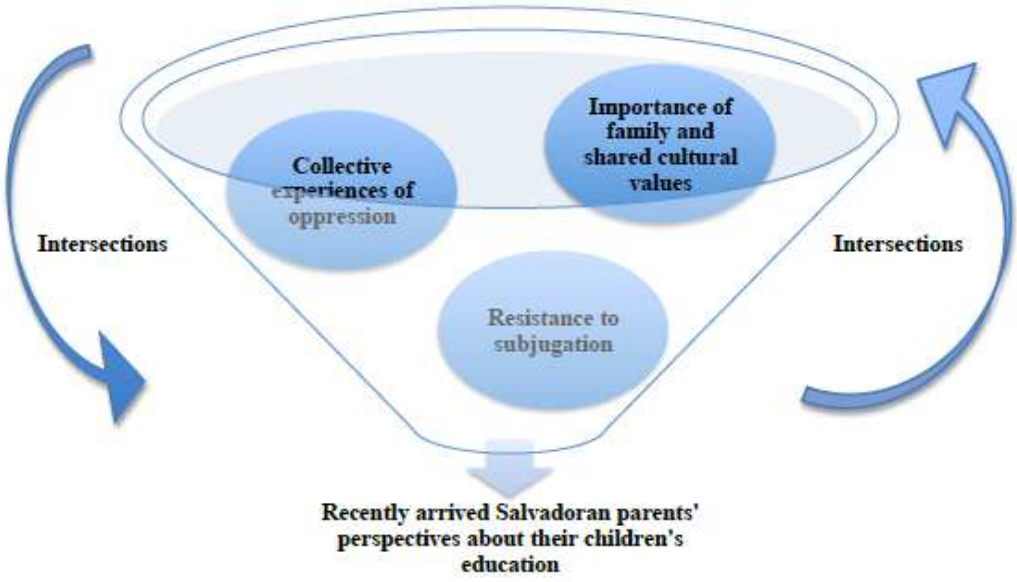

Figure 1. Theoretical framework as a lens to rationalize recently arrived Salvadoran parents' perspectives about their children's education

It is also important to note that I selected this framework in agreement with Gillborn's (2015) description of tools "of analysis and resistance rather than as academic tactic or fashion" (p. 279). Thus, this theoretical framework did not intend to explain recently arrived Salvadoran parents' perspectives about their children's education in a psychological manner. Rather, this combined framework allowed me to examine recently arrived Salvadoran parents' perspectives in context and analyze their opinions.

Conclusion

This chapter included the literature review and theoretical framework of this study. The literature review explained the understandings and misunderstandings that often exist between Latinx parents and teachers in U.S. schools and summarized the research that suggests ways of re-defining Latinx parent-teacher collaboration that support students' learning, development, and achievement. Beyond advocating for U.S. schools to provide the services that recently arrived Salvadoran students and parents need, this study addressed a significant gap in the literature that explores the impact of learning from this community to better serve the needs of Salvadorans.

This chapter concluded by explaining that within the context of this study, intersectionality theory and Latino/a families' epistemology were suited to expand the current literature and explore the development of collaborative relationships with recently arrived Salvadoran parents. To explore this further, in the following chapter I describe how I drew upon empirical data gathered from recently arrived Salvadoran parents using *testimonios* as a methodology to answer the research questions.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODS

The previous chapter illustrated the literature on approaches that re-defined Latinx parent-teacher collaboration to support students' learning, development, and achievement and described the theoretical framework that was used in this study. In this chapter, I explain the rationale for using a qualitative research design and *testimonios*[1] as a methodology to grasp the perspectives that recently arrived Salvadoran parents have about their children's education.

I begin with a detailed description of the research design and the community where this study was conducted. Then, I provide a rationale for using qualitative research methods. I conclude with a description of data gathering and analysis methods including participants, procedures, my positionality and role as a researcher, and research design's strengths and limitations.

Research Design

The qualitative research design for this study is aligned with my interest in understanding the way people interpret their own experiences (Merriam, 2009). In this qualitative study (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005), I used *testimonio* as "both a product and process" (Delgado Bernal, Burciaga & Carmona, 2012, p. 365). Further, I selected *testimonio* because is "a methodological tool that supports critical reflection, healing, and

[1]I chose not to continue translating the word *testimonio/s* into English in this study to resist from continuously having "to cater to a monolingual Anglophone audience" (Urrieta & Villenas, 2013, p. 532).

collective memory through the act of *testimoniando,* providing one's *testimonio*, to testify" (Pérez Huber & Cueva, 2012, p. 396).

Immigrant families need to be given the opportunity to contribute to the decision-making in schools. However, their voices are still not included in the education system of an increasingly linguistically and culturally diverse student body (Jasis & Ordoñez-Jasis, 2012; Olivos & Quintana de Valladolid, 2005; Pacheco & Gutiérrez, 2009). This absence of immigrant voices in schools demonstrates the need for their stories to be told and for their experiences to be acknowledged.

Examining the origin of *testimonios*, Pérez Huber (2010) explains that *testimonios* were first utilized as a research tool in Latin American literature to record the oppressive conditions people experience during wars. *Testimonios* empower disenfranchised groups of people that have been historically overlooked and heal their aggressions (Cienfuegos & Monelli, 1983). Cienfuegos and Monelli (1983) suggested that *testimonios* have therapeutic value that helps people overcome personal suffering and allows them to tell their story through remembering each detail including hurtful and traumatic experiences.

Beverley (2005) suggested that a *testimonio* is "by nature a demotic and heterogeneous form, so any formal definition of it is bound to be too limiting" (p. 547). However, Delgado Bernal and colleagues (2012) defined a *testimonio* as "an approach that incorporates political, social, historical, and cultural histories that accompany one's life experiences as a means to bring about change through consciousness-raising" (p. 364). In other words, *testimonios* confront the inequities of the status quo in educational

institutions and gives the power back to the communities of color (Delgado Bernal et al., 2012).

Narrative approaches such as *testimonios* help theorize new knowledge including the stories from marginalized groups in society (Prieto & Villenas, 2012). Prieto and Villenas explained that *testimonios* are inherently political because they come from communities experiencing inequities and can serve as information for others to take action. For this reason, *testimoniantes,* the individuals telling a story, provide the evidence to the inequities affecting their communities (Prieto & Villenas, 2012). *Testimonios* represent the collective stories from the testimoniantes' communities that can be theorized and promote agency and healing.

Building on Moraga's (2002) vision of a theory in the flesh, *testimonios* are instruments that create new knowledge gained from collected insights of oppression, which allow us to confirm our beliefs (Delgado Bernal et al., 2012). Schools using traditional parent involvement have disempowered immigrant families (Doucet, 2011; Jasis & Ordoñez-Jasis, 2012; Olivos & Quintana de Valladolid, 2005; Pacheco & Gutiérrez, 2009). I used *testimonios* as the methodology to explore the perspectives that recently arrived Salvadoran parents have about their children's education. Historically, the Latin American approach of *testimonios* was used during times of war to gather the stories from oppressed people. This approach has a direct connection with recently arrived Salvadorans because, as discussed in chapter I, Salvadorans are still experiencing the aftermath of the civil war.

El Pulgarcito de América in Washington, D.C.

El Salvador is a country known for its friendly people and is also known as *el Pulgarcito de América*, literally meaning the thumb of the Americas, because it is the smallest country in the Americas. Coincidentally, Salvadoran immigrants have established communities in the small city of Washington, D.C. with only a total area of 68.34 square miles. I decided to conduct this study in Washington, D.C. because Salvadorans are the largest group of the Latinx population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). Living in Washington, D.C., it feels like I'm back *en mi país*, in my country, El Salvador. The local Spanish-language television stations present news directly from El Salvador and announce events happening in Washington, D.C. for the Salvadoran community.

I walk around Washington, D.C. and I hear many people speaking Spanish in our Salvadoran accent and saying words like *cipota*, young girl, or *pisto*, money. I also see many Salvadoran restaurants and vendors selling delicious Salvadoran treats. In the summer, I can find refreshing treats like *charamuscas,* frozen flavored milk packaged in clear plastic bags. In the winter, I can find warm treats like *atol de elote*, warm drink made of corn. And, all year-round I can always buy the products (e.g., medicines, spices, snacks) that I used to enjoy growing up in El Salvador.

Due to my identity as a Salvadoran immigrant and my familiarity to places where Salvadorans frequently visit, I selected *pupuserias* in D.C. to conduct my study because they are restaurants where Salvadorans enjoy their traditional cuisine: *las pupusas*. *Pupusas* are handmade thick *tortillas* filled with cheese, refried beans, and/or pork. The locations of the *pupuserias* varied and depended on my participants' convenience.

Data Gathering and Instrumentation

In this study, I utilized qualitative methods of data gathering because the research questions and theoretical framework required a comprehensive approach to understand the perspectives that recently arrived Salvadoran parents have about their children's education. I selected qualitative methods to underscore the value of my participants' *testimonios* as the main focus of this study. I used the qualitative method of interviews to gather data because this technique allowed my participants to relive past experiences that are not possible to duplicate (Merriam, 2009).

Participants

The participants in this study were selected using purposeful sampling. Through purposeful sampling, participants were selected based on a sample that offered the best insight to answer the research questions (Creswell, 2008). I also used snowball sampling (Patton, 1990), which consisted of finding a few participants who met the criteria to participate in this study and who were able to refer me to other participants who also met the criteria as a strategy to recruit additional participants (Merriam, 2009). Two participants, assisted me to recruit the rest of my participants by referring me to other recently arrived Salvadoran parents they knew, and who also met the criteria to participate in this study.

In this study, all participants met the following criteria: (1) they needed to be recently arrived parents from El Salvador who have been in the U.S. for no longer than a year, (2) they needed to be born and raised in El Salvador, (3) they needed to identify as Salvadorans, and (4) they needed to have biological children between the ages of 4-17

years old enrolled in the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) system. Six recently arrived Salvadoran parents agreed to participate in the study – five mothers and one father. Table 1 details the participants' gender, number of children living in the U.S. and their children's ages, the *departamento* of El Salvador where they are from, and the time they have living in the U.S.

Table 1

Participant Demographics

Participant	Pseudonym	Gender	Number of Children in the U.S.	Ages of Children	*Departamento* of El Salvador	Time Living in the U.S.
Participant 1	Camila	Female	1	8	San Miguel	3 months
Participant 2	Vilma	Female	1	10	San Vicente	4 months
Participant 3	Sonia	Female	3	4, 8, 14	San Miguel	11 months
Participant 4	Melida	Female	3	10, 16, 17	San Miguel	11 months
Participant 5	Lydia	Female	1	15	La Libertad	12 months
Participant 6	Nelson	Male	3	5, 9, 15	San Miguel	12 months

While recognizing that recently arrived Salvadoran parents may speak indigenous languages or dialects from El Salvador, the recruitment process for the participants was

conducted in the Spanish language. During the recruitment process, the goal was to recruit six participants to gather sufficient data to answer the research questions. When I met with potential participants, I explained the purpose of the study, my research questions, and compensation for participation (see Appendix A). Moreover, I informed potential participants that there were not foreseeable risks involved in participation in the study other than a possible discomfort from sharing their personal experiences about being recently arrived Salvadoran parents. I assured potential participants that they did not have to discuss any information regarding their immigration status; as well as informing them that their participation was completely voluntary. To protect participants' privacy about themselves and their families, I created pseudonyms to discuss the findings of this study.

Data Collection Procedures

Understanding the importance of building rapport and respect with my participants (Madison, 2005), I provided a safe space for all of my participants to feel comfortable sharing their *testimonios*. Similarly important, it was my responsibility in this study to assure confidentiality by using pseudonyms for the participants and their families, and by not disclosing any participant characteristics to protect their identities' anonymity and privacy. Also, my goal was to make sure that my participants' voices were accurately represented in this study. Thus, it was pivotal for me to give my participants the necessary attention to their *testimonios*. I remained consistent with the data collection process to stay true to my goals.

Interviews

The most important data for my study were the participants' *testimonios* that occurred through one-time interviews. Interviews served as the primary source of the data collected. I used the semi-structured format for my interviews (Fontana & Frey, 2000). Semi-structured interviews are a combination of preliminary questions and a flexible space for open-ended questions to emerge (Merriam, 2009). Semi-structured interviews enabled me to improvise new questions based on participants' responses. I interviewed all participants individually using the same procedure. The questions that were used to gather the participants' *testimonios* are listed in the interview protocol (see Appendix C). I also collected field notes during the interviews to capture pivotal moments while *testimoniantes* are sharing their stories, and to remind myself of any clarifying questions and additional notes (Merriam, 2009). The recorded field notes during the interviews were used for later analysis.

The following procedures were conducted for consistency during the interviews: (1) interviews took place in familiar and public spaces for participants (i.e., pupuserias), (2) participants' *testimonios* were recorded using a digital audio recorder device (Beverley, 2005), (3) interviews were conducted in the Spanish language, (4) interviews took as long as the participants needed to answer the research questions, (5) field notes were taken during the interviews, and (6) the collected data was saved on my computer devise using a secure file.

Data Analysis Procedures

After the data was collected (i.e., *testimonios* and field notes) from participants, I transcribed the audio-recorded *testimonios* to facilitate the process of analysis (Merriam, 2009). I used ExpressScribe software to transcribe the data. In addition to using this software, I also used the web-based software of data analysis called Dedoose to examine the data and to identify findings.

To analyze my data, I used an inductive analysis approach for the data to generate themes as opposed to creating predetermined themes onto the data collected. An inductive analysis is a process that starts from the data and moves to a broader conclusion (Schwandt, 2007). Also, I used my theoretical framework (i.e., intersectionality theory and Latino/a families' epistemology) as a guide to organize the data collected. Intersectionality theory was the first tool to organize the data because it helped to identify the unique and different perspectives that recently arrived Salvadoran parents have. Hidalgo's (1999, 2005) three standards of Latino/a families' epistemology were used to provide categories: (1) collective experiences of oppression; (2) importance of family and shared cultural values; and (3) resistance to subjugation. These standards guided the coding of the interviews and facilitated the data interpretation. However, intersectionality theory prevented limiting the findings to only these three categories. Intersectionality theory allowed for subcategories to emerge organically. Also, this theoretical framework was used as a lens to draw conclusions and implications for this study (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Table 2 shows the coding scheme used for data analysis. The direct quotes of participants have been conceptually translated from Spanish to English (see Appendix D).

Table 2

Coding Scheme

Research Question: What perspectives do recently arrived Salvadoran parents have about their children's education?		
Category	**Theme**	**Direct Quote**
Collective experiences of oppression	Communication	"Que traten de conocer más a los padres." (Vilma, September 13, 2016). "Más enfoque en los papás." (Camila, August 30, 2016).
	Understanding	"Uno pasa cosas feas para llegar aquí." (Sonia, September 20, 2016). "Que me le tuviera un poquito más de paciencia." (Lydia, September 20, 2016).
	Counseling	"Necesitamos una terapia psicológica porque nuestro país vive en violencia." (Camila, August 30, 2016).
	Information	"Salieramos beneficiados, si tuvieramos apoyo [sobre información de vivienda y trabajos], son cosas que son importantes, es lo más necesario." (Lydia, September 20, 2016). "Talleres para que (los niños) vayan poniendose un objetivo de lo que ellos quieren ser cuando sean grandes." (Vilma, September 13, 2016).

