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Theorizing The Experiences Of Chicana Faculty At A Hispanic-Serving Institution

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THEORIZING THE EXPERIENCES OF CHICANA FACULTY
AT A HISPANIC-SERVING INSTITUTION

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Doctoral Program in Educational Leadership and Foundations

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2019

DEDICATION

Para mi abuela, mamá, madrina y tía Luz Alicia.

THEORIZING THE EXPERIENCES OF CHICANA FACULTY
AT A HISPANIC-SERVING INSTITUTION

by

KARINA CHANTAL CANABA, M.Ed.

DISSERTATION

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of
The University of Texas at El Paso
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of the Requirements
for the Degree of

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Department of Educational Leadership and Foundations

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ABSTRACT

Hiring and retaining a diverse faculty has demonstrated to have positive outcomes on student success. However, different forces have made it difficult for universities to have a diverse make-up that reflect their student populations, making it particularly important to investigate how faculty engage with the university. This study seeks to better understand how Chicana faculty engage with the university through the tenure and promotion process. Situated in a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI), this study looks to better understand how Chicana faculty navigate the complex, political environment of academia through their testimonios as faculty at the university.

The importance of retaining Chicanas in the academy is becoming a pressing issue as demographics suggest a rising number of Hispanic students, particularly Hispanic girls, matriculating into post-secondary institutions. Through the use of testimonios, the Chicanas in this study shared stories of various forms of microaggressions on campus, before and after the tenure probationary period. These Chicanas also described ways they have been able to navigate the academy to thrive professionally for themselves and others despite challenging circumstances.

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Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Education researchers have suggested that current educational scholarship fails to address the different forms and systems of oppression that People of Color¹ face as part of their educational experience in America (Solórzano & Yosso, 2001; Yosso, 2006). Race is a social construction used to afford or take away different opportunities, status, and power for People of Color (Greer, Back, & Solomos, 2006). Racism has taken up new forms, where it is no longer done in ways that are obvious and recognizable, allowing for these interactions to sometimes go unnoticed. Racism is embedded in all parts of American life, to include institutions such as education and law. In practice, racism as an example of one group believed to be superior over another has the “power to carry out racist acts” that affect different racial or ethnic groups. (Pérez Huber & Solórzano, 2015; Solórzano, 1998).

This research intends to better understand the experience of Chicana² faculty as they experience racism in higher education. Hearing their stories, or testimonios, helps us better understand their experiences and responses to microaggressions as they navigate tenure and promotion at a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI). In looking at racial and gendered microaggressions, one can investigate the more subtle forms of racism that have replaced previous, more obvious definitions of racism (Pérez Huber & Solórzano, 2015; Solórzano, 1998; Solórzano, Allen, Carroll, & Ceja, 2002). Researching microaggressions forces us to not take

¹ I capitalize terms such as People of Color, Women of Color and Faculty of Color to reassign discursive agency to the marginalized subject.

² I am utilizing the self-identifier “Chicana” throughout as a politicized term that arises from a site of consciousness raising, resistance, and rooted in praxis in social advocacy. All of the women participating in the study self-identified as Chicanas, which can incorporate a broad range of Hispanic groups.

interactions at face value, and instead examine them through a holistic critical lens. Racial microaggressions are a type of systematic racism that are used to remind marginalized groups to remain in the margins (Solórzano, 1998; Solórzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000). Racial microaggressions are forms of assault that can be: 1) subtle or spoken; 2) based on one's race, ethnicity, class, gender, immigration status, accent, or phenotypes, and 3) its cumulative effect manage to take an emotional or physical toll on People of Color (Solórzano, 1998; Daniel Solórzano et al., 2000).

Many Chicanas are pushed out of the academy and doctoral programs at high rates, with limited scholarship as to why that may be the case. The educational system is embedded with deficit ideology that may suggest that this phenomenon can be attributed to individual failures on the student's part and ignoring the larger structural and organizational barriers that are a part of the higher education experience (Valencia, 1997). This study aims to better understand the types of climates that Chicanas face as professors through the process of tenure and promotion in a university setting.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Faculty of Color are especially critical for student success. Research indicates Faculty of Color are more accessible to students and serve as role models to students who have few mentors, if any, in higher education (Levin, Walker, Haberler, & Jackson-Boothby, 2013). Having such role models allows minority students in particular to feel a sense of belonging, which leads to increased student achievement and advanced educational opportunities. Higher education leaders have long touted the importance of diversity as a means of better preparing their students to become active citizens in a complex, multifaceted society (Gurin, Dey, Hurtado, & Gurin, 2015; Gurin, Nagda, & Lopez, 2004). However, internal and external forces have made

it difficult for universities themselves to reflect diversity in its makeup of faculty and employees. Thus, understanding faculty's relationship and engagement within their respective university is of particular importance.

The environment that is "academia" or higher education is isomorphic in nature, replete with its own traditions and rules. These traditions have created its own set of systems its members should abide by; norms that dictate members' behaviors if they want to continue to be considered a part of the group (Meyer & Rowan, 2006; Meyer, 2006; Powell, 2007). An example as to how the environment (or the academy) exerts power over the individual is in the tenure and promotion process. The selection process is predicated on colleagues determining whether an individual has met criteria pertaining to their discipline or department. Those deemed to have done so are allowed to remain at the university. Those that do not, are forced to seek an appointment or employment elsewhere.

As diversity becomes more important to attract and retain students from diverse populations, universities have a vested interest to see that they retain a diverse make up of faculty (Levin, et al., 2013). Different perspectives and research agendas are vital to academic freedom at the university, and that can only be achieved through Faculty of Color obtaining tenure (American Association of Univeristy Professors, 1970). The university cannot claim to be a place to exchange ideas if faculty feel limited in what they can publish or research for fear of reprisal when the tenure decision comes.

Institutional structures must be examined to assess what we understand to be the meaning of knowledge, who is deemed worthy enough to create it, and how these ideologies impact diversity issues in higher education. It is important to investigate the environment of academia to better understand what the faculty perspective is like from those who are living these

experiences. In doing so, administrators would be able to implement better policies that would aid the faculty in recruiting and retaining a more diverse professoriate. Students benefit from a diverse faculty makeup, as they are introduced to different perspectives and approaches through faculty they are taught by and interact with regularly (Gurin et al., 2015).

Though strides have been made, the number of women in the academy is still not on par with their male counterparts due in part to family creation, lack of support by fellow women, a lack of flexibility in the workplace to make room for familial needs and commitments, as well as their partners' own career commitments (Allan, 2011; Haley & Jaeger, 2012; Wallace & Marchant, 2011); some fields are seeing the numbers of women decline (Allan, 2011). Women in the professoriate are encouraged to engage in the hidden curriculum of academia- the use of networks, contacts, persistence and political skills- to help them succeed and obtain tenure. Mentoring has also been suggested as beneficial for women, but some argue that such mentoring forces women to assimilate into a masculine culture for the sake of success (Kjeldal, Rindfleish, & Sheridan, 2005; Morley, 2013).

Not only does it require women to assimilate to a hegemonic culture that is not their own but mentoring also can also create an uncomfortable situation for some women who work in institutions with few other female colleagues. The responsibility falls on their other female colleagues to "show them the ropes," but it can accidentally create a competitive atmosphere amongst the women. Limited diversity creates an environment of competition and tokenism, and puts both women in an awkward and difficulty position- trying to find that balance of collegiality amongst a culture of rivalry (Morley, 2013).

Attempts have been made to promote gender equality, but such remedies are not always successful, as they are framed from the male lens or point of view with little, if any, input from

women. Sometimes these initiatives render a reverse, negative effect resulting in having less women participate in the academy (Allan, 2011). Even with interventions, women still feel as though they are not able to compete with male counterparts and have had to demonstrate that they are focused solely on their work without “distractions” such as spouses or family to impede their professional motivations. Data has shown that some women go out of their way not to discuss their families during interviews, sometimes going so far as to only interview when they are not visibly pregnant or nursing (Strausheim, 2013).

These issues become more complicated for Women of Color, who have to deal with gendered barriers as well as various forms of racial discrimination. The hope is that through these women’s stories, we can evaluate the cultures that are fostered and valued in these academic spaces. Examining cultures and climates can result in a better understanding of each individual’s situation, but also a critical view as to how diversity can bring equity to the forefront for the benefit of marginalized groups in higher education.

This study looks to share tools and strategies that have allowed these women to manage the complex, politicized environment of higher education. It is here that we are able to examine the ways that higher education reflects and reinforces white privilege, institutional racism, and social inequality. Additionally, this study looks to expose and reveal the different forms of biased attacks women face as they go through the process of tenure and promotion, which can be dehumanizing to a degree that can cause lasting psychological harm (Flynn, 2015; Smith, Hung, & Franklin, 2011; Smith, Allen, & Danley, 2007; Yosso, Smith, & Solórzano, 2011).

The importance of Chicanas in the academy is even more pressing now as demographics continue to change. Hispanic women were largely overlooked in educational research until about the 1970s. Research around this time focused largely on issues around postsecondary

participation and demographic information (Zambrana, Dorrington, & Alonzo Bell, 1997). Up until the mid 1990s, Latino enrollments were largely concentrated in two-year and community colleges, with little emphasis on going beyond technical training. Questions related to Latinos' access to higher education did not come to a head until census projections suggested a dramatic shift in demographics.

Hispanics currently make up the largest minority in the United States, and Hispanic girls are projected to make up a third of the U.S.'s female population by 2060 (Gandara, 2015). While the numbers in population are expected and continue to rise, we have not seen a similar rise in Chicanas attaining graduate and doctoral degrees. The percentage of Chicanas obtaining postsecondary degrees has increased by 19% from the year 2000 to 2016, while the percentage of Hispanic female professors has remained steady at 2% since 2013 when this data was first collected in aggregate form (National Center for Education Statistics, 2018c). Additionally, Chicanas in the professoriate have been found to be in lower rank positions, have lower tenure probability rates than their counterparts (Adam, 2012), and are concentrated at HSIs and two-year colleges. This is important to note when we discuss issues of access, representation, and diversity for faculty and the students we push through the educational pipeline.

College going rates are considered to be a mark of success, but further examination suggests that only graduating these women has not been enough. The issues that many Chicanas face have been similar to that of Female faculty in all of academia: lack of mentoring, more service appointments, tokenization, and familial obligations (Adam, 2012; DeMirjyn, 2011; Ek, Quijada, Alanís, & Rodríguez, 2010; Espino, 2015; Flores, 2011; Urrieta, Méndez, & Rodríguez, 2014). This is can be extremely problematic for Students of Color, whose enrollment numbers are steadily increasing, but who see less and less of themselves in the faculty they

encounter. Having diverse faculty is extremely valuable to students from underrepresented groups, as these faculty bring in new perspectives and creative teaching strategies (Adam, 2012; Espino, 2015). It is not only a matter of hiring Chicana faculty, but ensuring that they are retained. This is where the concept of tenure becomes extremely important.

1.3 Academic Freedom and Tenure

Academic freedom has been connected with colleges and universities since the time of Thomas Jefferson founding the University of Virginia (Brubacher & Rudy, 1968). Influenced by German universities and the protections they provided their faculty, Jefferson recruited faculty by offering them the opportunity to teach and publish on what they deemed fit without fear of losing their positions. The positions he was offering carried tenure for life. The injection of differing ideas often went against the perspective of university board of trustees, who were predominately businessmen from the local community and held more conservative views. As benefactors of their respective universities, many donors felt as though they should determine what would be deemed acceptable scholarship, putting them in conflict with faculty with more liberal views.

The American Association of University Professors (AAUP) was created as a response to these tensions to advocate for faculty concerns related to academic freedom, tenure, and free speech (AAUP, 1970). The AAUP set up guidelines and expectations for tenure and academic freedom in 1940, which suggested that professors should be able to write "...free from institutional censorship or discipline" and that they are authorized "...full freedom in research and ... publication of results" (p. 14). After a probationary period, professors are also afforded tenure which allows them protections from termination except for very specific reasons.

Academic freedom and tenure go hand in hand. It allows professors to do work of their choosing and be rewarded with tenure to continue their work without fear of reprisal. This process becomes complicated however, because it serves to be a subjective process masked as a meritocratic endeavor (Urrieta et al., 2014). For those that are denied tenure the justifications are that the individuals did not work hard enough, were unqualified or were not a “departmental fit.” The blame is placed on the individual and not the systems or structures in place or the secrecy that surrounds such decisions. It is because of this that we must look at the process with a critical theoretical lens to evaluate the tenure and promotion process.

1.4 Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs)

Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) are a small subset of colleges and universities in the United States that enroll a large number of Latino students. Due to limited modes of funding and support, government officials created the HSI designation in an effort distribute funds in a more efficient manner (Excelencia in Education, 2019; Garcia, 2016). Federal law defines HSI’s as any accredited and degree-granting institution that has a minimum undergraduate Hispanic enrollment of 25 percent. HSI’s now represent 17% of all colleges and universities in the United States and enrolling 66% of all Latino undergraduate students. This broad federal definition allows for institutions of various types and characteristics to qualify as an HSI, as the designation is based on demographic enrollment and graduation, and little else. This has the potential for HSI’s being for Latino students, but only in name, and not necessarily through practices that are beneficial for them.

1.5 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to gain a better understanding as to how Chicana faculty experience the process of tenure and promotion using testimonios. This study focuses on Chicana faculty who have been awarded tenure and promotion at Texas University (TU)³, located in the Southwestern United States. I interviewed participants and identified themes that surfaced from their testimonios. This population is of particular importance because they are able to reflect on the tenure and promotion process, now removed, and provide perspective on the practices of not only TU, but academia in general. The study may generate recommendations for administrators to better support Faculty of Color- specifically women- in academia.

The study, modeled after a study of Chicana and Native American PhD students (Cueva, 2013), is an opportunity to give voice to a marginalized groups through testimonios, and an attempt to create new forms of knowledge that are often delegitimized or devalued (Perez Huber, 2009; Pérez Huber & Solórzano, 2015). Utilizing testimonios also works toward breaking down the production of knowledge that limits perspectives and discourses- what Pérez Huber (2009) describes as an “apartheid of knowledge.” Improving the conditions for female faculty- especially of color- is beneficial for “academia” as a field, for TU, and the students it serves.

1.6 Study Significance

From an intersectional perspective, one cannot look at the experiences female faculty encounter as a singular universal occurrence, since there are a number of overlapping powers and privileges that an individual possesses (Solórzano & Yosso, 2001; Valdes, 2000; Yosso, 2005;

³ A pseudonym

Yosso, 2006). Much of the work related to Latino students and faculty are focused on how individuals make space at Predominantly White Institutions (PWI) (Fernández, 2002; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002; Solórzano et al., 2000; Urrieta Jr. & Villenas, 2013; Yosso, Smith, Ceja, & Solórzano, 2015; Yosso et al., 2011). Conducting this research at a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) provides another perspective that can be a means to compare whether the experience changes at all from one type of institution to another. The findings can also serve as an opportunity to bring forth recommendations to administrators to better address the climate that faculty operate under.

Furthermore, in incorporating theoretical frameworks grounded in Critical Race Theory (CRT) and Chicana Feminism represent a marked shift in traditional knowledge creation. CRT examines the different ways that education policy and practice serve as a means to exert power over marginalized groups (Bell, 1995; Bergerson, 2003; Ladson-Billings & Tate IV, 1995; Solórzano, 1998; Solórzano & Yosso, 2001). Its tenets push researchers to use interdisciplinary frameworks that defy traditional discourses towards advocacy for People of Color (Cueva, 2013; Lynn & Adams, 2002; Solorzano, 2006).