Sub-question 1: How do recently arrived Salvadoran parents define their role in their children's education?		
Category	**Theme**	**Direct Quote**
Importance of family and shared cultural values	Support System	"¡Vaya, hija, gracias a Dios!" (Melida, September 20, 2016).
Sub-question 2: What educational practices do recently arrived Salvadoran parents describe doing at home to support their children's learning, development, and achievement?		
Category	**Theme**	**Direct Quote**
Resistance to subjugation	Resources	"Busco el traductor en el teléfono. Esto dice así, esto dice tal cosa, entonces vamos descifrando y así logramos hacer la tarea. Esa es la manera qué yo estoy apoyando." (Camila, August 30, 2016).

Throughout this study, I wanted to make sure that the participants' voices were represented. For this reason, I identified direct quotes from the participants' *testimonios* that represented the emerged themes of the study. I did not translate participants' quotes because pivotal understandings can get lost during the translation process. As Delgado Bernal and colleagues (2012) suggested "one must be cautious to translate conceptually rather than literally because in translating particular terms, nuances get lost, and we run the risk of reproducing language marginalization" (p. 365). I then discussed the meaning and implications of these quotes.

The meanings of these quotes were interpreted using *reflexión*, reflexivity, which Lincoln and Guba (2000) described as "the process of reflecting critically on the self as a researcher, the 'human as instrument'" (p. 183). Espino, Vega, Rendón, Ranero, and

Muñiz (2012) recommended that, "through *reflexión* we move beyond self-reflection and self-inquiry toward a shared experience where our dialogue partners reflect our truths back to us as they share their own life journeys" (p. 445). In this study, my dialog partners were my participants. In other words, my participants became involved in the process of *reflexión* by confirming the accuracy of my understandings. Thus, *reflexión* corroborated the participants' knowledge and voices that *testimonios* advocates for giving them their role as my dialogue partners who supported me through reflecting back on my findings (Cavanagh et al., 2014; Delgado Bernal et al., 2012; Espino et al., 2012). Findings were described using the qualitative research approach of thick description (Geertz, 1973) to explain the themes identified that answered the research questions.

Validity

I used the critical process of triangulation to assure validity and reliability in this study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Triangulation happened by crosschecking and comparing all of the data collected from the participants' *testimonios* and the field notes (Merriam, 2009). When it comes to external validity in this study, I did not make generalized claims about recently arrived Salvadoran parents. Instead, I used my participants' *testimonios* and compared them with all of the collected data, as the beginning process to demonstrate the implications that exist for educators in supporting recently arrived Salvadoran parents and their children.

Member checking. The internal validity or credibility of this study was measured by member checks from all of the participants (Merriam, 2009). The member checking process consisted on asking participants to review my data and analysis. Member

checking was done informally over the phone to share my initial conclusions with participants. Participants used the process of *reflexión* to confirm if my interpretations of their *testimonios* and the field notes were accurate. After member checking concluded, I modified my data interpretations to accurately represent my participants' *testimonios.*

Positionality and Researcher Role

Positionality encourages researchers to recognize their privilege, biases, and authority while conducting studies (Davies, 1999). In this study, I acknowledged the various aspects of my positionality that may have influenced the participants' *testimonios* and my interpretations of findings. This is why I recognize that: (1) I was born and raised in El Salvador; (2) I am an immigrant in the U.S.; (3) I struggle learning the English language; (4) I am a teacher who has worked with the Latinx community; and (5) I consider myself an educational advocate.

My positionalities impacted my researcher role throughout this study because of the shared experiences that I have with participants. As a result, I consistently acknowledged my positionality in my field notes during interviews and I conducted myself on a professional manner to avoid showing my emotions during interviews. However, to avoid being perceived as a colonizer by my participants (Villenas, 1996), my role in this study was to build a rapport with participants based on a partnership (Rosaldo, 1989). As I also shared my *testimonio* in Chapter I, I had the responsibility to give my participants the collaborative role of my dialog partners for their contributions to be even more valued and recognized (Espino et al., 2012; Delgado Bernal et al., 2012). In other words, my participants were my *confirmantes,* validators, who helped me *reflexionar mis*

descubrimientos, reflect on my discoveries, in this study. It was also my responsibility to pay careful attention to their privacy, as any effective researcher must do (Madison, 2005).

Research Design Strengths

In the context of this study, the research design that I selected offers various strengths. *Testimonios* as a methodology provided recently arrived Salvadoran parents with the opportunity to share their perspectives about their children's education and experiences in U.S. schools. Framed in *testimonios*, my research was intended to challenge school structures that disenfranchise Latinx parents' opinions and only implement traditional views of parent involvement (Jasis & Ordoñez-Jasis, 2012). As the Latina Feminist Group (2001) implied that *testimonio* allows me to deeply think about the differences and similarities that exist in individual's stories and help to resist against dominant structures. This is how *testimonios as a methodology* empowers marginalized communities by treating them with the same respect that all families in schools deserve.

Testimonios guided the selection criteria for data collection tools and analysis procedures that were linguistically and culturally relevant for my participants. Interviews in the form of *testimonios* were conducted in the Spanish language in comfortable settings where participants did not feel intimidated or threatened in any way. In addition to *testimonios*, field notes were utilized to provide holistic understandings in this study. As suggested by *testimonios* and my theoretical framework (i.e., intersectionality theory and Latino/a families' epistemology), I used *reflexiones* to rationalize participants' experiences. The theoretical framework of this study also facilitated the de-construction

of the data and was used as a lens to disseminate the findings, conclusions, and implications.

The most important aspect of this research design was that it placed participants as the main focus of this study. I designed this study by giving *todo el respeto y dignidad que se merecen los participantes*, all the respect and dignity that all the participants deserve. Lastly, the design of this study was conducive to valid and reliable qualitative research.

Limitations

This study examined the perspectives that six recently arrived Salvadoran parents have about their children's education in Washington, D.C. Recognizing the geographical and small sample size limitations, my goal with this study was to only learn from six participants in a specific context and setting. The findings from this study can be used as a resource for educators and stakeholders to modify the services they offer to recently arrived Salvadoran parents, however, I recognize the limitation that my findings can only directly relate to the public schools in Washington, D.C. Therefore, I did not intend to draw generalized conclusions and implications to greater populations of other recently arrived immigrants in different geographical areas and settings.

Although I provided a thick description (Geertz, 1973) to describe this study's context and setting, participants, and findings in as much detail as possible, this study is not transferable to other educators and stakeholders in which their situations may relate to my study. In Washington, D.C., researchers should continue to investigate the experiences of Salvadoran parents who have been in the U.S. longer than a year as

parents' perspectives may change over time. My findings also indicated that research should continue to conduct research pertaining to the unique needs of the Salvadoran community living in various parts of the U.S.

Conclusion

My goal was to design a research methodology complimentary with the theoretical framework described in chapter II to accomplish what Delgado Bernal and colleagues (2012) described as "giving voice to silences, representing the other, reclaiming authority to narrate, and disentangling questions surrounding legitimate truth" (p. 365). An important aspect of my methodology was the process of *reflexión* (Espino et al., 2012) as the connectedness between methodology and theoretical framework throughout this study. *Reflexión* allowed underscoring the agency that was needed to acknowledge the inequities that exist in educational institutions told by individual's *testimonios* representing oppressed communities (Delgado Bernal et al., 2012). The next chapter depicts the findings from my participants' *testimonios* using intersectionality theory and the Latino/a families' epistemology as lenses to analyze the collected data to answer each research question.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

In this chapter, I provide a description of each of my participants[1] to better understand the perspectives they brought to this study. Next, I answer the research question that guided this study: What perspectives do recently arrived Salvadoran parents have about their children's education? Additionally, I answer the following sub-questions: How do recently arrived Salvadoran parents define their role in their children's education? What educational practices do recently arrived Salvadoran parents describe doing at home to support their children's learning, development, and achievement? I used intersectionality theory and the Latino/a families' epistemology to analyze participants' *testimonios*. Then, I identified the themes for each research question. I conclude this chapter with a summary of the study.

Description of Participants

Camila

Camila is a single mother. She has an eight year old daughter named Sofia. Sofia attends a public school in DCPS and is enrolled in the third grade. Camila also has a twenty year old son named Pablo who is waiting for an opportunity to immigrate to the U.S. in the near future. Camila and her children are from the *departamento* of San Miguel located in the Eastern region of El Salvador. She brought Sofia to the U.S. to offer her a

[1]All names that appear in this study (with the exception of the author's) are pseudonyms to maintain participants' and their families' confidentiality.

safer environment, a better education, and to financially support Pablo, her parents, and siblings in El Salvador. Camila came directly to Washington, D.C. because her aunt and nephew have lived in this community for many years and were able to offer her a place to stay with Sofia while she gets her own place.

Camila is a registered nurse in El Salvador and has always continued her education to improve in her profession. However, she is unable to work as a nurse in the U.S. because she does not speak English and she needs to complete additional educational requirements. Currently, she has a full time job working in the kitchen of a Mexican restaurant. She works different shifts during the week and relies on her aunt and nephew to pick up Sofia after school or to watch her on the days she gets off late from work. Camila attends classes to learn English in the mornings before she goes to work at a community center that provides free English classes to recently arrived immigrants from different countries but mostly Central American immigrants. She shared that she enjoyed participating in this study because she has never been asked before about the perspectives she has for Sofia's education. After her interview, Camila helped me recruit another participant, Vilma, she knew from her English class.

Vilma

Vilma is a single mother. She has a ten year old son named Julio. Julio attends a public school in DCPS and is enrolled in the fifth grade. They are from the *departamento* of San Vicente located in the Central region of El Salvador. Vilma brought Julio to the U.S. because of the unsafe conditions in El Salvador and to offer him a prosperous future with a better education. Vilma did not know anyone in Washington, D.C. when she

arrived with Julio, however, now she has developed friendships with her roommate, neighbors, co-workers, and fellow students in her English class.

Vilma completed high school with a focus on accounting in El Salvador. Currently, she has a seasonal job in a cleaning company. She works in the afternoons so she relies on her friend and roommate to look after Julio when he gets home from school. Vilma attends free English classes in the mornings at the same community center where she met Camila. Vilma shared that she enjoyed participating in this study because schools should consider the opinions of recently arrived Salvadoran parents. Vilma also shared that this is the first time she has ever been asked about her views on the education that she wants for Julio.

Sonia

Sonia is the mother of three children and lives with her husband, Braulio. All of their children attend public schools in DCPS. Their oldest daughter's name is Flor. Flor is 14 years old and is enrolled in the night grade. Their middle son's name is Luis. Luis is eight years and is enrolled in the third grade. Their youngest son's name is Walter. Walter is four years old and is enrolled in pre-school. Sonia and her family are from the *departamento* of San Miguel located in the Eastern region of El Salvador. Sonia and Braulio brought their children to the U.S. because of the dangers caused by *maras*, gangs, and to offer their children better opportunities that will prepare them for a successful future. Braulio came to Washington, D.C. before Sonia and their children so he could have a place for them to stay when they got here.

Sonia attended school up to the sixth grade in El Salvador. Sonia shared that she was very poor growing up and started working at a very young age to help her mother. Sonia currently works in the kitchen of an Italian restaurant in the afternoons and comes home late at night. She is also starting to earn extra money by cleaning houses. While she is at work, Braulio takes care of their children. In the mornings, Sonia prepares her children breakfast and helps them get ready for school. Braulio takes her children to school while Sonia stays at home cleaning and preparing the food for her children to eat in the afternoon. Sonia used to take free English classes in the mornings at the elementary school her younger children attend. Now, Sonia shared that she is learning more English at work by talking with her co-workers. Sonia knew other recently arrived Salvadoran parents who met the criteria for this study. She helped me recruit three other participants: Melida, Lydia, and Nelson.

Melida

Melida is the mother of three children and lives with her husband, Carlos. All of their children attend public schools in DCPS. Their oldest daughter's name is Fátima. Fátima is 17 years old but is currently in the ninth grade because the school placed her at a lower grade level to learn English and to make up credits she needs to graduate high school. Their middle son's name is Felipe. Felipe is 16 years old and is also attending the ninth grade. Their youngest daughter's name is Clara. Clara is 10 years old and is attending the fifth grade. Melida and her family are from the *departamento* of San Miguel located in the Eastern region of El Salvador. Melida and Carlos brought their children to the U.S. to give them a safer and better future away from the violence they experienced in

El Salvador. Carlos moved to Washington, D.C. before Melida and their children did so he could find a stable job and start earning a salary before they got here.

Melida attended school up to the sixth grade in El Salvador. Melida currently works different shifts in the kitchen of an Italian restaurant where she works with Sonia. Whenever Melida is not working, she makes sure her home is clean and her children always have food to eat when they come home from school. Melida shared that she is glad to be in the U.S. with all of her children because she feels safer even though they now live in a small apartment. She believes in providing her children with everything they need, such as a stable home and food, so they do not have to worry about anything except school.

Lydia

Lydia is the mother of two and lives with her husband, Marcos. Their oldest daughter's name is Cecilia. Cecilia is 22 years old and stayed in El Salvador with her boyfriend. Their youngest son's name is Gerardo. Gerardo is 16 years old, attends a public school in DCPS, and is enrolled in the tenth grade. Lydia and her family are from the *departamento* of La Libertad located in the Central region of El Salvador. Her husband came to the U.S. first. Marcos immigrated when Gerardo was only 26 days old. Lydia shared that she practically raised Gerardo by herself and feels very proud of the job she has done of raising both of her children in El Salvador. She explained that she came to the U.S. because she wanted to offer Gerardo a better and safer future and to reunite him with his dad, Marcos.

Lydia attended school up to the eight grade in El Salvador. Lydia currently attends English classes every morning at an elementary school near her home that offers free English classes to parents. Lydia does not work, but makes sure her son always has a clean house, a clean school uniform, and nutritious food to eat so he can become successful in school. Lydia is pregnant and expecting another son.

Nelson

Nelson is the father of three children and lives with his wife, Ana. All of their children attend public schools in DCPS. Their oldest daughter's name is Maria. Maria is 15 years old and is enrolled in the ninth grade. Their middle son's name is Javier. Javier is nine years old and is enrolled in the third grade. Their youngest son's name is William. William is five years old and is enrolled in pre-school. Nelson and his family are from the *departamento* of San Miguel located in the Eastern region of El Salvador. Nelson brought his family to the U.S. because he believes this country can offer his children better opportunities for a prosperous future and to give his children a safer life away from the dangers of *maras* that exists in El Salvador. Nelson came to Washington, D.C. before his wife and children because he wanted to make sure his family had a place to stay before they arrived.

Nelson completed high school in El Salvador. He became interested in music since a young age and began playing the guitar. Nelson currently works in a Mexican restaurant singing and playing the guitar in a Mariachi Band. When he gets off from work, Nelson is in charge of picking up his children from school. He feeds them the food that Ana has prepared for them before she left for work. After eating with his children,

Nelson helps them with their homework and puts them to sleep. Nelson used to attend free English classes at an elementary school close by his house. Nelson expressed that he and his wife have divided their responsibilities to take care of their children because they have different work schedules.

In this study, each of my participants represented a piece of the rich and vibrant Salvadoran community in Washington, D.C. All of my participants were excited to share their *testimonios* about the perspectives they have about their children's education with educators and stakeholders to improve the services their children need in schools. They answered the research questions about the type of education they wanted for their children in U.S. schools with confidence. Participants' perspectives about their children's education demonstrated insightful findings.

Findings provided themes for each research question. The themes came directly from the exact words used by my participants during interviews. I also included direct quotes from the participants' *testimonios* in the emerged themes. However, I did not translate participants' quotes word for word because pivotal understandings can get lost during the translation process. Instead, I interpreted participants' quotes conceptually to avoid marginalizing the language of my participants' *testimonios* (Delgado Bernal et al., 2012). By maintaining the direct language of my participants in Spanish, I made sure that my participants' voices were authentically represented as they related to each of the research questions. The subsequent sections depict the findings of each research question and conclude with a summary of the study.

Perspectives of Recently Arrived Salvadoran Parents about their Children's Education

In this section, I answer the research question: What perspectives do recently arrived Salvadoran parents have about their children's education? The following themes depict the participants' perspectives to better serve recently arrived Salvadoran parents and their children: (1) communication, (2) understanding (3) counseling, and (4) information.

Communication

Building relationships. *"Que traten de conocer más a los padres."* When asked about what advice parents would give teachers to improve the relationships between teachers and parents, Vilma responded that teachers need to try harder to meet their students' parents in person to get to know them better. Vilma added:

> Que los maestros conozcan los padres de los niños porque uno cuando está recién llegado no conoce a nadie, entonces es importante de que [la maestra] tenga un trato con los padres por lo menos una vez al mes. De reunirles, o a los tres meses, por lo menos para saber qué se está haciendo con mi hijo.

Vilma shared that recently arrived parents do not know many people and that it is very important for teachers to develop close relationships with parents. She suggested that teachers should meet and interact with parents once a month or every three months to ensure that parents are aware of what their children are doing in school. Vilma felt that she was not offered enough opportunities to meet with Julio's teachers unless she reached out to them. Vilma explained:

> Más que todo, porque de ayí va a depender el comportamiento del niño o cómo puede ser en la escuela o cómo puede ser en la casa porque si en la escuela siempre se porta bien y en la casa hacen un relajo o es lo contrario y uno no sabe, porque no le reportan a uno nada, entonces más que todo es la recomendación a los maestros.

Vilma suggested that teachers become more interested in learning about their students' behavior at home. Vilma thought that this communication should be mutual because she was also interested in knowing about how Julio is behaving at school. She expressed that this communication is necessary because she was not frequently informed about her son's behavior or academic performance.

Similarly, Camila shared that she wanted to know what and how her daughter Sofia is doing in school on a daily basis. She described that she had to take the initiative to ask teachers about how Sofia is doing at school because otherwise she did not receive that information. Moreover, she shared that when she asked Sofia's teachers about how she is doing in school they only give her good feedback. However, Camila also wanted to know about the areas that she needs to give additional support to Sofia at home.

Strenghtening collaboration. *"Más enfoque en los papás."* Camila suggested the use of an orientation for parents to focus more on parents' needs to better support their children at home. She expressed, "Yo pienso que igual que los niños también los papás necesitan a veces como una orientación, ¿Por qué? Mi hija está en la escuela todo el dia, pero yo no." Camila's request for a parent orientation suggested an opportunity for

teachers and parents to come together, get to know each other, and promote mutual communication.

Camila, Lydia, Vilma, and Nelson indicated having challenges due to the lack of communication about school policies and the expectations for parents and students. For example, Camila explained that parents need more information about the daily activities in schools. Camila described that she felt misinformed about the day-to-day school information from Sofia's school. Lydia and Vilma also felt concerned that their children were telling them that they are not eating at school. They stated that they did not know about what the school served their students to eat during breakfast and lunchtime.

Additionally, Nelson shared that he was not aware of the consequences for the students who are not following the rules of the school where his daughter, Maria, attends:

> Yo he visto jovenes que han entrado a la escuela, por el vestuario no quieren aceptar [las reglas], las reglas son de vestirse bien, pero a veces no quieren optar por hacerlo o fumar antes de entrar. Yo he visto eso.

Nelson recalled seeing many students not following school rules such as the dress code and observed students smoking outside of the school. He wondered about how much the school is enforcing rules and if there are any consequences for those students who do not follow school policies. Nelson expressed this concern because he did not want Maria to stop following the school's expectations or become part of groups of students who are causing trouble. Lydia also expressed her concern about not knowing about school issues such as fights between students that she never hears about from any teacher or administrator.

Also noteworthy, all participants agreed that there is not enough support to help their children with homework. In fact, all of the participants responded that all the homework that their children bring home is only in the English language. All participants noted that the instructions for homework assignments are never in Spanish and that they had difficulties understanding what they needed to do to help their children. For example, Sonia requested additional homework instructions in Spanish to better help her children at home. Sonia stated, "Que [los maestros] nos mandaran una copia [de la tarea] en español o por lo menos un ejemplo." Sonia suggested that teachers send copies of the homework instructions to parents in Spanish or at the very least to send an example of what children need to do in their homework so parents have a better understanding of the assignments.

Camila even wondered how other recently arrived Salvadoran parents who do not know how to read and write in Spanish and who do not have any resources at home, such as dictionaries or electronic translators, were able to support their children academically. Camila shared what she told one of Sofia's teachers the first week of school:

> Yo no le puedo ayudar con la tarea, la primera semana, o sea, cómo le voy a ayudar, yo no tengo ni un libro, apenas cargo un diccionario en inglés y en español porque me lo traje, eso es bueno, pero no sé ni traducir algo, y gracias a Dios yo sé leer y escribir, y las personas qué no lo pueden hacer, se les hace más dificil, ¿Cómo le hacen para ayudar a sus hijos? Entonces, eso también es muy importante, qué no todas las personas tenemos un nivel académico. No todos los

> papás, entonces ahí, hay unos papás qué saben a penas poner su nombre o lo más necesario, entonces ahí, es también enfocarse a ellos.

Camila expressed her concern about how teachers are unaware that some parents are barely able to write their own name and know only basic academic skills. Camila explained that even though she has academic degrees in nursing in El Salvador she struggled to help Sofia with her homework and wondered how parents without a formal education can possibly help their children with homework. She stressed that teachers need to keep in mind that not all parents have the abilities to support their children at home. Similarly, Sonia stated that her husband, Braulio, was able to help her children with homework because he completed high school in El Salvador. However, she also stated that it was still difficult for Braulio to assist her children because he did not speak English.

Understanding

The hardships of immigrating to the U.S. *"Uno pasa cosas feas para llegar aquí."* Sonia wanted teachers to understand that some Salvadoran immigrants experience dangers getting to the U.S. Understanding recently arrived Salvadoran immigrant parents and their children is especially important for this community because of the hardships that some of them lived on their way to the U.S. For example, Vilma said:

> Llegar hasta aquí no es fácil y pasamos muchas cosas que a lo mejor nadie se las imagina. Qué porque [los inmigrantes] estamos fuertes y queremos sobresalir llegamos hasta donde estamos pero en ocaciones, nos ven de menos. Con mucho

> racismo para con nosotros. Entonces creo que todos somos humanos y todos merecemos respeto más que todo.

Vilma shared that getting to the U.S. was not easy and that she has gone through experiences that were unimaginable for some people. She also added that just because immigrans are resilient and come here for a better life does not mean that they should be mistreated. Vilma said that on many occasions, immigrants feel discriminated and experience racism. She explained that all human beings deserve respect no matter where they come from or who they are.

Nelson shared that the sacrifices that he and his wife Ana have made to come to the U.S. were all worth it. Nelson explained that he did not regret immigrating to the U.S. because his children, Maria, Javier, and William have a better future here. Nelson explained, "Mi decisión de vivir acá, bueno que Dios me ha permitido estar hasta hoy aquí es para darle un mejor futuro a mis hijos." Nelson expressed that he took the decision to come to the U.S. to give his children a better future. Nelson concluded his *testimonio* by stating that he wanted to relay the message to teachers that he felt, "Muy agradecido," very greatful, to be here with his family.

The hardships of learning English. *"Que me le tuviera un poquito más de paciencia."* When I asked Lydia about any negative experiences she has had in the school her son, Gerardo, attended, Lydia requested more patience from teachers. Lydia recalled a negative experience about the hardships of learning English during a meeting she had with one of Gerardo's teachers:

> Hubo una profesora que ella no habla nada en español, entonces una vez que tuve yo una reunión con los maestros, le habló al niño [Gerardo] como muy feo, él tenia como cinco meses de estar estudiando y cuando uno viene de su país, no le agarrra mucho al inglés, porque ayá no se habla eso, entonces la profesora como que le gritó feo, hasta yo me sentí mal, en frente de mi, y estaba una niña ahí traduciendo y le gritó bien feo y le dijo de que si no aprendia el inglés le dijo que ella no lo queria en su clase, porque ella no podia hablar español y ella queria que él aprendiera rápido y mira me dió lástima el niño, porque él es valiente, porque un varón es valiente, no llora, así tan fácil, porque él no llora, él ahí mire, a él se le salieron las lágrimas y me dió lástima a él verlo como ella [la maestra] le gritó de feo y a él se le salieron las lágrimas y él me dijo, si en ese momento, se le metió qué no queria ir a la escuela.

Lydia's *testimonio* uncovered the expectation that some teachers hold that recently arrived immigrant students should acquire the English language rapidly. Lydia shared the way this teacher yelled at Gerardo in front of her and told him that he needed to learn English fast even though Gerardo had only been in the U.S. for five months. Lydia expressed the sadness of seeing Gerardo being yelled at by his teacher just because he did not speak English. She revealed the pain of seeing Gerardo in tears and the humiliation he felt for being reprimanded by his teacher for reasons that were out of his control. Lydia shared that after that incident Gerardo did not want to come back to school.

Melida and Sonia asked for more *paciencia*, patience from teachers. They both asked teachers to be more patient with their children. In a similar way, Nelson,

encouraged teachers to have *tolerancia*, tolerance, for all students because they are the future of this country. Overall, understanding is the advice for teachers that resonated from all six participants. All participants felt that teachers need to understand how difficult it is to come to this country without knowing the language. They all suggested for teachers to empathize with their children in their journey to learning English.

All participants suggested that teachers learn Spanish to better serve them in schools. For example, Vilma expressed that she needed to ask the school's secretary to translate for her when she needed to ask Julio's teachers a question because not all of his teachers spoke Spanish. Similarly, the rest of the participants stated that they had to find other teachers or staff who can translate for them because their children's teachers did not always speak Spanish. Lydia shared that sometimes teachers rely on other students to translate for them during parent-teacher meetings, "Ahí estaba otra estudiante para que me traduciera porque la maestra no habla nada de español." Lydia explained that students who are bilingual helped teachers translate for them during meetings because there are some teachers in Gerardo's school who did not speak a word of Spanish.

Counseling

"Necesitamos una terapia psicológica porque nuestro país vive en violencia." Camila answered very confidently when asked about suggestions for services needed in schools to better serve recently arrived Salvadorans. She shared that therapy is needed for not only children but also parents who just arrived to the U.S. from El Salvador due to the violence they have witnessed or experienced. Camila explained:

> Necesitamos una terapia psicológica porque nuestro país vive en violencia, entonces si usted va a El Salvador, o alguien visita El Salvador usted no va a escuchar una noticia favorable, lastimosamente, un muerto por aquí, un muerto por ayá, mataraon a fulano aquí, las maras, los que se dedican a extorsionar, o sea, hay un sin fin de problemas en El Salvador. Entonces yo pienso que tal vez los niños no vivian tan afectados aunque los papás si y uno se viene de ayá pues, huyendo de esos problemas, pues, entonces, si, se necesita una terapia psicológica.

Camila's vivid account about the unfortunate issues that El Salvador is facing includes murders, gangs, and extortions. She expressed the need for Salvadoran parents to receive some type of counseling because it is likely that parents were more affected and traumatized than their children. Participants like Camila and Melida shared that parents tried to shield their children as much as possible from the reality they are living, and as a result they do not take care of their own traumas.

Sonia suggested that schools need to have therapists available to ask children why they and their parents came to the U.S. and learn about the different reasons why Salvadoran come here. Sonia explained that this is important because schools need to know that not all immigrants come to the U.S. based on personal preference, and may have decided to immigrate for reasons of distress. As Sonia described:

> Si se enfocaran [las escuelas] en a cómo por lo menos preguntarles a los niños en la escuela, ya saben que nosotros venimos de sufrir del país, que hubiera alguien un terapista o algo en la escuela y llamaran a cada alumno que viene de diferentes

> países, preguntarles, ¿Por qué haz venido? Porque todos no venimos solo porque queriamos, algo teniamos que haber pasado para dejar nuestro país, yo dejé mi casa.

All six participants explained that the most important reason for leaving El Salvador was due to the violence that the country is experiencing. For example, Melida expressed that her urgency to leave was to provide a safer environment for her children. Melida expressed that she and her family spent nights at a neighbor's house because they did not feel safe in their own home. Melida shared, "En el dia estabamos en la casa, donde viviamos, pero ya en la noche, nosotros buscabamos irnos para otro lado." Like Melida who needed help from a neighbor to find a safe place to spend nights, Sonia had to rely on her neighbor to pick up her children from school because of extortion calls that she received from *mareros*, gang members, telling her to give them money or they will go to her children's school and kill them. Sonia shared:

> Y le llamaba al señor vecino, mire vaya a traerme los niños a la escuela, que me acaban de llamar que me los van a ir a matar a la escuela. ¡Eso es horrible! Ya mis hijos salian de la escuela afligidos y yo corriendo abria el portón y los entraba para dentro y cerraba la puerta. ¡Esa no es vida!

All participants shared similar *testimonios* about the difficult situations they were living in El Salvador. They all reflected on the dangerous living conditions they had that included a consistent fear of gun violence and inability to provide their children a peaceful life. Participants agreed that they felt safer in the U.S., and did not care about leaving their homes and their loved country in search for *más seguridad*, more security.

Melida and Sonia, for instance, explained that it did not matter to them that now they live in a small apartment *amontonados*, crowded, because it is a safer life and the lives of their children is what matters the most. Each participant expressed a similar sentiment of uncertainty and always feeling unsafe in El Salvador while raising their children. As Sonia shared, "Ahora, pasan los muchachos con unas sus pistolas, ¿qué va a querer uno estar en la calle?" Sonia described seeing *mareros* walking around her neighborhood carrying guns creating an environment that did not give her family tranquility and stability.

Participants shared traumatic experiences from their living conditions in El Salvador that motivated them to come to the U.S. in search for safety. The *testimonios* from Camila, Melida, and Sonia depicted the need of counseling for not only recently arrived Salvadoran parents but also for their children to heal from the horrific experiences they lived in El Salvador.