Chicana Feminism provides the researcher permission to center Women of Color into the analysis. It also allows for the researcher to bring in their personal experiences and perspectives into the process, resisting parochial notions of “truth” and “objectivity” (Delgado Bernal, 2002; Delgado Bernal, Burciaga, & Flores Carmona, 2012; Pérez Huber, 2009). Along with centering Women of Color in the analysis, Chicana Feminism allows for the analysis of domination to be scrutinized from multi-modal perspectives that include power, privilege, colonial histories, and patriarchy (Delgado Bernal, 2002). It is through these shared stories that Chicana women are

able to share similar testimonios of dominance while sharing knowledge with one another and preserving it for future generations.

Testimonios as a methodology are used to preserve witness accounts, in this instance, four women who have gone through and obtained tenure and promotion. Testimonios are a means to allow the participants to share and reflect on their experiences and share stories of hope and strength. Centering the methodology on the subjects creates a different relationship between researcher and participants, breaking down barriers between knowledge creators and passive participants, and giving voice to those that have traditionally been silenced in more traditional forms of research methods (Delgado Bernal et al., 2012; Latina Feminist Group, 2001).

1.7 Research Questions

To better understand the situation facing Chicana faculty, two questions are used to guide this study:

- How do Chicana faculty describe their experience of going through tenure and promotion?
- What were their experiences with racial and gendered microaggressions?

1.8 Overview of Dissertation

This dissertation is organized into five chapters and will be incorporating literature and theory from a variety of different disciplines. Chapter one is the introduction and problem statement, and the questions guiding this study. Chapter two provides literature on the current status of Chicanas in the professoriate, as well as the theoretical frameworks used for the purposes of this study. Chapter three outlines the methodological and research design of the study as well as process of recruiting participants. In chapter four, I present these women's

stories and an analysis of their exchanges and interactions throughout their professional journeys in the professoriate. The fifth and final chapter discusses implications for theory and practice as well as recommendations for policy and future research.

Chapter 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a synthesis on the theoretical literature to better understand racism, subjugation of People of Color, and the intersections of racism and gender in researching these populations. The theoretical frameworks of Critical Race Theory and Chicana Feminism that influence my epistemological perspective are introduced in this chapter. An overview of women in higher education is presented, followed by a discussion of Chicanos and Chicanas in post-secondary education.

2.2 History of Higher Education for Women in the United States

Higher education in the United States originally started to train ministers for religious orders with the founding of Harvard College in 1636 (Rudolph, 1990). As other universities were being founded- Yale College, The College of William and Mary, Princeton University among others- the training of enrollees began to expand to include lawyers, politicians, and farmers (Rudolph, 1990). By 1800, there were twenty-five colleges in the United States; fifty-two in 1820 (Thelin, 2011).

Women's colleges were being established at the beginning of the 1850s which allowed women access to college degrees but were not allowed to teach on campuses until the mid-1900s and even then, were limited to administrative duties at the expense of teaching opportunities (Thelin, 2011). Though access to education was becoming more and more available for women in the early 20th century, it was often met with resistance due to a perceived attack to male economic advantage (Allan, 2011). Historically speaking, however, the

experiences of People of Color, and Women of Color in particular, have experienced additional barriers in higher education and in the professoriate.

2.3 Chicano/as and Post-Secondary Education

The end of World War II brought forth a new generation of college-aged students who demanded and expected access to a college education (Cuádriz, 2005). The availability of low-interest loans, grants and other need-based aid opened the doors for nontraditional students who would not have been able to afford college otherwise. Questions began to arise regarding Chicano/as and educational attainment and were framed as a community issue, incorporating both men and women equally in the literature.

Literature on Chicano/as in the professoriate has been used as an opportunity to ask critical questions of institutional cultures and practices to determine whether they have done enough to incorporate marginalized groups into the fold. Michelle Espino (2015) suggests that research-intensive institutions that tout policies of affirmative action for students limit Latina/o faculty presence on their campuses. Through analyzing the lived experiences of Mexican American faculty and post-doctoral fellows, Espino demonstrated how institutions have a vested interest in diversity, but up to a certain point. These fellows and faculty experienced feelings of tokenization and commodification, only alienating them from their universities.

Urrieta(2014)□ were also critical of the meritocratic narrative of the tenure and promotion process in their paper, “‘A Moving Target’: A Critical Race Analysis of Latina/o Faculty Experiences, Perspectives, and Reflections on the Tenure and Promotion Process.” In following 16 Latino faculty members at various career points in the United States, they sought to investigate how his population “perceive, experience, and negotiate the tenure and promotion process” (p. 1154). As part of a longitudinal qualitative study spanning nine years, the authors followed these

16 Latinos as they went on throughout their various stages of career trajectories. Participants ranged in professional rank, and the study allowed participants an opportunity to reflect on the process, and on how sometimes obtaining tenure did little to change some individual's circumstances in the academy. Again, this research revealed the toxic, unwelcoming environments Latinos in the professoriate face as part of their careers.

Susan De Luca and Ernesto Escoto (2012) identified different Latino norms as ways that universities can recruit and support Latino faculty on their campuses. Their suggestions heeded the academy to not only institute policy change, but to work towards genuine understanding of the different cultures of those individuals that make up institutional faculty. Understanding commonalities between People of Color, they argue, has the opportunity to foster an environment of "acceptance and knowledge transfer" (p. 37) in higher education. Urrieta and Mendez Benavidez (2007) also interrogate how Chicano/a faculty make sense of their intellectual work within the confines of a Euro-centric hegemonic academy and what motivates their community commitment. Other studies have measured how Faculty of Color perceive campus climate and satisfaction in comparison to White faculty (Jayakumar, Howard, Allen, & Han, 2009).

This literature incorporates Chicanas and People of Color in aggregate form. Though important, this literature has the potential to create a void in recognizing the differing layers and complexities related to power and inclusion (Mowatt, French, & Malebranche, 2013). In response to this type of erasure, Chicana scholars began asking whether Chicanas were deemed an invisible or forgotten minority in higher education (Casas & Ponterotto, 1984; Cuádriz, 2005; Delgado, 1971; Herrera Escobedo, 1980). The foundations then were laid for Chicana scholars to begin to center scholarship that not only focused on Chicanas in higher education, but also with a theoretical perspective grounded in social justice (Cuádriz, 2005).

2.4 Literature on Chicanas

Scholarship in the 1970s brought forth questions of access and incorporation of Chicanas in the college and universities, as well as utilizing nontraditional spaces and places for methods and research (Blackwell, 2003; Cuádriz, 2005; Saldivar-Hull, 2000). Studies began focusing on discriminatory practices in schools, challenging deficit notions, and deterministic models in education (Candelaria, 1980; Cuellar, 1976). Recommendations in these studies asked higher institutions to create environments more hospitable for Chicanas, with the understanding that People of Color would also benefit from these changes.

The first commissioned study of Chicanas happened in 1978, and it identified barriers for Chicanas post-secondary educational attainment at five California institutions. The findings and study legitimized the study of Chicanas and demonstrated the need for Chicanas to be studied not as a sum of a larger Chicano whole, but as its own group with needs and demands separate from their male counterparts (Cuádriz, 2005). Research related to issues of labor, family and work began to influence questions related to Chicanas in higher education (Baca Zinn, 1980; Pesquera, 1985; Romero, 1992; Romero, 1997; Ruiz, 1998; Zavella, 1987). The focus up to this point, however, had been on Chicanas and potential barriers in degree attainment and not necessarily professional success in post-secondary institutions.

As time progressed, the scholarship has evolved from simply counting the number of Chicanas in a specific department, to addressing questions of how Chicanas navigate the academy and create areas of support and encouragement. In their study, “Narratives from Latina Professors in Higher Education”, Medina and Luna (2000) followed three Latina faculty members working in colleges of education at state universities to demonstrate how the experiences of junior Chicana faculty are linked to their early experiences in school. Notions of internalized racism and gender

oppression manifested themselves throughout their graduate programs and into their careers as they shared stories of how they felt they lacked the mentoring necessary to traverse the academy.

Alyssa Garcia (2005) utilized counter-storytelling to dismantle the silence around the issues Latinas face in the academy by talking to Latina professors who were working at different types of institutions. In her work, Garcia not only discusses the difficulties that these women faced, but also created a space for them to incorporate their lives outside of professional work into the scholarship. Through the details of their struggle and survival, Garcia uses the literature to create full-fledged images of these women and provide a space of healing for herself and the Chicanas she interviewed.

Academic work is also used by Chicanas as a means to bridge their professional identities and the larger community. Many works are done through auto-reflexive or autoethnographic pieces, that place these women at the center of their own scholarship. Miroslava Chavez-Garcia (2011) uses auto-ethnography to document her journey from childhood to graduate school and her transformation into a public intellectual. Ruth Trinidad Galvan's (2011) piece on vivencias and autoheroteorías connected her relationship between the fieldworkers she met in Ecuador and Mexico through her fieldwork and her bout with cancer. Reflecting on interactions with women who worked in the fields provided lessons of resiliency and hope for Trinidad Galvan, even as she faced extreme adversity. In *Telling to Live*, The Latina Feminist Group (2001), selected testimonio essays and poetry that captured the complexities of negotiations in higher education by Latina graduate students and scholars.

Identity creation and a sense of belonging is an important theme for literature on Chicanas in the professoriate. "Chicana Identity Construction: Pushing the Boundaries," (2005) authors Helen Vera and Esmeralda de los Santos resist traditional positivist views of identity construction

to better understand how Chicanas manage multiple identities in order to adapt to and interact with the dominant culture. It is through this constant negotiation that, according to Vera and de los Santos, allow Chicanas to overcome sexist and racist experiences. It is a source of strength that should be recognized, and not viewed as a deficit or shortcoming.

Creating space and community central to two works related to an interdisciplinary collaborative at an HSI (Ek et al., 2010; Quijada Cerecer, Ek, Alanis, & Murakami-Ramalho, 2011). These studies utilized semi-structured focus groups and collaborative meetings as sources of data. Findings from these studies suggest that collaboratives of this nature, comprised of like-minded Chicana scholars served as a space of transformation and resistance within the confines of a usually unreceptive area. The collective also became a vessel for the mentoring of Chicanas by other Chicanas, and enabled Chicanas to find the affirming community the literature urges they locate in order to be successful.

2.5 Race and Racism

The definition of race and racism varies among disciplines (Carter & Goodwin, 2006). Scholars such as Solórzano and Yosso (2002) argue, however, that though there is no conclusive definition, race serves as a socially constructed classification that has persisted throughout US history (Greer et al., 2006). Racism and how it is defined remains fluid and ever-changing, allowing power and resources to be shifted to and from groups depending on where they may fall on the societal hierarchy at a particular moment in time (Haney-López, 2000). The notions of institutionalized racism, patriarchy and socio-economic competition are ingrained in the fabric of American history, and thus, provide different ways that systems of oppression are introduced and reintroduced into society.

According to Solórzano, Allen, and Carroll (2002), racism is defined in the following ways: 1) The belief that one group is superior over others; 2) The group that is believed as superior has power to carry out racist behavior; and 3) Racism affects multiple racial/ethnic groups. White privilege/supremacy can be explained as a “system of racial domination and exploitation where power and resources are unequally distributed to privilege whites and where People of Color are systematically oppressed in various contexts” (p. 22).

By this definition, racist ideologies and white supremacy work in consort to keep institutional power from being accessible to People of Color and continue to perpetuate social inequalities to those already disadvantaged. An example of this is the construction of knowledge, where whites control the definitions of “objective truth” that dictate where and how legitimate knowledge is created (Pérez Huber, 2009). As a result, white values and beliefs are recognized, while at the same time actively exclude People of Color while further legitimizing white dominance and control (Delgado & Stefancic, 2006).

In discussing issues related to female faculty of color, race is only one social that can be examined along with notions of gender, socio-economic status, immigration status, and age. Regardless of social category and the complexity of analysis, the underlying element of examination is rooted in identifying the power dynamic at play that allows one group to exert dominance over another (Delgado & Stefancic, 2006).

2.6 Critical Race Theory (CRT)

Critical Race Theory (CRT) is composed of a large literary base to include disciplines such as law, sociology, history, ethnic and women’s studies (Decuir & Dixson, 2004; Ladson-Billings, 1998; Solórzano, 1998; Solórzano et al., 2000). CRT originally served as a response to civil rights scholarship. CRT makes its attempts to challenge and change racist policies that

marginalize particular groups of people by adhering to the societal status quo (Milner, 2008) All of these literary roots converge to include discourse on race and racism in a multitude of facets in life. CRT is a theoretical framework that is used to analyze and critique both the structural and cultural aspects in our society that promote and promulgate racism (Decuir & Dixson, 2004; Ladson-Billings, 1998; Solórzano, 1998; Solórzano et al., 2000). CRT is composed of five tenets.

Described by Solórzano, Ceja, and Yosso (2000) they are:

- a. The centrality of race and racism and their intersectionality with other forms of subordination,
- b. The challenge to dominant ideology,
- c. The commitment to social justice,
- d. The centrality of experiential knowledge, and
- e. The transdisciplinary perspective (p. 63).

The five tenets make a number of assumptions. Race and racism are a permanent part of U.S. society and can be exercised through various forms of marginalization to include gender, class, sexuality and other differences (Milner & Howard, 2013). CRT challenges the popular notion of objectivity and meritocracy. Believing in such notions of color blindness or equal opportunity only further disguises problems related to power and privilege. CRT scholars push to eliminate racism, sexism, and poverty and move towards the pursuits of civil rights gains by examining race through numerous different disciplines to allow for a comprehensive and more complete analysis on how racism and inequality prevail. The final tenet acknowledges that the experience of People of Color is valuable and important to better understand racial subjugation.

Storytelling methods are vital in CRT, with testimonies and interviews being popular methodologies utilized in CRT research.

For CRT scholars, investigating and looking at race must take a multidisciplinary perspective. While it is important to question and critique the attitudes prevalent in society, we must also investigate how social constructs and systems contribute to the creation and institutionalization of said attitudes. Similar to the writings of Du Bois, CRT scholars seek to identify those that are hurt by racism and racist interactions and gives them a voice in an intersectional manner. This allows for marginalized groups to also have a voice and become empowered in knowing that their experience is not a singular or isolated incident, with the hope that through this discovery, they will also push for change (Solórzano et al., 2000).

Such a theoretical framework is especially important in education, as education can be considered a major breeding ground where these attitudes and inequalities not only exist but are affirmed and reconstructed to a new generation of students (Ladson-Billings, 1998). Race is still a determining factor of inequality, and though gender and class have been topics of study in looking at inequality, race has remained largely ignored. Deemed to be promoting ideas that have been considered to be “un-American” and radical, CRT has received some push back from the larger community, yet CRT research has continued to be investigated in education, though largely in the realm of primary education.

Scholarship regarding curriculum has made the suggestion that curriculum officials specifically design their student courses and textbooks to reflect a white supremacist ideology. This means that perspectives that do not align with the dominant white male standard of knowledge is transformed into a caricature that fits the mold of the dominant narrative (Ladson-Billings, 1998). Historical minority figures are used as one or two chapter of textbooks,

if included, and reduced to easy-to-digest versions of themselves. Critiques on instruction and assessment question not only the tools used to educate students and the methods used for assessment as ways meritocracy and oppression can be snuck into education and further affirm perceived “failure” in minority students, the disproportionate inequality in the school funding system, and the failed guise of desegregated schools. Only more recently has the lens turned from primary schools to institutions of higher education, in varying degrees.