Information

Resources for children. *"Talleres para que* [*los estudiantes*] *vayan poniendose un objetivo de lo que ellos quieren ser cuando sean grandes."* Vilma shared that students need information in schools in the form of workshops. Vilma's quote reflects the belief that participants have for their children to not only go to school but to also set goals to develop their future aspirations and further their education. All of the participants expressed how much they wanted their children to take advantage of all of the opportunities in education that they can get to prepare them for a successful future. For

example, Nelson stated that he could not give his children the education that he wanted for them in El Salvador because the situation there is difficult.

In a similar way, Sonia suggested that schools should offer information to students about the negative aspects of joining gangs so that students are not distracted from all possible educational opportunities. Sonia noticed that the same *maras* that exist in El Salvador are also present in Washington, D.C., such as La Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13) gang. Sonia expressed that she was always advising her children, Flor, Luis, and Walter not to associate with anybody who look like *mareros*. Sonia shared that it is critical for schools to provide information about avoiding gangs to recently arrived Salvadoran students. Sonia explained that this is important because, "Nosotros lo hemos vivido en carne propia," they have directly experienced the violence from *maras* in El Salvador. Sonia, Melida, Lydia, and Nelson were concerned to see that the same *maras* that they were escaping from in El Salvador are also here in the U.S. because they have older children in high school that may be influenced by *mareros.*

Resources for parents. *"Salieramos beneficiados, si tuvieramos apoyo sobre* [*información de vivienda y trabajos*], *son cosas que son importantes, es lo más necesario."* In terms of the type of information that schools can provide for recently arrived Salvadoran parents, Lydia suggested that recently arrived Salvadoran immigrants can benefit from information about day to day nuances that all recently arrived immigrants have to learn living in the U.S. For example, Lydia explained that schools can give parents information about housing because it is difficult for some families to find places to live when they have young children. As Lydia stated, "A las personas que

tienen hijos no se les hace muy fácil conseguir donde vivir, porque la gente discrimina a los niños." Lydia believed that they need information about housing options to know where to live because there are many landlords who discriminate against tenants who have infants and toddlers. She added, "Yo vine directamente aquí con Gerardo porque mi esposo ya había rentado el apartamento antes que nosotros vinieramos. Y lo bueno que Gerardo pues ya está grande pero ahora que venga este [bebé] no sé que vamos a hacer." Lydia explained that her husband, Marcos, had rented the apartment before she and Gerardo arrived because he was already living in the U.S. However, Lydia is now concerned because she is pregnant and soon they will have a newborn in her apartment and she was not sure how her landlord is going to react.

Moreover, Lydia also suggested that schools should provide information about job opportunities for recently arrived parents. She added that this is particularly important for parents who are undocumented. She explained, "Necesitamos trabajar para nuestros hijos y salir adelante. Porque aquí es cara la vida." Lydia emphasized that recently arrived immigrant parents need information about jobs to sustain their families because life here is very expensive.

Camila, Vilma, and Sonia echoed the need of information about jobs for recently arrived parents, whether or not they are documented. They shared that they were always looking for better paying jobs. For example, Camila said, "Pues yo siempre ando buscando trabajos en lo que sea." Although Camila was working in the kitchen of a Mexican restaurant, she shared that she was still always looking for a better job to help support her daughter. Similarly, Vilma was working a seasonal job for a cleaning

company but she was worried that she did not know where she was going to work after her job assignment ended. Sonia shared that she had more than one job to earn extra income. Sonia cleaned houses while not at her regular job in the kitchen of an Italian restaurant. She expressed that she was always interested in learning about new job opportunities to better herself and her family.

Role of Recently Arrived Salvadoran Parents in their Children's Education

In this section, I answer the study's first sub-question: How do recently arrived Salvadoran parents define their role in their children's education? In the first subsection, I describe how participants defined their role in their children's education as the providers of a support system for their children to complete their education successfully.

Support System

"¡Vaya, hija, gracias a Dios!" Melida shared that whenever her children, Fátima, Felipe, and Clara told her about any of their academic accomplishments at school she congratulated them by thanking God. Melida explained that her role in the education of her children was to support them by telling her children how proud she feels of them and by making sure that their only responsibility is to succeed in school:

> Que yo no los pongo, les digo yo, a hacer nada más que trabajen, pues en el estudio, que es lo que les va a servir a ellos y como pues si, yo ya les tengo ahí la comida preparada, y ahí en eso que no se preocupen, solo que coman y que se preparen porque de enseñarles no puedo enseñarles porque el inglés, ellos están con su teléfono en traductor con la tecnología.

Melida stressed that she expected her children to go to school and prepare themselves academically. She added that she was not able to help her children with their homework very much because she did not speak English. However, she made sure that they did not have to worry about their most basic needs so they can only focus on school.

Just like Melida, all participants' *testimonios* about their role in their children's education underscored that they considered themselves a support system for their children. For example, even though Melida, Lydia, and Sonia did not have a formal education or knew the English language to help their children with their homework, they still strived to give their children moral support and encouragement. Lydia shared what she told Gerardo everyday, "Pues yo le digo todos los días que estoy muy orgullosa de él, viera que inteligente me ha salido no por ser mi hijo verdad, pero si, y eso que yo lo crié sola en El Salvador." Lydia explained that she told her son that she was very proud of him because he is very smart and dedicated in school even though she raised him by herself in El Salvador while her husband was already in the U.S.

Sonia shared that she wanted to make sure that her children knew she was there to support them with whatever she could so they can accomplish more in life than she did. Sonia added that her mother did not offer her the same educational opportunities due to their lack of financial resources:

> Si no pones atención, yo no te voy a ayudar. Y ¿cómo te voy a ayudar? si yo no fuí ní al séptimo grado, entonces nosotros venimos de una familia muy pobre y entonces a mi me tocó trabajar desde los siete años, entonces y yo al final preferí trabajar que estudiar. Y estudiar y trabajar ayá, usted sabe que es difícil y yo ni

> me quiero acordar de esa niñez tan terrible, porque yo le digo yo vendia dulces en la escuela, llevaba dulces para vender, y en la tarde cuando llegaba de la escuela no me iba a poner a hacer deberes sino que me iba a vender tamales, cuajada, y mi mamá de todo hacia para vender. Mi mamá me decia mirá ya está la cuajada ahi handa a venderla. ¿Qué deberes? Mi mamá nunca nos exigió [terminar] deberes. Vayan a vender, de los libros no se come. ¡Como no, si se come!

Sonia explained that she came from a poor family and she needed to work while going to school since the age of seven to help her mother feed the family. She proudly shared that her mother made homemade candy and cheese to give her to sell at school and after school at a plaza. Nonetheless, Sonia also recognized that her mother made the mistake of not prioritizing her education and motivating her to abandon her education after the sixth grade to become a full time worker selling food. Sonia explained that she was unable to help her children, especially her oldest daughter, Flor, who attended high school, because her daughter's coursework is beyond her education background. Sonia's childhood taught her to raise her children to be focused in school. This is why she encouraged all her children to pay attention in school to be able to complete their homework assignments because she was not always going to be able to help them. But she also reminded her children that she was there to support them so they did not have to worry about bringing food to the table or anything else besides completing their education.

Camila, Vilma, and Nelson also expressed that their role in their children's education was to support them in whatever they could so that their children were only concerned about school. As Nelson explained, "Yo quiero que ellos sepan que mi esposa

y yo estamos aquí para apoyarlos en lo que nosotros podamos." Nelson shared that he wanted his children to know that he and his wife Ana will always be there to support them in whatever they could. Nelson and all of the participants communicated the importance of their role in providing the support system that was necessary for their children to complete their education successfully in the U.S. Participants demonstrated awareness of how difficult it is for them and their children to come to another country and learn a new language. Yet, they shared that learning the English language in school is going to be a vital skill for their children to accomplish whatever they want in their lives.

Educational Practices Recently Arrived Salvadoran Parents do at Home

In this section, I answer the second research sub-question: What educational practices do recently arrived Salvadoran parents describe doing at home to support their children's learning, development, and achievement? In the following subsection, I describe how the educational practices that participants did at home to support their children's learning, development, and achievement focused on providing the resources their children need to succeed in school.

Parents as Resource Providers

"Busco el traductor en el teléfono. Esto dice así, esto dice tal cosa, entonces vamos descifrando y así logramos hacer la tarea. Esa es la manera qué yo estoy apoyando." When asked what educational practices she used to support her child's learning, development, and achievement, Camila explained that she used her phone translator to help Sofia decode the homework instructions. Camila described that the process they used to translate each word is challenging and time consuming, but she was

glad that she was able to provide a resource for Sofia to complete her homework assignments. Just like Camila, all participants expressed that the educational practices they did at home to help their children's learning, development, and achievement had to do with providing the resources their children need for school.

Vilma supported her son, Julio, by not only using her phone translator but also by dedicating the time to assist him with comprehension questions about the homework:

> Yo le pregunto para ver si él en realidad entiende las tareas que le han dejado porque a veces puede ser que a ellos [los estudiantes] les dejan las tareas y el niño no sepa que hacer y entonces llega a la casa en lo mismo porque si uno de padre no sabe y él que ha estado en la clase no la ha entendido estamos en el aire. Entonces y le pregunto a ver en cada cosa que escribe. Mira, ¿esto qué es? Mira, dime ¿qué es esto? O algo, y él me dice es tal cosa, y me siento satisfactorio, porque sé que lo está entendiendo. Y ya luego, nos ponemos a hacer ahí y le digo escribamolo, escribamolo, para que se nos quede más.

Vilma explained that she intentionally asked Julio to explain to her what the assignment was about to confirm if he understood what he needed to do. She explained that sometimes schools assigned their students with homework that they did not understand. And if parents did not understand it either they ran into the problem of both being confused. Vilma also shared that she felt proud of Julio when he understood the assignment and reinforced his comprehension by making sure they wrote down what they learned in English to retain the information. This way, Vilma shared that she was also learning the content with Julio and practiced her English.

Similarly, Lydia shared that the process of helping Gerardo with his homework was more of a partnership. Lydia shared what she told Gerardo, "Explicáme de qué se trata y si podes comenzá, le digo yo, y luego seguimos los dos, porque entre los dos pensamos mejor." Lydia expressed that she asked Gerardo to explain to her what the homework assignment was about before she can help him. She believed that even though she did not always know how to help Gerardo with his homework she still wanted to support him with as much as she could because she perceived that he enjoyed her support.

Nelson, shared the routine he implemented at home everyday to support the learning, development, and achievement of Maria, Javier, and William:

> Ya cuando venimos de la escuela en la tarde, ya su comida ya está en la mesa y los dejo un rato que se relajen, vean la tele como una hora y media tal vez, y si hay tareas yo me involucro con ellos también a hacer tareas hasta terminarlas. Y a las nueve lo más tarde nos vamos a dormir para que amanezcan bien frescos sin sueño.

Nelson's routine consisted of picking up his three children from two different schools when he got off from work. After he picked up his children they came to the house where his wife Ana had already prepared food that was ready for them to consume as soon as they arrived. Ana prepared their food before she went to work in the afternoons. Nelson and his children ate as soon as they got home after school. After eating, he would give his children some time to relax by watching television. After about an hour and a half, Nelson would ask his children if they had any homework and he committed his time to

help them. Then, by nine o'clock at night, Nelson would send his children to sleep so they can wake up refreshed for the next day.

Nelson's routine to support his children academically demonstrated a collaborative effort with Ana. Nelson and Ana worked together by dividing their responsibilities to better assist their children since they both had jobs. They both worked to have a stable financial situation at home. However, they also knew about the importance of not leaving their children *desatendidos*, unattended. They both provided access to all of the resources that are necessary for their children to succeed in school from the most fundamental needs such as food, housing, clothing, and to anything else they need for school. At the same time, they also assisted their children with academic practices at home to assure that their children are successfully learning in school.

On the other hand, Camila and Vilma are single mothers and worked different schedules during the week. They implemented different educational practices to support their children's learning, development, and achievement. While their work shifts were inconsistent they still made sure they supported their children with everything that they have going on either before school every morning or after school every night. Camila shared her routine to support Sofia academically:

> Por lo general, nos levantamos a las seis y media de la mañana, ella se baña, yo le preparo su desayuno, se alista, ocho y quince ya está en la escuela. Yo trabajo de diez de la mañana a cuatro de la tarde o de diez de la mañana a cinco de la tarde ahora vengo llegando seis y media [a la casa]. Pero miércoles, jueves y viernes trabajo de cuatro de la tarde a diez de la noche o once de la noche entonces yo

> vengo llegando [a la casa] a las once y cuarenta de la noche porque en lo que vengo de ayá entonces ya vengo llegando a las doce de la noche a la casa. Entonces yo llego cansada, llego solo me cambio y ella ya está bien dormida, no sé qué pasó de ella el resto del dia. Entonces es la rutina. Y el siguiente dia nos levantamos y si ella tiene tarea las hacemos en la mañana antes de ir a la escuela porque no hay nadie más que me apoye. Y si ella me tiene que contar algo pues en la mañana.

Camila would work two days a week from ten in the morning to about five in the afternoon but during the rest of the week she would start in the afternoons and would finish her work shifts at eleven thirty at night. Camila explained that three days a week she got home at midnight and Sofia was already asleep. During the days that she could not see Sofia after school she assisted her with homework in the mornings before going to school. She expressed that unfortunately this was not an ideal situation and she wished she had more time to help Sofia with her homework right after school. However, Camila shared that even though she did not have an ideal work schedule she planned additional time every morning to ask her questions about her experiences in school or anything that she needed.

The educational practices that Sonia, Melida, and Lydia did at home to support their children's learning, development, and achievement involved making sure their children were well fed, had a clean home to do their homework, and had clean clothes for the next day. They recognized that even though their educational backgrounds were limited, what they did for their children's education at home was equally meaningful.

Moreover, they explained that having a stable home with all the basic needs helps their children perform better academically. Lydia shared that everything she did at home for Gerardo should be considered educational practices, “Pues yo trato de hacer lo mejor que puedo con él.” Lydia expressed that at home she tries to do her best for Gerardo. She described that she wanted Gerardo not to have any challenges that can distract him from his responsibilities at school:

> Su ropa, tenersela limpia, su comida, hago lo que puedo en la casa para mantener limpio, mantenerle su uniforme limpio, para que él no tenga problemas como para ir a la escuela, algo así qué se le dificulte, que no tenga él las cosas listas.

Lydia considered that having Gerardo’s school uniforms clean, food, and a clean home were educational practices and were as necessary as when she sat down with him to do his homework. All of the mothers who participated in this study emphasized that the educational practices that they did at home to help their children’s learning, development, and achievement had to do with providing basic needs for their children. At the same time, the female participants agreed that they provided attention and time for their children at home to facilitate their children’s educational experiences at school.

Nelson did not take care of the cooking, household cleaning, and laundry. However, Nelson expressed that he and his wife Ana divided their responsibilities to take care of their children because they had different working schedules. Nelson explained that he worked to provide the financial stability that fulfills the basic needs of their children. Nonetheless, he also understood the importance of assisting his children at home with educational practices such as providing attention, time, and positive role

modeling to enhance their academic success. This is why Nelson would pick up his children after school, eat with them, help them with their homework, and put them to sleep.