2.7 Racial and Gendered Microaggressions

As previously mentioned, race and racism are allowed to permeate and reproduce via different institutions that reinforce and validate white privilege to further exclude and suppress People of Color (Yosso et al., 2011). In consort with CRT, institutions exert control in a manner that allow for whites to benefit from privileged status in society. The manifestations of these forms of control are evident when People of Color interact with or participate in these institutions. These interactions no longer appear to be overt and intentional, but they are forms of oppression that are a Person of Color may deal with on a daily basis.

Microaggressions are defined as seemingly harmless comments and behaviors that reinforce notions that People of Color are not welcome in these spaces. These small interactions have a cumulative effect in harming students and People of Color. Examples of this include studies by Smith, Yosso, and Solórzano (2011) that have demonstrated how students navigated environments while in higher education to reveal hostile, racist and isolating climates for traditionally marginalized students entering white, privileged environments. It is a delicate balancing act, where Students of Color live and work in constantly stressful, injurious environments. The authors even suggest that these interactions impact Students of Color to such

negative degrees that the long term psychological and physiological injuries are similar to those that have gone to war (Smith et al., 2011; Smith et al., 2007; Yosso et al., 2011).

It is important to note that microaggressions are not limited to assaults based solely on race. It also includes what Ek et al., (2010) describe as “social locations,” (p. 545) which can include gender and class. Acts of marginalization can also be based on a variety of different reasons to include immigration status, accents, and phenotype. Thus, the analysis of microaggressions should be viewed from an intersectional lens to better mirror the lived realities of Chicanas (Ek et al., 2010).

2.8 The Intersections of Race, Gender, and Politics

When one investigates issues related to privilege and dominance, race and gender are not mutually exclusive. Women of Color experience oppression and racism within differing social categories- gender, sexuality, immigration status to name a few. Women of Color, through the creation of justice-focused agendas, have actively challenged racial, gender, and economic inequality. As a response to white privilege in feminism, Women of Color separated from the Women’s Movement in the 1960’s (Smith, 2002). This allowed Black feminist to create a new feminist epistemology that created an academic space for women to theorize from overlapping perspectives on race, class, gender, and other social categories (Crenshaw, 2016).

In allowing voices of working class and traditionally marginalized groups to be centered, these Feminists of Color actively worked to not only subvert hegemonic feminism, but to take back the ideas of who qualifies as knowledge creators and who can claim knowledge, independent of traditional academic practices. It also served as a means to challenge white feminists in the academy, by re-examining any and all forms of oppression and use their stories to be able to counter racism (Anzaldúa, 1983). In *This Bridge Called My Back* (2002), Anzaldúa

and Moraga suggest that theory is created via the retelling of women's lived experiences and memories. Bringing attention to injustice through women's stories of their lives is a tool that allows us to magnify voices that have long been silenced and recognize the power that we have that has also been ignored. For Anzaldua and others, theory practiced in this way can bring about change for not only women, but the world.

For theorists like Anzaldúa and Moraga, the research agenda must be aligned with spiritual and psychological perseverance, and a recognition that one's political work is an act of resistance and push forth work of healing and surviving racism (Anzaldúa, 2013; Anzaldua & Moraga, 2002; Moraga, 2000). In a similar vein, Teresa Córdova (1998) suggests that our work is political, as well as the methods we use to create that work. For us to battle racist structures in academia, we must be prepared to break away from the practices that have historically silenced and erased People of Color. This includes utilizing indigena traditions and allowing space for subjectivities that create "lived experiences, social justice, and diverse modes of consciousness produced through a Chicana feminist theoretical subjectivity" (p. 35).

Delgado Bernal (2002) suggests that People of Color retain their own perception of what is deemed legitimate knowledge. Similarly, the way that these groups define their own ways of learning are related to culture, tradition, family, languages, and relatives. Delgado Bernal encourages researchers to exercise agency in using the methods of our ancestors to decolonize Eurocentric forms of knowledge creation. This process of decolonization works to break the divide that limits the range of what is deemed acceptable epistemology in academia and empower People of Color (Perez Huber, 2009).

2.9 Chicana Feminist Epistemologies

As mentioned in the previous section, Chicana Feminism confronts hegemonic feminism by injecting narratives of experience and cultural knowledge into the field. These epistemologies push back on erasure of racialized subjects, and examines their experiences through intersectionalities of race, class, gender, and sexuality (Crenshaw, 2016). Chicana theory continues to counter racism by occupying the in-between spaces that have historically been overlooked, such as the body, mind, and spirit (Alarcon, 1990; Anzaldua & Moraga, 2002). Questioning who creates theory and what counts as theory creates a space for U.S. Women of Color to be able to share their stories, experiences, and realities with different approaches to push for justice and change.

Anzaldua stresses the need to pull Chicana and Women of Color out from the shadows to occupy spaces that, if unattended, will be taken over by “white men and Anglo women” (Anzaldúa, 2013). It is here where the potential for agency can be lost. If we are not willing to share the story of our people by our people, others can (and will) do it for us. Anzaldua advocates that we create our own *teorias* to allow us to analyze our world, from our location and perspective. Her suggestion to create *teorias* that “cross borders, that blur boundaries” demands that we incorporate historical contexts of marginalization for Women of Color, Third World Feminists, and queer Theorists of Color.

2.10 Summary of Chapter

This chapter provides an overview of the already-established literature in reference to higher education, Chicano/as in higher education and a history of race and racism in America. Additionally, this chapter includes the theoretical frameworks guiding this study: Critical Race Theory, racial and gendered microaggressions, and Chicana Feminist Epistemologies. In this

study, these theoretical frameworks work together to illuminate the climate Chicana faculty face in the academy, amplify their voices, and center them as creators of legitimate knowledge. The following chapter discusses testimonios as the methodology for this study as well as participant recruitment and data analysis.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

This chapter outlines the research design and methodology used for my study. The chapter begins with a discussion on testimonios, its definition and its use as a social justice methodology. After which, I explain the model for analysis of microaggressions and discuss the process of data collection to include participant criteria, selection and recruitment process. Finally, I will end the chapter with a discussion of the data analysis.

3.1 Testimonio as a method and methodology

Since this study is looking to understand the experience of Chicana faculty, I am utilizing testimonios to give voice to a group marginalized within the academy. Testimonio is a method and methodology that works to record and save the experiences of Chicanas as they navigate their professional lives in academia. While there is no set definition, testimonios are based on the re-telling of one's lived experience as a means to find collective solidarity against oppressive structures (Delgado Bernal et al., 2012; Latina Feminist Group, 2001). As a social justice methodology, it forces a repositioning of power between researcher and subject, (Delgado Bernal et al., 2012; Perez Huber, 2009; The Latina Feminist Group, 2001) while also challenging Eurocentric notions of knowledge (Delgado Bernal et al., 2012; Perez Huber, 2009; The Latina Feminist Group, 2001).

There is no set definition, but the use of testimonios work to incorporate political, social, and historical aspects to one's life experience to bring about change and social justice for People of Color (Delgado Bernal et al., 2012; Perez Huber, 2009; Perez Huber & Cueva, 2012). Where the Eurocentric tradition of education research seeks to promote ideologies of truth, objectivity and individuality, testimonio allows both researcher and participant to inject their own

knowledge, positionalities, and experiences into the process (Delgado Bernal et al., 2012; Pérez Huber, 2009).

Similar to the work of Smith (2008) and Cueva (2013), this study seeks to incorporate an anti-racist model where the voices of the oppressed are centered within the context of a larger decolonial structure. Additionally, research that is centered on decolonial methods must also examine the how notions of history and domination influence greatly the cultures and stories of people who are oppressed.