Providing a positive role model was important for all participants. Five out of six participants shared their interest in learning English. Camila, Vilma, Sonia, Lydia, and Nelson expressed that they wanted to learn English to better support their children with their homework and to also obtain better jobs. They currently attend or have attended weekly English classes to improve their language skills.

All participants focused on providing their children with the resources they need for school at home to facilitate their children's learning, development, and achievement. Participants' perceptions about what those resources are included: nourishment (e.g., food), housing (e.g., stable living condition), hygiene (e.g., clean clothes), a good learning environment (e.g., clean home), technology (e.g., smart phone and internet access), attention (e.g., interest in their whereabouts), time (e.g., homework support) and, positive role modeling (e.g., interest in learning English).

Table 3 details the findings by theme that answered each research question.

Table 3

Findings by Theme

Research Question		Theme
What perspectives do recently arrived Salvadoran parents have about their children's education?		• Communication • Understanding • Counseling • Information
How do recently arrived Salvadoran parents define their role in their children's education?		• Support System
What educational practices do recently arrived Salvadoran parents describe doing at home to support their children's learning, development, and achievement?		• Resources

Summary

This study explored the perspectives of recently arrived Salvadoran parents in Washington, D.C. The primary purpose of this study was to learn from recently arrived Salvadoran parents to build and sustain collaborative relationships in schools. Six recently arrived Salvadoran parents agreed to participate in one-time interviews. Participants were interviewed using *testimonios* as a methodological tool to gather the perspectives about their children's education. Participants shared the way they defined their role in the education of their children. And finally, they described the educational

practices they did at home to support their children's learning, development, and achievement.

Several themes emerged from participants' *testimonios* when asked about what can educators and stakeholders learn from recently arrived Salvadoran parents to better serve their needs. Participants suggested that schools should improve the communication they offer parents so that parents can learn about the overall functions of the schools and their children's behavioral and academic performance. They also requested that teachers show their children more understanding about their journeys to the U.S. and learning a new language. Participants expressed the need for schools to offer counseling for parents and children due to the traumatizing experiences they have lived in El Salvador. Moreover, participants addressed that schools need to enhance the opportunities they provide for students to increase their future aspirations and educational endeavors; as well as more information about ways to sustain their families (i.e., housing, jobs).

When participants were asked about how they defined their role in the education of their children, they shared that their role was to create a support system at home for their children. Participants created a support system at home where their children did not have to worry about anything else but their education. When speaking of the educational practices they did at home to support their children's learning, development, and achievement, participants explained that they provided all of the resources their children needed to be successful academically such as nourishment, housing, hygiene, good learning environment, technology, attention, time and, positive role modeling.

The next chapter presents a discussion about how findings contributed to the extant literature, theoretical framework, conclusions, implications for practice, recommendations for further research, concluding remarks, and my *reflexiones*.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

In this final chapter, I discuss how this study contributed to the extant literature. Then, I discuss how the findings relate to intersectionality theory and Latino/a families' epistemology. Additionally, this chapter provides conclusions that have implications for practice and recommendations for future research on recently arrived Salvadoran parents and students. This dissertation culminates with concluding remarks and my *reflexiones* of what I learned from my research as a Salvadoran educator living in Washington, D.C.

Findings' Contributions to the Extant Literature

This study contributed to the extant literature by addressing: (1) the perspectives that recently arrived Salvadoran parents have about their children's education, (2) the role of recently arrived Salvadoran parents in their children's education, and (3) the educational practices that recently arrived Salvadoran parents describe doing at home to support their children's learning, development, and achievement. Prior to this study there was a lack of research around the perspectives recently arrived Salvadoran parents have about their children's education. Additionally, there was a lack of research around the way recently arrived Salvadoran parents define their role in their children's education and the educational practices they do at home to support their children's education.

Although the extant literature (Gallo & Wortham, 2012; Gurrola et al., 2016; Moll et al., 1992; Mulhern, 1997; Olivos, 2004; Quiñones & Marquez Kiyana, 2014; Zentella,

2005) has provided insights for schools to help Latinx parents and students navigate schools' expectations and build collaborative relationships, my study indicated that the literature had not yet addressed that recently arrived Salvadorans need specific resources to facilitate their transition to an unknown culture in the U.S. The research presented in chapter II explored various understandings and misunderstandings that exist between Latinx parents and teachers that prevent them from having collaborative relationships in U.S. schools. However, this research focused primarily on the perspectives that Mexican immigrant parents have about their children's education (Gallo & Wortham, 2012; Gurrola et al., 2016; Moll et al., 1992; Mulhern, 1997; Zentella, 2005). This study filled these gaps in the existing literature by learning the perspectives that recently arrived Salvadoran parents have about their children's education, including their role, and the educational practices they do at home to support their children's education.

The findings of this study answered the research problem of how to better serve the needs of recently arrived Salvadoran students and their parents to build and sustain collaborative relationships in U.S. schools because I addressed the unique perspectives that recently arrived Salvadoran parents have about their children's education and how they support their children's education at home. In the following sub-sections, I discuss how my findings are significant and contributed to the extant literature.

Perspectives of Recently Arrived Salvadoran Parents about their Children's Education

In this study, four themes emerged from the perspectives that recently arrived Salvadorans have about their children's education: (1) communication, (2) understanding

(3) counseling, and (4) information. Findings derived from recently arrived Salvadoran parents' experiences and align with extant literature specific to the understandings and misunderstandings that can exist between Latinx parents and teachers in U.S. schools and the ways of rethinking Latinx parent-teacher collaboration.

The finding about the need for communication in this study advanced the extant literature on the importance of communication to develop strong parent-teacher relationships and avoid misunderstandings (Mulhern, 1997; Olivos, 2004; Quiñones & Marquez Kiyana, 2014; Zentella, 2005) because in this study I specifically explored how communication is essential for parents who recently arrived from El Salvador to this country. Findings addressed a lack of opportunities for recently arrived parents to interact with teachers in schools. Recently arrived Salvadoran parents in this study, addressed instances where they had to take the initiative to reach out to their children's teachers because they were not sure about what their children did in schools or their overall academic and behavioral performance. They also identified instances when they did not understand the overall school policies and procedures, making them feel confused and lost.

However, recently arrived Salvadoran parents in this study outlined ways in which they can feel more informed in schools, such as invitations from teachers to have one-on-one meetings and orientations. My findings underscored the need for improving the communication from educators to better serve recently arrived Salvadoran parents and their children.

Findings also demonstrated the need for understanding recently arrived

Salvadoran parents and their children in U.S. schools. Findings moved beyond the extant literature, which lacked research about understanding recently arrived Salvadoran parents' hardships of immigrating to the U.S. and learning a new language in schools. My finding advanced the research because in addition to showing *respeto y confianza* (Tschannen-Moran, 2001; Zentella, 2005) to build and sustain collaborative relationships with recently arrived Salvadoran parents, educators need to focus on understanding them. My research uncovered that recently arrived Salvadoran parents want educators to learn about the different reasons why they immigrate with their children to the U.S. and that they come seeking for safety, work, and better opportunities. My findings indicated that understanding is pivotal for recently arrived Salvadoran parents and their children due to the emotional distress they may have experienced in El Salvador and on their journey to the U.S. Recently arrived Salvadoran parents in this study made it clear that they came to the U.S. to escape the violence caused by *maras*, extortions, and other unsafe situations for their children.

Due to the hardships that some recently arrived Salvadoran parents experience in El Salvador and on their journeys to the U.S., findings showed the need of counseling in schools for parents and students. Understanding recently arrived Salvadoran parents and students advanced the research about creating school spaces for empowerment (Cavanagh et al., 2014; Durand, 2011; Jasis & Ordoñez-Jasis; 2012; Olivos & Quintana de Valladolid, 2005) because it provided another way to empower recently arrived Salvadoran parents and students through counseling services. My findings addressed that some recently arrived Salvadoran parents and their children may have gone through

traumatizing experiences and that they can benefit from counseling services to help them overcome these experiences.

Similarly, findings also indicated that recently arrived Salvadoran parents can also benefit from school-provided information about resources (e.g., housing, jobs) so that parents can better transition to a life in this country. Providing counseling and information in schools contributed to the extant research about rethinking Latinx parent-teacher collaboration (Doucet, 2011; Pacheco & Gutiérrez, 2009; Tschannen-Moran, 2001; Zentella, 2005) because it emphasized the unique services and resources that recently arrived Salvadoran parents need in schools. My research indicated that recently arrived Salvadoran parents felt more comfortable interacting with educators when schools offered them unique services and considerations. However, recently arrived Salvadoran parents also wanted educators to move beyond just offering these services and instead to initiate closer relationships with parents to learn about what they need.

Role of Recently Arrived Salvadoran Parents in their Children's Education

Findings showed that recently arrived Salvadoran parents in this study defined their role of a support system in their children's education, which contributed to the research about the different ways Latinx parents and teachers view their roles in the education of children (Cavanagh et al., 2014; Ryan et al., 2010; Villalba et al., 2007; Zentella, 2005). Findings demonstrated that recently arrived Salvadoran parents in this study supported their children's education at home in whichever way they could. For instance, recently arrived Salvadoran parents created a support system at home so their children did not have to worry about their basic needs (e.g., shelter, food, and clothing).

My research indicated that recently arrived Salvadoran parents wanted their children to succeed in school and that they did what they could so that their children only focused on their education.

Additionally, findings indicated that recently arrived Salvadoran parents' role of a support system added to the research about how parents extended school experiences to the home despite their lack of a formal education or knowing the English language (Durand, 2010; Gallo & Wortham, 2012; Zentella, 2005). For example, findings showed that recently arrived Salvadoran parents who had a formal education in El Salvador used their own educational resources to support their children with homework even when they did not speak English. At the same time, findings showed that recently arrived Salvadoran parents who did not have an extensive formal education strived to give their children moral support and encouragement.

Educational Practices Recently Arrived Salvadoran Parents do at Home

Findings indicated that the educational practices recently arrived Salvadoran parents described doing at home to support their children's learning, development, and achievement consisted of providing all of the necessary resources that their children need for school. Findings demonstrated that their educational practices contributed to the extant literature that addresses the importance of acknowledging the unique ways Latinx parents are involved in their children's education (Durand, 2011; Gallo & Wortham, 2012; Mulhern, 1997; Olivos, 2004; Ryan et al., 2010). For instance, recently arrived Salvadoran parents in this study provided their children with all of the resources they

need to be successful academically, such as nourishment, housing, hygiene, good learning environment, technology, attention, time and, positive role modeling.

Based on the practices that recently arrived Salvadoran parents in this study did at home to support their children's education, findings also added to the research that recommends schools to rethink the expectations of Latinx parents' involvement in schools that differs from U.S. approaches to build and sustain collaborative relationships (Doucet, 2011; Mulhern, 1997; Pacheco & Gutiérrez, 2009; Tschannen-Moran, 2001; Zentella, 2005). For example, recently arrived Salvadoran parents believed that their children needed a stable home where their children felt supported to succeed in school. My research underscored the value of the resources that recently arrived Salvadoran parents provided their children at home. It also demonstrated that these resources are valid and important practices for their children's learning, development, and achievement because children need all of these resources to become successful in schools.

Findings Related to Intersectionality Theory

In answering my research questions, the findings are consistent with intersectionality theory. Findings demonstrated that recently arrived Salvadoran parents connected with each other even though they are from different *departamentos* of El Salvador, different social economic status, and different educational backgrounds.

Although the recently arrived Salvadoran parents in this study had different backgrounds and experiences, they shared the common experience of being new to the U.S. and having to learn a new language and culture. For example, all recently arrived Salvadoran parents in this study did not speak English and did not know about all of the

nuances of the U.S. culture. Intersectionality explains that even though there are differences among the academic achievements of recently arrived Salvadoran parents, they all have experienced the challenges of coming to this country not knowing how to navigate a new life and language. Nevertheless, recently arrived Salvadoran parents understood that their role in the education of their children consisted of providing them with the support they need to be successful in schools. For instance, some recently arrived Salvadoran parents supported their children by directly assisting them with their homework, while others supported their children by providing all of their basic needs so that they can solely focus on school.

Intersectionality theory was also evident when recently arrived Salvadoran parents in this study were asked what educational practices they used to support their children's learning, development, and achievement. The *testimonios* shared by recently arrived Salvadoran parents about their educational practices at home underscored similarities regardless of their differences in gender and financial means. Recently arrived Salvadoran parents expressed that their educational practices included making sure their children are always well fed, clean, have a comfortable home, and have whatever they need to complete their homework. The five mothers and one father in this study understood that it was their responsibility to provide the basic needs (e.g., nourishment, housing, and hygiene) for their children to perform their very best in school. They all realized that without those very basic needs their children are unable to focus on their education.

The father in this study, Nelson, did not cook or did any housework. Yet, Nelson still worked full time to provide the financial resources to pay for rent, groceries, and anything else that his children may need. He recognized the importance of what his wife Ana did at home, such as the household chores, and explained that they had divided their jobs to make sure all of the basic needs were met for their children. Recently arrived Salvadoran parents' perspectives about the educational practices they did at home, regardless of their gender or financial support, also included giving their children attention and time. All of the recently arrived Salvadoran parents in this study shared that the educational practices they did at home were not a strain to their daily lives, but rather a responsibility that they embraced.

Findings indicated that recently arrived Salvadoran parents cared deeply about their children's education, regardless of their gender or additional support they received from their children's other biological parent. Recently arrived Salvadoran parents expressed that the sacrifices they made in leaving their country did not end upon arriving to a new life in the U.S. Instead, they expressed that their obligation was to continue making sacrifices so their children are equipped with all of the tools they need to surpass them academically and financially. They all wanted their children to prepare themselves in school and become prosperous in their futures.

Findings Related to Latino/a Families' Epistemology

The standard of collective experiences of racial oppression from the Latino/a families' epistemology is present in the findings that answer the questions of this study. Recently arrived Salvadoran parents' collective experiences of racial oppression were

included in their *testimonios* when they shared their experiences of living in the U.S.

Findings indicated that the recently arrived Salvadoran parents in this study left El Salvador because of *miedo*, fear, for their families' well-being caused by the violence that the country is struggling with. Recently arrived Salvadoran parents were thankful that they now felt safer in the U.S. However, they were aware that life in the U.S. is complicated and challenging. Regardless of their immigration status, recently arrived Salvadoran parents understood that racism and discrimination exists toward Latinx' immigrants. They believed that negative perceptions of Latinx immigrants are present in schools and influence teachers' interactions with them. Recently arrived Salvadoran parents recognized that not many people know that Latinx are a diverse group who come from different countries in Latin America. For instance, findings showed that recently arrived Salvadoran parents perceived that schools do not recognize the unique aspects of the Salvadoran culture even when Salvadorans are the largest group of Latinxs in Washington, D.C. (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010).

The standard of the importance of family and shared cultural values from the Latino/a families' epistemology is also shown in the recently arrived Salvadoran parents' responses when asked about their role in the education of their children. Findings indicated that recently arrived Salvadoran parents supported their children at home as part of their daily responsibilities besides their jobs. Their responses spoke to the importance that they had for their family. Recently arrived Salvadoran parents also displayed their importance of shared cultural values when emphasizing their religious faiths. In many instances, they recognized their blessings as a result of their religious beliefs. *"Gracias a*

Dios," was consistently said by recently arrived Salvadoran parents when expressing how thankful they were to God to be in the U.S. with their children. Findings demonstrated that recently arrived Salvadoran parents had close connections to their faiths and considered religion a cultural value.

In a similarly way, the standard of resistance to subjugation from the Latino/a families' epistemology also emerged in recently arrived Salvadoran parents' *testimonios*. Recently arrived Salvadoran parents' awareness of the racism and discrimination against Latinx' immigrants that exists in the U.S. motivated them to show teachers and the community who discriminates against them that they came to this country to have a better life for their family and to do good things. Findings showed that recently arrived Salvadoran parents' way to resist subjugation is evident by their commitment to helping their children at home and by providing them with all of the resources they need to succeed in schools. They all showed a strong desire to eliminate negative perceptions about recently arrived Salvadoran immigrants.

Conclusions

Implications for Practice

In this study, I examined recently arrived Salvadoran parents in Washington, D.C. The primary purpose of this dissertation was to learn the perspectives that recently arrived Salvadoran parents have about their children's education to build and sustain collaborative relationships in schools. Using intersectionality theory and Latino/a families' epistemology as a framework, I used the *testimonios* from recently arrived Salvadoran parents to identify and address their unique needs to better serve them and

their children in schools. Implications for improving the services for recently arrived Salvadoran parents and students are organized in the following subsections: (1) Recommendations for schools, (2) Recommendations for school administrators, (3) Recommendations for teachers, (4) Recommendations for teacher preparation programs, and (5) Recommendations for policy makers.

Recommendations for Schools

The most significant recommendation for schools is to offer counseling services for recently arrived Salvadoran parents and students. My findings showed that recently arrived Salvadoran parents may have gone through traumatizing experiences (González-Barrera et al., 2014; Moodie, 2010) not only in El Salvador but also during their journey to the U.S. Counseling would provide recently arrived Salvadoran parents with the tools to overcome these traumas. In doing so, recently arrived Salvadoran parents could better support their children academically at home because they will feel emotionally and mentally prepared to offer their children what they need to succeed in schools.

Findings also indicated that recently arrived Salvadoran students may need counseling services, or at the very least an interest from schools to learn about their experiences. Recently arrived Salvadoran students' experiences are worth exploring because schools need to understand that not all immigrants come to the U.S. by choice. For instance, many unaccompanied minors from El Salvador arrive to the U.S. seeking protection (De Avila, 2014; González-Barrera, Krogstad, & López, 2014). Schools can benefit greatly from making counseling services available for recently arrived immigrant students because they will perform better academically after overcoming traumatic

experiences.

However, these counseling services in schools must be optional, confidential, non-threatening, and non-invasive for recently arrived Salvadoran parents and students to feel comfortable sharing their stories. Schools offering counseling services must consider this because recently arrived Salvadoran parents and students may be undocumented and may feel afraid of sharing any information about them. Findings demonstrated that the purpose of offering counseling services is not to question recently arrived Salvadoran parents and students about their immigration status. Instead, the purpose of making this resource available in schools is to help them overcome traumatic experiences.

Researchers, such as Suárez-Orozco and Todorova (2003) and Enriquez (2011), suggested that schools can alleviate the challenges that recently arrived immigrants face by developing unique services that they need to succeed. My findings support this claim because structural changes in schools serving recently arrived Salvadoran immigrants are needed to enhance schools' understandings of this community. Schools would need to either hire qualified and bilingual staff or train current staff to successfully provide these types of services for recently arrived Salvadoran parents and students.

Findings also illustrated that schools serving recently arrived Salvadorans must modify the dominant and mainstream European American culture model they follow (Banks, 2008; Campbell, 2010; de Jong, 2011; Enriquez, 2011; Sheets, 2005; Valenzuela, 1999). The English language is still dominant in the schools that participants' children attend even when those schools have a majority of non-English speakers. Schools must show recently arrived Salvadoran parents and students the *respeto, confianza*

(Tschannen-Moran, 2001; Zentella, 2005) and understanding they deserve by incorporating and celebrating the Salvadoran culture, such as their history, language, food, music, values, and traditions that are unique to the Salvadoran community.

Another significant recommendation for schools is to create collaborative school spaces where parents feel empowered (Durand, 2011) to express what they and their children need. That is, to intentionally provide opportunities for recently arrived immigrant parents to contribute to the decision-making in schools. Their voices must be recognized and included in the education system (Jasis & Ordoñez-Jasis, 2012; Olivos & Quintana de Valladolid, 2005; Pacheco & Gutiérrez, 2009). In other words, their stories must be told and their experiences must be acknowledged. At the same time, schools can take additional steps to ask recently arrived Salvadoran parents about the resources (e.g., counseling) and information (e.g., housing, jobs) they need to succeed in the U.S. Findings demonstrated that more in-person meetings conducted in Spanish are needed to reach out to recently arrived Salvadoran parents about how they can better support their children at home (Gallo & Wortham, 2012). Similarly, findings indicated that schools should include recently arrived Salvadoran parents' expertise about the education they believe is best for their children to build collaborative relationships with these families (Cavanagh et al., 2014 & Jasis & Ordoñez-Jasis, 2012). Findings showed that recently arrived Salvadoran parents are interested in sharing their perspectives about their children's education, however, schools need to reach out to them (Olivos & Quintana de Valladolid, 2005) to build and sustain collaborative relationships.

Recommendations for School Administrators

The most important recommendation for school administrators is to advocate for services that recently arrived Salvadoran parents and students need. School administrators must be interested in learning about each recently arrived Salvadoran parent in their school. By doing this, school administrators can learn that recently arrived Salvadoran immigrants differ in socio-economic backgrounds, prior schooling, and experiences (Gallo & Wortham, 2012; Ramirez, 2014; Suárez-Orozco & Todorova, 2003). School administrators will also learn that recently arrived Salvadoran immigrants need unique services that may differ from other Latinx immigrants. Findings indicated that school administrators can better serve this community by considering them partners in the education of their children (Cavanagh et al., 2014; Durand, 2011; Jasis & Ordoñez-Jasis, 2012; Olivos, 2004; Olivos & Quintana de Valladolid, 2005). This means, to provide ample opportunities for recently arrived Salvadoran parents to voice their perspectives about what they want for their children's education and by including them in the schools' decision-making.

School administrators can build these partnerships by promoting the *respeto, confianza* (Tschannen-Moran, 2001; Zentella, 2005) and understanding that are necessary to build and sustain collaborative relationships with recently arrived Salvadoran parents. Findings indicated that all school staff (e.g., administrators, teachers, office personnel) must work together to provide quality services to this community. For this reason, school administrators must use their leadership to model a welcoming and inclusive environment in schools where recently arrived Salvadoran parents feel comfortable to navigate the

U.S. school system. School administrators can make recently arrived Salvadoran parents and students feel welcomed by making their culture visible in schools (Sheets, 2005). For example, school administrators can promote and celebrate in schools the rich history, language, food, music, values, and traditions of El Salvador. Similarly, school administrators must listen and support their teachers (Jasis & Ordoñez-Jasis, 2012) when they request specific tools or initiatives that will improve the school experiences of recently arrived Salvadoran parents and students.

Recommendations for Teachers

The most pivotal recommendation for teachers is to show recently arrived Salvadoran parents and students that they understand the obstacles they are going through as newly arrived immigrants in the U.S. (Tschannen-Moran, 2001; Zentella, 2005). To do this, findings indicated that teachers must become interested in learning from recently arrived Salvadoran parents (Cavanagh et al., 2014; Jasis & Ordoñez-Jasis, 2012). Recently arrived Salvadoran parents' addressed that they enjoyed being part of this study because they believed that teachers need to hear their perspectives about their children's education (Durand, 2011; Gallo & Wortham, 2012; Mulhern, 1997; Olivos, 2004; Ryan et al., 2010). Also, they addressed that teachers need to know about the obstacles, hard work, and sacrifices that they experienced coming to the U.S. (Menjívar & Abrego, 2009). Recently arrived Salvadoran parents shared that that they love El Salvador but had to leave due to the danger and uncertainty they were experiencing there. For these reasons, findings in this study underscored that teachers must alleviate the challenges that recently arrived parents and students experience in U.S. schools (Castro-Salazar &

Bagley, 2010; Duncan-Andrade, 2009; Enriquez, 2011; Gurrola et al., 2016; Suárez-Orozco & Todorova, 2003; Valenzuela, 1999), and not pressure them to become assimilated to the European American culture (Sheets, 2005; Suárez-Orozco & Todorova, 2003).

Another important recommendation for teachers is to improve the communication (Gallo & Wortham, 2012, Olivos, 2004) with recently arrived Salvadoran parents. Findings showed that recently arrived Salvadoran parents were not satisfied with the communication they had with their children's teachers. Recently arrived Salvadoran parents felt that they did not have enough opportunities to meet with teachers in person. For example, teachers should offer orientations, meetings, and more opportunities to meet with parents because they are not clear about classroom policies and procedures. Findings also demonstrated that teachers must find ways to communicate with parents in Spanish. One way to do this is for teachers to reach out to school staff fluent in Spanish to assist them in the translation of documents that teachers send home (e.g., homework, reminders, announcements). Findings also indicated that non-Spanish speaking teachers should try to learn the Spanish language to better serve this community. This way, these teachers would have a better understanding of how difficult it is to learn a second language. At the same time, these teachers would show recently arrived Salvadoran parents and students that they are interested in learning their native language. But most importantly, they would empathize with recently arrived Salvadoran parents and students about the challenges that emergent bilinguals experience in schools.

Findings also underscored that teachers should learn from recently arrived Salvadoran parents about their role in the education of their children and the educational practices they do at home to support their children's learning, development, and achievement (Doucet, 2011; Gutiérrez & Rogoff, 2003; Moll et al., 1992; Pacheco & Gutiérrez, 2009). Findings showed that teachers should modify the collaboration they expect from recently arrived Salvadoran parents. Teachers can do so by showing recently arrived Salvadoran parents that they support and recognize their role and the educational practices they do at home to support their children's education (Durand, 2011; Gallo & Wortham, 2012; Mulhern, 1997; Olivos, 2004; Ryan et al., 2010).

Recommendations for Teacher Preparation Programs

Findings concluded that teacher preparation programs must expose teacher candidates to the diversity that exists within the Latinx immigrant community (Gallo & Wortham, 2012; Ramirez, 2014; Suárez-Orozco & Todorova, 2003). Teacher candidates must recognize that Salvadorans represent a growing community of Latinxs (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). For this reason, it is necessary that teacher preparation programs instill in their teacher candidates that recently arrived Salvadorans need unique services to make their transition easier in an unknown culture in the U.S. (Castro-Salazar & Bagley, 2010; Enriquez, 2011; Sheets, 2005; Suárez-Orozco & Todorova, 2003; Valenzuela, 1999).

Teacher candidates need to learn that recently arrived Salvadoran parents' knowledge and cultural backgrounds are important teaching tools for their classrooms (Banks et al., 2005; Doucet, 2011; Gutiérrez & Rogoff, 2003; Moll et al., 1992; Pacheco & Gutiérrez, 2009; Ladson-Billings, 1994). Embracing recently arrived Salvadorans

parents' knowledge and culture must be part of teacher preparation programs' curricula and instruction. Additionally, teacher candidates need to learn to value the resources that recently arrived Salvadoran students and their parents bring to schools (Gutiérrez & Rogoff, 2003; Moll et al., 1992; Pacheco & Gutiérrez, 2009).

Teacher preparation programs must also promote the importance of collaborating with recently arrived Salvadoran students' parents. Teacher candidates should know that to foster collaboration in their classrooms they need to show *respeto, confianza* (Tschannen-Moran, 2001; Zentella, 2005) and understanding to recently arrived Salvadoran parents. Teacher candidates who will be teaching in Salvadoran communities need to learn about the history of El Salvador and the reasons why Salvadorans immigrate to the U.S. To do so, teacher preparation programs should take their teacher candidates to spend time in Salvadoran communities so they can learn about their culture (e.g., history, language, food, music, and traditions) before they start serving this community in schools. Findings also suggest that teacher preparation programs should support their faculty members by offering them professional development opportunities to better prepare teacher candidates who will be working with recently arrived Salvadoran students and parents.

Recommendations for Policy Makers

Findings from this study give insights to policy makers about the challenges that recently arrived Salvadoran students experience in U.S. schools due to its emphasis of assimilating immigrants to the European American culture (de Jong, 2011; Nieto, 2002; Shannon, 1995; Sheets, 2005; Wright, 2010). One of the ways recently arrived

Salvadoran parents and students experience this assimilation process in U.S. schools is through the pressures they feel of learning the English language. Findings showed that recently arrived Salvadoran parents understood that English is the dominant language in U.S. schools. However, they expressed the challenges of not understanding their children's homework due to the lack of information in Spanish. Recently arrived Salvadoran parents explained that they have difficulties helping their children at home because all of the assignments that teachers send are only in the English language. They also expressed that in their children's schools they did not always interact with teachers who were able to communicate with them in Spanish.

Although it is important for recently arrived Salvadoran parents and their children to learn English, this does not mean that they need to stop embracing their culture and language to succeed in the U.S. This recommendation is important for policy makers because not all recently arrived Salvadoran students are able to succeed in assimilative school environments that force them to adopt the European American culture (e.g., the English language) and let go of their own culture to succeed (Bacallao & Smokowki, 2013; Peguero, 2009; Sheets, 2005; Suárez-Orozco and Todorova, 2003). For these reasons, this study informs policy makers about the language challenges that recently arrived Salvadoran parents and students experience in U.S. schools. Thus, findings demonstrated that bilingual education is important for recently arrived Salvadoran parents to make their transition easier living in this country and acquire the English language. For instance, Spanish/English dual language programs foster bilingualism and biliteracy as well as cross-cultural understandings between English native and Spanish native students

(de Jong, 2011; Wright, 2010). These types of programs can help recently arrived Salvadoran students learn to read and write in both languages simultaneously while using their first language as a tool for second language acquisition (Diaz, Esquierdo, & Whitacre, 2013).

McDonnell & Hill (1993) explained that U.S. school policies do not focus on addressing the needs of recently arrived immigrants. Findings support this claim because recently arrived Salvadoran parents expressed that they have never been asked if their expectations about their children's education were met in U.S. schools. Findings showed that policy makers must reach out to recently arrived Salvadoran parents about their perspectives to better support them in schools. This study demonstrated that recently arrived Salvadoran parents are eager to share their opinions and to collaborate with educators and stakeholders.

President Barak Hussein Obama stated why is important to focus on the education of immigrants in his farewell speech as U.S. President:

> If we're unwilling to invest in the children of immigrants, just because they don't look like us, we will diminish the prospects of our own children - because those brown kids will represent a larger and larger share of America's workforce. (The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, 2017)

Policy makers can find ways to address the unique services that recently arrived Salvadoran students need by asking their parents about their children's education. For example, recently arrived Salvadoran parents suggested schools to offer counseling services for them and their children because of the traumatic experiences that they

experienced in El Salvador or on their journey to the U.S. Policy makers should support these services by requesting school funding that can facilitate the success of recently arrived Salvadoran students and parents in U.S. schools.