Testimonio as politicized feminist methodology

A testimonio is shared by a witness, to voice injustice and raise awareness of oppression through the stories shared by the narrators (Delgado Bernal, 2015; Delgado Bernal et al., 2012; Perez Huber, 2009; Perez Huber & Cueva, 2012; Urrieta Jr. & Villenas, 2013). Not only do testimonios preserve memories and lived experiences, but it also allows us to seek firsthand accounts of colonization, oppression, and subordination and place it within a larger, collective experience (Delgado Bernal et al., 2012; Huante-Tzintzun, 2016; Perez Huber, 2009). Testimonios are tools to retain stories as evidence of the political, cultural, and economic circumstances that colonized women endure.

The interview process re-conceptualizes the subject, allowing erased female subjects to come to the fore and reveal how systems of oppression affect their bodies, minds, and spirits. (Latina Feminist Group, 2001). This allows knowledge to be created from a decolonial framework and providing discursive power to include voices of indigenous populations, women, undocumented immigrants, and People of Color who all can experience the same situation or environment differently. Research is then transformed into a more “humanizing and liberating” research process (Pérez Huber, 2009).

In this study, I conducted four qualitative testimonios that allowed participants to discuss injustice experienced throughout their professional careers at TU. In this case, testimonio allows us to better understand how Chicanas experience the types, effects of and responses to racial and gendered microaggressions during their professional experience.

3.2 A Model for Data Collection and Analysis of Racial Microaggressions

To better understand the ways different subjugations are reproduced through institutional structures, I am incorporating Solórzano and Perez Huber's Model for Data Collection and Analysis of Racial Microaggressions (2012). Microaggressions describe the overt and covert ways that oppression displays itself in education and academia, each having an overall negative impact on an individual in different ways. This model provides a lens to sort racial and gendered microaggressions first by interactions and then by an individual's effects and responses. Through these stories, I am able to listen to the occurrences of microaggressions by each woman and get a glimpse into how each navigated these interactions.



Figure 3.1: A Model for Data Collection and Analysis of Racial Microaggressions (Solórzano & Perez Huber, 2012)

The model provides four principles in relation to microaggressions that occur in education systems and how we examine them:

1. Types of Microaggressions: how an individual is targeted by microaggressions. They can be based on race, gender, class, language, sexuality, age, immigration status, phenotype, accent or surname.
2. Contexts of Microaggressions: the environment (how, where) the microaggressions occur.
3. Effects of Microaggressions: the physical emotional, and psychological consequences of microaggressions.
4. Responses to Microaggressions: how an individual responds to interpersonal and institutional racist behaviors. (Solórzano & Perez Huber, 2012)

This model allows us to view these interactions in more holistic terms, and not just as instances that happen in a vacuum. Critically examining the environment and its aftereffects allow us to better understand the nuance and long term impacts these interactions have on individuals.

3.3 The Current Context of Chicana Faculty at TU

TU is an HSI characterized an R1 university (very high research activity) by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education and located in the southwestern United States. Predominantly serving undergraduate students, TU enrolls about 25,000 students (National Center for Education Statistics, 2018). As of Fall 2017, TU had 353 tenured faculty and 159 on the tenure track (National Center for Education Statistics, 2018). It is from this population of faculty that I recruited participants for this study.

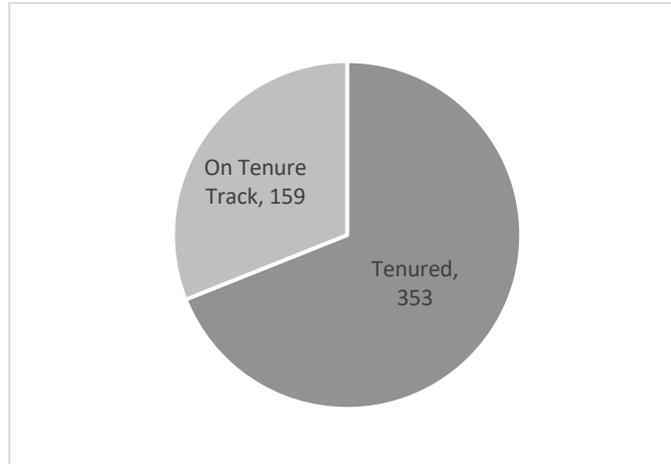


Figure 3.2: TU Faculty by Professor Rank (National Center for Education Statistics, 2018)

A team of female faculty received funding from the National Science Foundation (NSF) to investigate what types of opportunities were available to female faculty at TU from 2002-2007. In their “Final Findings Report” to the National Science Foundation, the ADVANCE team included the creation of a maternity and family leave plan, increased communication amongst faculty regarding the new plan and its implementation, interaction among faculty and academic departments, and the promotion of interdisciplinary work as part of their suggestions to improve the climate for women at the university (Posey & Nava, 2007). The group also recommended the University-wide implementation of a formal third year review among four colleges at TU, as well as the rise in female tenure-track/tenured faculty hires and overall faculty make-up.

The study also brought to light issues including the differences of expectations between male and female faculty, male students challenging female professors in class, and the higher expectation for female junior faculty to participate in more service appointments than their male counterparts- issues that are not limited to TU (Guo, 2015; MacNell, Driscoll, & Hunt, 2015; Morris, 2016; Pittman, 2010; Sheltzer & Smith, 2014; Williams, Phillips, & Hall, 2014).

Though the report at TU identified issues related to the current climate at the university, there are still major hurdles that have to be overcome to ensure that the university is more inclusive to female faculty and their needs. Male faculty positions at all levels at TU still outnumber female faculty 757 to 621, and the number of male faculty that are tenured is nearly double that of their female counterparts, 353 to 181 (National Center for Education Statistics, 2018). When broken down by ethnicity, the numbers of female faculty at TU demonstrate a disparity amongst women that are tenured at the university:

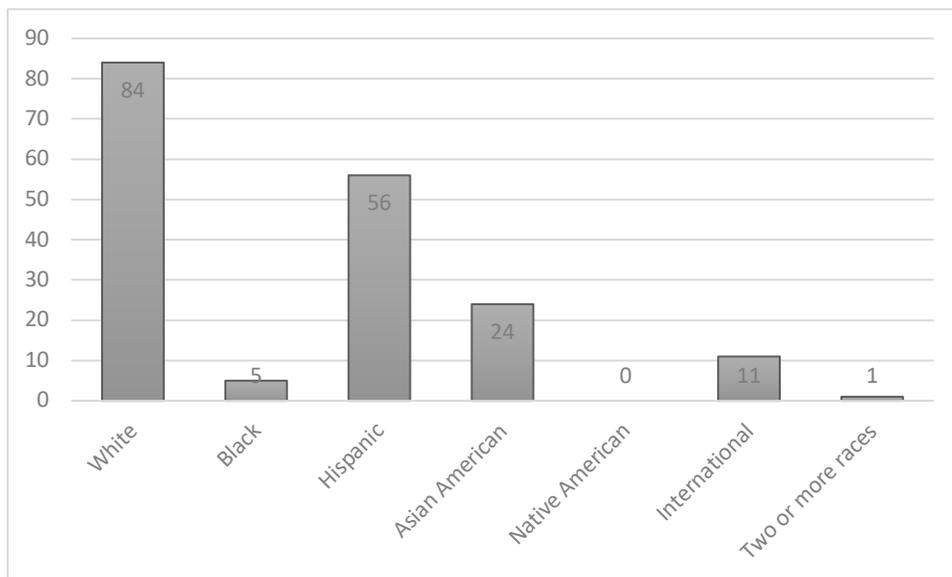


Figure 3.3: TU Tenured Female Faculty by Ethnicity (National Center for Education Statistics, 2018)

3.4 Recruitment of Participants

For the recruitment of this study, I utilized unique purposeful sampling. I used this sampling method because I based my decision on “unique, atypical, perhaps rare attributes or occurrences of the phenomenon of interest” (Merriam, 2009, p. 78). To identify potential participants, I requested a spreadsheet from the Department of Human Resource Services to include faculty that had active appointments at the university, their official job titles, department,

gender and university email address. After which, I filtered through the listing to only include those individuals with titles of Professor and Associate Professor and then by gender. I then proceeded to go through each academic department website and look through their faculty profile pages to ensure that no potential participants were overlooked and that the contact email were correct and up to date.