Recommendations for Further Research

This study holds implications for educational researchers because it opens the space to examine ways to better serve the Salvadoran immigrant community in U.S. schools. I propose further research to continue exploring the unique perspectives of recently arrived Salvadoran parents enrolling their children in U.S. schools. My research addressed the *testimonios* from only a small group of six participants. Out of those six participants, only one male participated in this study. Under the criteria of this study, it was challenging to find recently arrived Salvadoran fathers to participate because Salvadoran immigrant fathers usually come to the U.S. by themselves and then they bring their families once they find work. Through snowball sampling, I was able to meet many recently arrived Salvadoran fathers. However, these fathers' children were still in El Salvador and they were in the process of helping them immigrate to the U.S. For this reason, recently arrived Salvadoran fathers were difficult to recruit because they did not meet the criteria for this study. Consequently, this study cannot draw generalized conclusions and implications to greater populations of other recently arrived Salvadoran immigrants in different contexts and settings. Educational researchers should continue recruiting recently arrived Salvadoran fathers by modifying the criteria of future studies.

Although my study did not specifically focus on exploring the perspectives of Salvadoran parents who have sent their children unaccompanied to the U.S.–Mexican

border, further research about unaccompanied children is necessary. This means that educational researchers need to explore the reasons why Salvadoran parents are sending their children to the U.S. and to also directly learn from unaccompanied children's experiences including their journeys and the challenges they face in U.S. schools. Moreover, the narratives of unaccompanied children are necessary because their unauthorized status in the U.S. prevents them from having access to public services (Migration Policy Institute, 2015).

My findings also showed that recruiting Salvadoran parents who have been in the U.S. for longer than one year can uncover different perspectives about their children's education. Findings suggested that recently arrived Salvadoran parents who have been in the U.S. for only a year are grateful for all of the services that U.S. schools are providing for them and their children in comparison to what they were receiving in El Salvador. However, recently arrived Salvadoran parents also made suggestions to improve their children's education. Their responses indicated that Salvadoran parents who have been part of U.S. schools for longer than one year may have different perspectives. In other words, it will be worth conducting studies with Salvadoran immigrants who are more familiar with identifying inequities in U.S. schools and who can be more critical when discussing their experiences. By doing so, educational researchers can also explore other important issues that recently arrived Salvadoran immigrants experience such as institutionalized racism in U.S. schools (Castro-Salazar & Bagley, 2010; Gurrola et al., 2016). It will be of great value to study the ways recently arrived Salvadoran and other Latinx immigrants begin experiencing racism and how they begin to form their own

biases about other people of color while attending U.S. schools. Hidalgo (2005) addressed that the colonial history in Latin America has always valued white people over people of color. This claim addresses how the history of racism in Latin America combined with systemic racism that exists in the U.S. can exacerbate immigrants' perceptions about other groups of immigrants.

Similarly, another recommendation for further research is the examination of gender identity among recently arrived Salvadoran immigrants. In other words, the exploration of how recently arrived immigrants identify in regards to their gender. For instance, I decided to use Latinx/s as an inclusive and gender-neutral term to describe my participants who are from the Latin American country of El Salvador, however, it would be of great value to the field of education to explore the perspectives that recently arrived Salvadoran immigrants have about their gender identities.

Finally, educational researchers should explore smart phone applications that facilitate translations to English. Recently arrived Salvadoran parents in this study explained that they used their phones to help translate and better understand homework assignments due to the lack of instructions in Spanish. It would be beneficial for all recently arrived immigrants to have access to additional resources in U.S. schools that can alleviate the many challenges of learning a second language. Further research about these types of resources will help recently arrived Salvadoran parents and students succeed in U.S. schools.

Concluding Remarks

By sharing their *testimonios*, the recently arrived Salvadoran parents in this study articulated the perspectives they have about their children's education to help educators and stakeholders build and sustain collaborative relationships in U.S. schools. Recently arrived Salvadoran parents expressed that they need communication, understanding, counseling, and information in schools to better support their children academically. They also shared that their role in their children's education was to create a support system at home for their children to thrive in this country. Additionally, participants described the educational practices they did at home to support their children's learning, development, and achievement were to provide all of the resources that their children need to succeed in their education. For educators and stakeholders, this study is a reminder about the value of directly learning from recently arrived Salvadoran parents about their unique needs and the resources that they bring to schools. Recently arrived Salvadoran parents have valuable knowledge about their children's education that we must include in schools serving the Salvadoran community. We must become interested in learning about the perspectives that recently arrived Salvadoran parents have about their children's education by providing a space in schools where they feel welcomed, valued, and included.

Reflexiones

For native-born Americans, it means reminding ourselves
that the stereotypes about immigrants today were said,
almost word for word, about the Irish, Italians, and Poles -
who it was said were going to destroy the fundamental character of America.
And as it turned out, America wasn't weakened by the presence of these newcomers;
these newcomers embraced this nation's creed, and this nation was strengthened.

So regardless of the station we occupy, we have to try harder.
We all have to start with the premise that each of our fellow citizens
loves this country just as much as we do;
that they value hard work and family like we do;
that their children are just as curious and hopeful
and worthy of love as our own.
- President Barack Hussein Obama, *Farewell Address*

I decided to conduct this study for two personal and empowering reasons. First, I am a proud immigrant from El Salvador with the responsibility to advocate for the Salvadoran community living in the U.S. And second, I currently live in Washington, D.C. where Salvadorans are the largest group of the Latinx population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). This entire experience has been *muy memorable,* very memorable, because I got to remember my own experiences as a Salvadoran immigrant in the U.S. And, I even had special moments with my mom by re-living our own memories about when we were *recién llegados*, recently arrived, Salvadoran immigrants.

During the beginning process of designing this study, I thought that I was well informed about all of the obstacles that recently arrived Salvadoran immigrants experience during their journeys to the U.S. However, while interviewing my participants and listening to their *testimonios*, I realized how easy it is to disconnect from the current obstacles recently arrived Salvadoran immigrants are experiencing. For example, my participants shared that when undocumented immigrants mostly coming from Central America seeking for asylum get detain by immigration officers, they may be released but forced to wear *grilletes*, Global Positioning System (GPS) ankle monitors. Participants shared that these *grilletes* cause physical pain like burning their skin. They expressed that these *grilletes* make undocumented immigrants feel judged and humiliated. In addition to

wearing these *grilletes*, undocumented immigrants have to report by phone and in person to an immigration office, which requires them to travel long distances to sign documents.

During the recruitment process, I was also reminded about the different situations recently arrived Salvadoran parents experience in bringing their children to the U.S. I had the opportunity to meet many recently arrived Salvadoran mothers who were not able to participate in my study because they did not meet my participants' criteria of having children enrolled in public schools of Washington, D.C. These recently arrived Salvadoran mothers shared that they have not been able to bring their children from El Salvador yet. While they were sharing their stories, I felt their sadness and guilt for not having the resources to accelerate the process of sending for their children. I also met other Salvadoran mothers who did not qualify to participate in my study because they have been in the U.S. for longer than a year. However, they were excited to share with me that they were finally able to bring their children from El Salvador. Some of them had to bring their children one by one as opposed to bring them all together. Their stories of survival and the sacrifices they have made for their children are extraordinary. I witnessed their pain for leaving their children in El Salvador but unfortunately they all had their reasons for not bringing them when they came to the U.S.

Similarly, I met recently arrived Salvadoran fathers who also did not meet the criteria of having their children enrolled in public schools of Washington, D.C. However, these fathers told me that they came here first to get a job and assure they have a home for their families when they are able to send for them. After these fathers explained their situations, I understood the reason why I was not able to recruit more male participants in

this study. Nonetheless, I am thankful for the father who met the criteria to participate in my study and shared his *testimonios* about his children's education. Although these Salvadoran mothers and fathers did not meet the criteria for my study, it is important to share their stories because they add value and depth to the Salvadoran immigrant narrative.

After concluding this study, I confirmed the value of having used *testimonios* as my methodological tool that provided my participants and myself with the space for reflection (Pérez Huber & Cueva, 2012). Through *testimonios,* recently arrived Salvadoran immigrants shared their voices to acknowledge their experiences in U.S. schools. While listening to my participants' *testimonios*, I traveled back to the year of 1997 when I arrived to this country from El Salvador. Some of their *testimonios* resonated with me because when I first arrived to the U.S., I was judged by people who assume that learning English is an easy process. For instance, I felt emotional when I heard one of my participants expressing the sadness she felt for her son who was reprimanded and yelled at by his teacher just because he was not learning English quickly enough. My participant did not defend her son because she did not speak English and because she did not like to create conflicts. Even though my participant was advised by some of her friends to complain to the school about this teacher's behavior, she did not want to do anything that would cause problems. My participant's reaction for not filing a complaint against this teacher's behavior may have been because of her immigration status or because she is a recently arrived immigrant and felt intimidated by the process. I am concerned that just like my participant, many other recently arrived immigrants are

not able to express their feelings in schools. Although I understand my participant's decision to not confront this teacher, I also believe that recently arrived immigrants feel marginalized and threatened in U.S. institutions such as schools that stops them from addressing injustices that they experience.

This study got me to reflect about how marginalized recently arrived immigrants are in U.S. schools. The ways they are marginalized may not always be explicitly evident but they are definitely present based on the suggestions my participants shared to improve their children's education. Participants explained that they are not included in the making of school decisions. Schools do not show an interest in learning about and from recently arrived Salvadoran parents' educational expertise. Yet, what I confirmed in this study is that recently arrived Salvadorans are knowledgeable and have a clear understanding of the kind of education they want for their children.

My participants expressed their gratitude for being invited to participate in this study. Participants addressed that there are many important things that people in the U.S. need to know about recently arrived immigrants. They explained that immigrants are coming here with goals that they want to accomplish. Moreover, they expressed how they want the people of the U.S. who already had the opportunities to achieve their goals to understand that recently arrived Salvadoran immigrants are also looking for those opportunities.

All of my participants are optimistic about their future in the U.S. They are clearly aware about the challenges that they face in this country, such as the discrimination against Latinx immigrants. However, they have positive attitudes and believe that if they

work hard they will reach their goals. Even though my participants have been in the U.S. for a short period of time, they are resilient people and do not stop when faced with obstacles. This is the kind of example that they want to model to their children and to all the people of the U.S.

My participants showed me how happy they are to be in the U.S. to start a new life for their children. I was impressed by the enthusiasm of the two single mother participants. I respect these two mothers who just arrived to this country and they are already working *en lo que sea*, in whichever job, to help them start earning money for their children. One of my participant's even had more than one job. But what I admire the most about all of my participants besides their commitment to work hard to support their families is their commitment to support their children's education. My participants worked arduously to provide to their children the basic needs to survive but they also took the time to help their children succeed in school. They support their children's education by helping them with their homework or by cheering them to continue striving for success. Even more impressive is that most of my participants also take the time to attend English classes. Every time I finalized an interview with one of my participants I felt empowered. Their stories of why they left El Salvador along with all of the obstacles they had to overcome during their journeys to the U.S. are so full of hope. Through their stories I affirmed the potential that immigrants bring to this country.

My findings challenge the anti-immigrant sentiments that were exacerbated during this past 2016 presidential election. *Todavia me duele*, it still pains me, that one then-presidential candidate misrepresented Mexicans and Latinx immigrants without

recognizing our contributions in this country. In fact, I started writing these *reflexiones* the day of elections on November 8, 2016, and I wrote those *reflexiones* very confidently that we were going to have our first *mujer presidenta,* woman president, in the history of the U.S.

On that election's day, I wrote on my *reflexiones* the hope and high expectations that I had for Hillary Clinton to continue the inclusive environment that I felt as a Latina during President Obama's administration. I wrote on my *reflexiones* that it was only until President Obama took office that I felt like an American in this country. After 20 years of living in the U.S., for the first time I finally understood what it meant to feel patriotic, and that was, because I felt included. For eight years, I saw a person of color and his beautiful family in the White House that inspired me to believe for a brighter future full of progress *para todos nosotros*, for all of us. On that day, I also wrote on my *reflexiones* that although there was progress, there was still so much work to do to better serve Latinx immigrants in this country. But, I was hopeful and confident that we were going to work together to achieve that goal.

Unfortunately, the next day, after I slept almost all day exhausted for staying up all night hoping for the election results that I wanted, and after trying to digest the results, I had to modify my *reflexiones.* Now, I had to write about how after this past presidential election, my findings have become even more important for my participants and for the educational field. Although I am still full of hope, I realized that the challenges for Latinx immigrants, especially those who are *recién llegados*, recently arrived, and undocumented are going to be even greater. I'm now even more concerned about the

future of sanctuary cities, such as D.C. where undocumented immigrants did not feel as persecuted. The obstacles that we already started facing with this new administration demonstrate a more pivotal reminder of the responsibility that I have to continue working on the implementation of my findings.

My findings share the incredible survival stories of six admirable and resilient Salvadoran parents who came to this country full of goals and hopes for themselves and their children. My participants empowered me to continue my life goals. Their *testimonios* re-energized me to continue fighting against injustices that affect all immigrants. I am thankful for the time my participants gave me. They were incredibly helpful by participating in my study and by helping me find other participants. They provided implications to the unique history and perspectives of recently arrived Salvadoran parents in relation to the education of their children in Washington, D.C. I owe them my commitment to continue advocating for recently arrived Salvadoran immigrants, Latinx immigrants, immigrants from other countries, and other historically oppressed groups of people who do not receive the quality of education they deserve in U.S. schools. I am hopeful that this study will bring light to build more bridges between educators and stakeholders with recently arrived Salvadoran parents to better serve them and their children's needs.

APPENDIX A

RESEARCH RECRUITMENT SCRIPT

RESEARCH RECRUITMENT SCRIPT
[To be read aloud to parent in Spanish]

My name is Ingrid Colón and I am asking individuals to participate in a research study. As the investigator, I am trying to understand how to build collaborative relationships between recently arrived Salvadoran parents and educators in Washington D.C.

Participants are being asked to participate in a 20 minutes interview with topic areas that include your background, schooling experiences, your role as a parent, and your perspectives about your children's education. Each interview will be audio recorded, will last no more than 20 minutes and will be conducted at a location of their choosing such as Salvadoran restaurants.

There are no foreseeable risks involved in participating in this research beyond those experienced in everyday life. Although, I do not anticipate any risks to you as a result of your participation in this interview, you may experience some discomfort explaining your experiences as a recently arrived Salvadoran parent. If you do not feel comfortable in participating you are not required to answer anything that you do not want to. There will be no penalty if you decide to withdraw from the interview. If you are having some discomfort, I will answer any questions or address concerns.

You will receive compensation from participating in this study. You will be provided with a meal that will include: 2 pupusas (traditional Salvadoran dish found in pupuserias) and 1 non-alcoholic drink at the end of the interview. If you are not able to participate on the same day you are recruited and would need to be interviewed on another day, you will receive a flat rate of $5 cash to cover your transportation costs. You will receive your transportation compensation at the end of the interview.

Data generated for the study will only be used for the purpose of this study and not for any other purposes. Also, in order to alleviate privacy concerns, your identity will be kept confidential by using pseudonyms when reporting this information. Any notes that I take will be stored electronically on a password protected network drive and destroyed after the study is completed. You can ask me to leave at anytime. I do not want my presence here to interfere with your activities today.

Participation in this study is voluntary. You may withdraw at any time without penalty. If you do not want to be in this study, you do not have to participate. Even if you decide to participate, you are free not to answer any question or to withdraw from participation at any time without penalty. Your decision to participate or not will have no effect on our current relationship.

Consent:
Will you consent to participate in this research study?

Interview:
Questions will be asked that elicit information related to you experiences in education and as a parent. These experiences will be put into context by asking you to reconstruct these early experiences.

If you have questions about this research study, please feel free to contact Dr. Amy Heineke, at aheineke@luc.edu.

If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Loyola University Office of Research Services at (773) 508-2689.

Thank you.

APPENDIX B

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

CONSENTIMIENTO PARA PARTICIPAR EN ESTE ESTUDIO
[To be read aloud to parent in Spanish]

Título del proyecto: Los Recién Llegados: Construyendo Relaciones Colaborativas entre Padres Salvadoreños Recién Llegados con Educadores en la Capital de la Nación
Investigadora(s): Ingrid Colón

Introducción:
Usted está invitado a participar en un estudio de investigación conducido por Ingrid Colón de la Escuela de Educación en la Universidad de Chicago Loyola. Usted ha sido invitado porque yo estoy interesada en aprender sobre sus perspectivas en cómo construir relaciones colaborativas entre padres recién llegados de El Salvador con maestros en la capital de la nación.

Por favor lea este consentimiento cuidadosamente y haga cualquier pregunta que tenga antes de decidir participar en este estudio.

Propósito:
Yo estoy interesada en ententer como construir relaciones colaborativas entre padres Salvadoreños recién llegados con maestros de Washington D.C. La pregunta principal es: ¿Cuáles son las perspectivas de los padres recién llegados de El Salvador sobre la educación de sus hijos? Para responder a esta pregunta, yo exploro las siguientes preguntas: ¿Cómo los padres recién llegados de El Salvador definen su rol en la educación de sus hijos? ¿Qué prácticas educacionales los padres recién llegados de El Salvador describen hacer en casa para apoyar al aprendizaje, desarrollo y logros de sus hijos?

Procedimientos:
Si usted está de acuerdo en participar en este estudio, se le pedirá que participe en una entrevista de 20 minutos sobre sus perspectivas en cómo construir relaciones colaborativas entre padres recién llegados de El Salvador con maestros de Washington D.C. Adicionalmente, yo también la/lo contactaré por medio de una llamada telefónica durante otro día para confirmar mi interpretación de su entrevista.

Riesgos/Beneficios:
No hay ningún riesgo más aya de que los que se viven cada día. Aunque no anticipo ningún riesgo como resultado de su participación en esta entrevista, usted tal vez puede experimentar alguna incomodidad explicando sus experiencias como una madre o padre recién llegada/o de El Salvador. Usted no tiene que compartir ninguna información sobre su estado migratorio. Si usted no se siente cómoda/o en participar, no se requiere que usted conteste preguntas que no quiera. No habrá ninguna penalidad si usted decide retirarse de la entrevista. Si usted se siente incomoda/o, yo le puedo contestar cualquier pregunta o preocupaciones que tenga.

Usted recibirá compensación por participar en este estudio. A usted se le proveerá una comida que incluye: 2 pupusas y 1 bebida sin alcohol al final de la entrevista. Si usted no puede participar el día que se le invite y necesita regresar otro día, usted recibirá una compensación de $5 en efectivo para cubrir su costo de transportación. Usted recibirá su compensación por el costo de transportación hasta el final de la entrevista.

Confidencialidad:
Yo protegeré su derecho de privacidad.

- Ninguna información personal sobre usted será compartida con nadie que no esté trabajando en este estudio. Su nombre no será incluido en este consentimiento. Sus respuestas individuales o personales no serán compartidas con nadie.
- La información que se obtenga será confidencial por medio del uso de seudónimos para proteger su identidad. Este seudónimo será usado en las transcripciones de las entrevistas para que ningún nombre aparezca en ningún documento.
- Las grabaciones de las entrevistas en audio serán disponibles solamente para la investigadora.
- Cuando la transcripción de las entrevistas concluyan, las grabaciones de las entrevistas serán destruidas.

Participación Voluntaria:
La participación en este estudio es voluntaria. Si usted no quiere participar en este estudio, usted no tiene que participar.

- Aunque usted decida participar, usted tiene la opción de no contestar cualquier pregunta o de retirarse del estudio sin ninguna penalidad.
- Su decisión de no participar no le afectará en nada.

Contacto y Preguntas:
Si usted tiene alguna pregunta sobre este estudio o la entrevista, contacte a Ingrid Colón al icolon1@luc.edu o la profesora patrocinadora, Dra. Amy Heineke, al aheineke@luc.edu. Si usted alguna pregunta sobre sus derecho como participante en este estudio, usted puede contactar a la Oficina de Servicios de Estudios en la Universidad de Loyola Chicago al (773) 508-2689.

Declaración de Consentimiento:
Su firma de abajo indica que usted ha leído la información de arriba, ha tenido la oportunidad de hacer preguntas, y está de acuerdo a participar en este estudio. Se le dará una copia para que usted guarde.

_____ _____

Firma de Participante **Fecha**

_____ _____

Firma de Investigadora **Fecha**

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH
[To be read aloud to parent in Spanish]

Project Title: Los Recién Llegados: Construyendo Collaborative Relationships between Recently Arrived Salvadoran Parents and Educators in the Nation's Capital
Researcher(s): Ingrid Colón

Introduction:
You are being invited to participate in a research study being conducted by Ingrid Colón in the School of Education at Loyola University of Chicago. You are being asked to participate because I am interested in learning your perspectives about how to build collaborative relationships between recently arrived Salvadoran parents and educators in the nation's capital.

Please read this form carefully and ask any questions you may have before deciding whether to participate in this study.

Purpose:
I am interested in understanding how to build collaborative relationships between recently arrived Salvadoran parents and educators in Washington D.C. within a predominantly Salvadoran population. The overarching research question guiding this study is: What perspectives do recently arrived Salvadoran parents have about their children's education? To respond to this broader question, I explore the following sub-questions: How do recently arrived Salvadoran parents define their role in their children's education? What educational practices do recently arrived Salvadoran parents describe doing at home to support their children's learning, development, and achievement?

Procedures:
If you agree to be a participant in this study, you will be asked to participate in a 20 minutes interview addressing your perspective on how to build collaborative relationships between recently immigrated Salvadoran parents and educators in Washington D.C. In addition to the interview, I will contact you over the phone at another day to confirm my interpretation of your interview.

Risks/Benefits:
There are no foreseeable risks involved in participating in this research beyond those experienced in everyday life. Although, I do not anticipate any risks to you as a result of your participation in this interview, you may experience some discomfort explaining your experiences as a recently arrived Salvadoran parent. You do not have to discuss any information about your immigration status. If you do not feel comfortable in participating you are not required to answer anything that you do not want to. There will be no penalty if you decide to withdraw from the interview. If you are having some discomfort, I will answer any questions or address concerns.

You will receive compensation from participating in this study. You will be provided with a meal that will include: 2 pupusas (traditional Salvadoran dish found in pupuserias) and 1 non-alcoholic drink at the end of the interview. If you are not able to participate on the same day you are recruited and would need to be interviewed on another day, you will receive a flat rate of $5 cash to cover your transportation costs. You will receive your transportation compensation at the end of the interview.

Confidentiality:
I will protect your right to privacy.

- No personal information about you will be shared with anyone who is not working on this study. Your name will not be included on any form. The individual or personal answers you provide will not be shared with anyone else.
- Information gathered will be confidential through the use of a pseudonym to protect your identity. This pseudonym will be used on interview transcriptions so that no names appear on any documentation.
- Audio recordings will be accessible by only the researcher.
- Once audio recordings have been transcribed, the original audio files will be destroyed.

Voluntary Participation:
Participation in this study is voluntary. If you do not want to be in this study, you do not have to participate.

- Even if you decide to participate, you are free not to answer any question or to withdraw from participation at any time without penalty.
- Your choice not to participate will not have any effect on you.

Contacts and Questions:
If you have questions about this research project or interview, feel free to contact Ingrid Colón at icolon1@luc.edu or the faculty sponsor, Dr. Amy Heineke, at aheineke@luc.edu. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Loyola University Office of Research Services at (773) 508-2689.

Statement of Consent:
Your signature below indicates that you have read the information provided above, have had an opportunity to ask questions, and agree to participate in this research study. You will be given a copy of this form to keep for your records.

_____ _____

Participant's Signature **Date**

_____ _____

Researcher's Signature **Date**

APPENDIX C

RESEARCH INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

RESEARCH INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Procedures

Instruction: Please do not discuss any information regarding your immigration status.

Instrucción: Por favor no comparta ninguna información sobre su estado migratorio.

[To be read aloud to parent in Spanish]

1.	*¿Qué estudios tiene usted?* What formal education do you have?
2.	*¿Por qué se vino para los Estados Unidos?* Why did you come to the U.S.?
3.	*¿Cuánto tiempo ha estado en los Estados Unidos?* How long have you been in the U.S.?
4.	*¿Ha vivido en otros estados de éste país? ¿Dónde?* Have you lived in another state in this country? If so, where?
5.	*¿Cuántas/os hijas/os tiene en las escuelas de aquí en Washington, D.C.?* How many children do you have attending schools here in Washington, D.C.?
6.	*¿Cuénteme sobre la educación que usted quiere para su/s hija/s/os?* Tell me about the education you want for your child/children?
7.	*¿ Cuénteme sobre sus experiencias en las escuelas de su/s hija/s/os aquí en Washington, D.C.?* Tell me about your experiences in the school/s of your child/children in Washington, D.C.?
8.	*¿Se han cumplido todas sus expectativas de las escuelas de este país? ¿En qué formas?* Have the schools in this country met your expectations? If so, in which ways?
9.	*¿Se siente usted que todo lo que necesita de la escuela de su/s hija/s/os se lo dan? Por qué o por qué no?* Do you feel that the school/s of your child/children provides you with everything you need? Why or why not?
10.	*¿Cuáles son los servicios en las escuelas que usted ha visto que ayudan a los padres que acaban de venir a este país?* What services in schools have you seen that support recently arrived parents in this country?
11.	*¿Cuénteme sobre alguna/s experiencia/s positivas que ha tenido en la escuela de su/s hija/os? ¿Y algunas experiencias negativas?* Tell me about any positive experiences that you have had at the school/s of your child/children? What about any negative experiences?
12.	*¿En qué formas la/os maestra/s/os de su/s hija/s/os han apoyado a su/s hija/s/os?* In what ways have educators supported your child/children?
13.	*¿Qué hace usted para apoyar o ayudar a la educación de su/s hija/s/os en la casa? ¿En qué formas usted piensa que la/s/os maestra/s/os de la escuela reconocen lo que usted hace por su/s hija/s/os para apoyarla/s/os o ayudarla/s/os en la casa?* What do you do to support or help the education of

	your child/children at home? In what ways, do you think teacher/s recognize what you do at home to support or help your child/children?
14.	*¿Dígame algunos consejos que usted le puede dar a la/s/os maestra/s/os de su/s hija/s/os?* Tell me some advice you would give to the teacher/s of your child/children?

Prompts

1. What do you mean by?
2. Would you explain . . . ?
3. What did you say when . . . ?
4. What were you thinking about when . . . ?
5. Give me an example of . . .
6. Tell me about the time . . .
7. Take me through the experience when . . .

APPENDIX D

CODING SCHEME WITH QUOTES TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH

Research Question: What perspectives do recently arrived Salvadoran parents have about their children's education?		
Category	**Theme**	**Direct Quote**
Collective experiences of oppression	Communication	**"*Que traten de conocer más a los padres*."** "To try to get to know the parents." (Vilma, September 13, 2016). ***"Más enfoque en los papás."*** "To focus more on parents." (Camila, August 30, 2016).
	Understanding	***"Uno pasa cosas feas para llegar aquí."*** "One goes through ugly things to get here." (Sonia, September 20, 2016). ***"Que me le tuviera un poquito más de paciencia."*** "To have a little more patience." (Lydia, September 20, 2016).
	Counseling	***"Necesitamos una terapia psicológica porque nuestro país vive en violencia."*** "We need a psychological therapy because our country lives in violence." (Camila, August 30, 2016).
	Information	***"Salieramos beneficiados, si tuvieramos apoyo sobre [información de vivienda y trabajos], son cosas que son importantes, es lo más necesario."*** "We would benefit from information (about where to live and jobs), these are important things, the most needed." (Lydia, September 20, 2016). ***"Talleres para que (los niños) vayan poniendose un objetivo de lo que ellos***

		quieren ser cuando sean grandes." "Workshops for (the children) to start setting objectives about what they want to do when they are older." (Vilma, September 13, 2016).
Sub-question 1: How do recently arrived Salvadoran parents define their role in their children's education?		
Category	**Theme**	**Direct Quote**
Importance of family and shared cultural values	Support System	***"¡Vaya, hija, gracias a Dios!"*** "Good, daughter, thanks to God." (Melida, September 20, 2016).
Sub-question 2: What educational practices do recently arrived Salvadoran parents describe doing at home to support their children's learning, development, and achievement?		
Category	**Theme**	**Direct Quote**
Resistance to subjugation	Resources	***"Busco el traductor en el teléfono. Esto dice así, esto dice tal cosa, entonces vamos descifrando y así logramos hacer la tarea. Esa es la manera qué yo estoy apoyando."*** "I look for the translator on the phone. This says this, this says about this, then, we decipher, and that is how we are able to do the homework. That is the way how I am supporting him" (Camila, August 30, 2016).

Note. I translated the direct quotes of participants conceptually and not literally to avoid the loss of nuances and marginalization of my participants' language (Delgado Bernal et al., 2012).

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VITA

Ingrid T. Colón is the daughter of Rolando A. Tamayo and Carmen E. Romero de Tamayo. She was born in San Salvador, El Salvador on August 27, 1983 where she grew up with her brother, Rolan, sister, Tifa, grandmother, Tanchito, and aunt, Delmi. She currently resides in Washington, D.C. with her husband, Fernando R. Colón.

Ingrid attended Catholic schools in San Salvador, El Salvador. Having immigrated to the United States in 1997, Ingrid attended a public high school in Las Vegas, Nevada. She graduated from the University of Nevada Las Vegas in 2005 with a B.S. in Elementary Education. In 2008, she earned an M.A. in Curriculum and Instruction with an emphasis in Urban Education from San Diego State University.

Ingrid has worked in the field of education for the past 14 years. She has held various positions in education. Her teaching career includes pre-school and elementary education experience. Ingrid decided to complete her Doctorate in Education at Loyola University Chicago as a full time student in 2013 where she became an adjunct professor teaching undergraduate courses. Ingrid is currently a graduate assistant in the School of Education. She has a commitment to advocate for historically oppressed groups of people and to stand up against the inequities that exist in social structures.

DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

The dissertation submitted by Ingrid T. Colón has been read and approved by the following committee:

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