The criteria for this study included: 1) Participants self-identifying as Chicanas; 2) Have gone through at least one tenure review with a decision having been made; and 3) be working at TU. An email invitation was sent to 29 potential participants that met the criteria for this study. The initial invitation to participate was sent out via email July of 2018 with two subsequent follow ups sent two and four weeks after the first message was sent. Overall, 15 of the 29 participants had replied, with one declining outright. From those responses, 12 had indicated that they would be willing to participate, but for a number of reasons were not available during the intercession and asked that we schedule at a time that was more convenient for them during the fall semester. In following up to schedule meeting times, eight did not reply after multiple attempts to re-establish contact. In total, four Chicanas agreed to participate. In scheduling the first round of interviews, I allowed the participants to select times and locations that they were most comfortable with. All four chose to meet with me in their offices on the university campus. All of our interactions were audio recorded and transcribed. Written consent was obtained at the beginning of the meeting where we discussed and reviewed IRB regulations. All participants were given pseudonyms to protect their identities.

Altogether, the interviews averaged 79 minutes in length, with the longest being 125 minutes in length and the shortest being 63 minutes long. Below is a breakdown of their personal attributes. Their stories will be discussed more in-depth in the next chapter:

Table 3.1 Description of Participants

Pseudonym	Rank	Departmental Affiliation
Ximena	Associate	Social Science
Emma	Associate	Science/Engineering
Valentina	Full	Science/Engineering
Sofia	Full	Science/Engineering

3.5 Data Analysis

Since the study is guided by already-existing theoretical frameworks, deductive coding was used to organize the interview data through constant comparative analysis. Constant comparative analysis creates “chunks” into smaller more meaningful parts (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2007). Chunks are compared to previous codes to allow similar chunks to be organized under the same code. This allowed me to organize and analyze data in a critical way by sorting items by category and subcategory in their testimonios based on their racial and gendered experiences in academe. The initial transcriptions were all read at once to get a better sense of the material that was to be coded. They were then read again a second time and organized as broad, more general themes. The third and fourth readings allowed me to refine the themes and better assess the relevancy of the ideas that were being organized, using the Solórzano and Huber model (2012) as a guide for analysis.

Grounded in Chicana feminist epistemology, cultural intuition serves as a critical lens to view knowledge production. Cultural intuition is one way where we can push back on “epistemological racism” that stymies what can be considered legitimate in the academy (Delgado Bernal, 2002; Perez Huber, 2009). Cultural intuition allows participants and researchers to discuss findings communally to be able to stimulate discussion and dialogue

throughout the process of data analysis. Cultural intuition allows us to incorporate our personal experience, cultural knowledge, and professional experience to analyze data (Delgado Bernal, 2015).

The stories were organized in terms of interactions the Chicanas had with others within the context of TU. Then, the interactions were classified in terms of type of interaction- who was it with? Was it within the confines of a formal or informal setting or meeting? What systems of difference was the microaggression based on (race, gender, immigration status, etc.)? Afterward, I examined what the effects of the microaggression had on the faculty- how did they feel about it? What did they do in response? Finally, what did each woman do in response to how they felt in relation to their interactions? Their responses allow me to theorize their experiences and attempt to place them within the already-existing literature.

Once the initial analysis was completed, I reached out to them once again via email communication to invite them to meet. In our follow up meetings, we discussed the initial findings and I allowed them the chance to continue the conversations related to their professional experiences, if they felt comfortable. If they agreed, I asked them additional questions to reflect on some instances that they may have not discussed previously.

Researcher Disclosure

When conducting any type of qualitative research, one must acknowledge and recognize the image of the “neutral” or unbiased investigator is a myth (Dey, 1993). Disclosing past experiences allows the researcher and the readers better understand what is shaping their interpretations of this study. I currently work at Texas University, and I do have some personal connections with some of the participants based on our professional relationship.

This may have encouraged some to participate for this study, all interviews were conducted on a voluntary basis, with their trust that strictest confidentiality was maintained throughout. All of the participants were allowed to withdraw from participating at any time and were encouraged to stop at any time if they ever felt uncomfortable. My professional relationships with some of them also may have influenced their responses, making them hesitant to share some stories for fear of negative consequence. It is here where I allowed them to reflect on their stories and feel comfortable letting me know if something needed to be taken off the record.

My familiarity with TU also helped me incorporating what I know about the university and some of the procedural, logistical hurdles they were talking about in their testimonios. The experience has allowed me to better understand the context of their stories, and better integrate the cultural intuition into this study. As a Chicana who (maybe) aspires towards a career in the academy, the experiences and lessons that these women shared are immeasurable to me.

3.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter provided an overview of testimonios as a research methodology as well as the model of analysis for microaggressions. The process of recruiting participants is also discussed, as well as a general overview of the methods for data collection and analysis. The following chapter introduces the participants, and highlights their stories as Chicana faculty along the tenure track at TU.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This study seeks to better understand the experiences of Chicana faculty as they navigated the tenure and promotion process at a Hispanic-Serving Institution. This chapter addresses these questions by answering the following questions:

- How do Chicana faculty describe their experience of going through tenure and promotion?
- What were their experiences with racial and gendered microaggressions?

These stories differ based on numerous factors such as culture, histories, types/forms of microaggressions, and previous institutions attended. Therefore, it must be noted that while these stories may share similarities, they are not the same. Though the experiences are not universal, they are stories that need to be heard as a means for the participants to heal and validate their voices (Anzaldúa & Moraga, 2002; Delgado Bernal, 2015).

This study is guided by principles grounded in Chicana Feminist Epistemology and CRT. Chicana Feminism allows us to examine the experiences of others through the intersectionalities of race, class, gender, and sexuality (Delgado Bernal, 2015). CRT additionally allows us to scrutinize how power and white privilege are reproduced and recreated through institutions such as education using interdisciplinary approaches (Cueva, 2013).

Microaggressions are tools that are used to exert control that allow whites to continue to benefit from privileged position in society. Microaggressions are small daily interactions of discrimination that cause cumulative, long-term harm to People of Color (Solórzano et al., 2000). These interactions are analyzed using Solórzano and Perez Huber's "Model for Data Collection and Analysis of Racial Microaggressions" (Solórzano & Perez Huber, 2012). Using this model

will allow me to gain a better understanding of the interactions themselves, but also the contexts in which they occur and their long-term impacts on the individuals. First, each Chicana will introduce themselves and how they arrived at TU. Then, each shares their experiences from their beginnings at TU, through finding out of their promotion decisions, and then their current situations and future professional plans.

4.2 Emma

Emma grew up in Star City and is third generation American. After graduation from the local Catholic High School, she moved away to pursue a bachelor's degree in life sciences at a private university. Her journey to academia happened accidentally:

...[I] went to ... [Texas] for [my] undergrad, thinking I wanted to be a Med Tech... at the time I was really, really involved with the boyfriend that I had for like four years and he was in Dallas and so I wanted something that was in science, because I loved it, but I wanted something I could come out and get a job, and get married, and have kids, that type of thing. And [then] we broke up. So, I was thinking well okay, ... now I can pursue other things and I thought I wanted to go into medicine...

After participating in a summer research program, a faculty mentor convinced her to pursue biological research and not medicine. A decision that followed her through her undergraduate and graduate degrees:

...A biology professor ... [a]sked me what I wanted to [do] with my life, and I said I wanted to go into medicine. And he said, 'no you don't.' I'm like okay, ... what else do you do? He's like oh, you need to do this [research]... [And I] Loved it. Loved it. So, when I came back to [school] my sophomore year, I hunted down faculty that could help me figure out, how do I pursue research, because that's what I wanted to do.

Emma graduated with a bachelor's degree, and then continued on to a flagship University on the Eastern Coast of the United States. Having had such a positive and enjoyable experience participating federally-funded diversity research programs, Emma had decided that she wanted to have a career affording similar opportunities to other minority students. However, when the time came for her to start applying, Emma found that her career aspirations were, again, being redirected:

...[T]hroughout my entire undergrad and grad years, I was involved in minority-based programs. They were there specifically designed to increase diversity in STEM. And I enjoyed that aspect of it so much that my plan was never to go into academia. I wanted to go into policy, science policy. I wanted to be the administrator who had the money to determine how do we create initiatives that are going to enhance diversity. That's what I wanted to do. When I was close to graduating from grad school, I applied for a science policy position at the National Institutes of Health. And my grad advisor refused to write me letter [of recommendation]. He was pissed, saying that I had wasted his time. I had wasted my time. That I was too talented to end up being a pencil pusher. That this was a complete disappointment. And so, I decided not to apply, because I didn't think I would be eligible, much less competitive without a letter of support from my own mentor. So, I applied for post postdoc positions [instead]... And I got one that I really enjoyed. I really enjoyed. It was in Toronto.

It was after her post-doctoral experience, that Emma obtained a science educator position at TU. She was not selected for that position, but was called back by the department at TU when a new position opened up:

...I didn't really intend to be a faculty member. I really kind of wanted to be helping the students. But I didn't qualify [for the first position] because I didn't have a PhD in science education. And surprisingly enough, at the time, the department had lost a faculty member ... to the dean's office. And so, they decided to look at me, as what they called a 'target of opportunity,' which is part of being an ethnic minority female. ...I came and I interviewed, I got free trip home for Easter weekend. And they offered me the job.

After obtaining tenure, Emma slowly started shifting more towards administrative roles both in and out of the university:

...[I]t all worked out well, because now this has been the only faculty position I've had, only job I've had since being a postdoc. And I still get through and I teach students, I have them in my lab. I've been an advisor; I've been on the board of [different professional organizations]. I've been in all types of things. I've been able to do everything I always thought I wanted to do, by being a faculty member... [I]t didn't happen on purpose. It just, was kind of haphazard and I ended up right where I wanted to be.

4.3 Valentina

Valentina has been at TU working in the College of Applied Sciences and was promoted to Associate Professor and then to Full Professor within the college. Along with her experience in the private and government sectors, she has also had previous administrative experience. Valentina knew that she had wanted to work with students since she began her career as an undergraduate tutor, but had to modify her post-baccalaureate plans due to her familial obligations:

I was assigned three students... who were failing their respective math classes. They, basically, just handed them over to me and said, 'Tutor them,' and so I did. We had tutoring sessions, and I managed to get all three of them up to A's by the end of the semester. To me, that was so rewarding that I said, "Gee, I'd like to do this on a full-time basis, working with students..."

Things [came] and went, and I got my bachelor's... and then I came back for a master's. Then, I really enjoyed research, and I wanted to do a PhD, but circumstances were such that I had to work, and so I went to work for the government for a couple of years. Then, my husband at the time got a job in a fairly remote institution... In one of those strokes of luck they had an opening for someone who knew how to teach the subjects that is my specialty, and so I took on that job as a lecturer. Then, from there I knew that I was going to enjoy it, and then I, at one point, came back for the PhD, and then transitioned to be a tenure-track professor.

Before beginning her work at TU, she had already worked at three other universities as an Assistant Professor. Her arrival to TU was, as she describes it, the result of good fortune and an ideal time for her as she was looking to move institutions:

...[I]n a stroke of luck, I decided to come look at ...[TU], and they had a position that was like a cookie cutter [perfect] for me. Of course, this is not the nice part of the story, but the reason that there was a vacancy and classes were already scheduled like that was because the person who used to do that, who also had my expertise, died suddenly. I just kind of stepped in and took over his classes without skipping a beat.

It was a fit with regard to expertise and classes. It was also a fit with regard to the type of students that I wanted to help, and also the type of students that I wanted to work with ...

Because I've had at another institution where they are very entitled, and it makes it a little bit tough... I find that [TU] has very few ... students who act that way.

No longer working in administration, she has returned to her department to continue teaching, and is also the probation advisor for her department, guiding students who are on the brink of failing out of school towards academic success.

4.4 Sofia

Sofia is also from Star City, and in fact, attended the same High School as Emma. She left Star City to pursue a bachelor's degree in life sciences at a Predominantly White Institution in East Texas. After which, she moved to Arizona and graduated with her master's and Doctoral Degrees. After two post-doctoral positions, she worked at a nonprofit research facility before returning to Star City to work as an Assistant Professor at TU. Sofia has also been promoted to Associate and then Full Professor. In that time span, she has received numerous regional and national awards related to excellence in mentoring, research, and securing extramural funding from government agencies.

Sofia's focus now is on her mentoring both students and faculty that are coming up the ranks as a means for her to give back:

I've learned I'm absolutely not interested in administration, zero. I would hate it. I've learned that I'm very conflict averse. I don't like conflict at all. At [this] point in my career, generally people are deciding. You get asked to be Chair. You might [get] asked to be considered for dean, things like that. I just don't think that's been the path for me, at least not yet. If I don't maintain the longevity and the funding, then I might consider things like that, but I don't want that to be the reason, because that's not what I've learned makes me happy.

The mentoring, we have two new faculty ... here. I enjoy them so much. I feel, I hope... that I can help them. I have a post-doc training grant now. Right now, we have three postdocs. I feel responsibility and I enjoy mentoring them, too. That's more what I've learned about myself than enjoying the administration piece. Then I have friends ... that I see in jobs like that [in administration] and I study their jobs and I look, and I observe, and I realize what I would like about different paths.

4.5 Ximena

Ximena was born in South America and did her undergraduate work there before attending a flagship institution in the Southern United States for her graduate studies. It was her early exposure to scholarship in Anthropology that opened the door for a potential career in academia:

[S]ince I started my BA, I loved doing research. I did my BA in anthropology, and so doing anthropology I learned about doing research, ethnographic research, and I loved it. So that's how I started to think that probably I would like to be a researcher. But I didn't know about all the different possibilities. And it was when I was doing my masters that I got to be more familiar with the career path of a professor, and so that's how when I decided probably, I w[ould] go for my PhD. But at the beginning I just knew that I liked to do research, then later on I thought about it, and I wanted to be a professor too.

... [I mean,] you can be a researcher with a master's, right? You don't have to be a faculty, but then later on when I did my masters, I said, 'Maybe that's the path that I want to go' because I really liked doing research. I wanted to be a forever student, and so that's why I said you know, it's better to do it that way because I cannot do many, many, many

master's and PhDs right? So that's how I decided, maybe the professoriate is the way to go.

After her graduation, Ximena had applied to multiple universities to pursue her dream of becoming a professor and was very strategic in choosing where she wanted to work:

I looked purposefully for a university that was on the border because I thought that my expertise ... was going to be better appreciated here right? Also, I had more opportunity to do research with bilingual populations, but also personally I wanted to be on the border, and close to Latin America. I am originally from [South America], so I wanted to be closer [to home].

[And] I got a couple of offers. I got another offer from [another university] at that time, and so I visited both. And I really liked the city here. So much more fluency, you know, the fluid communication between Star City really attracted me more than [the other university].

Ximena was also attracted to the evolving mission of the university, and viewed a new position in TU as a chance to be a part of larger institutional change:

Also, the university [TU], I love the mission ... Also, I saw a lot of focus and emphasis on research, which I didn't see [at other places]. We're in a transition at that point, so I saw for example, a lot of the discourse of, we want to become a research university ... So, I really appreciated that push to become a research university, and so I felt that support to do research. ...I liked for example, that I had to teach less courses ... at least in the first year. So, things like that were also very attractive to me.

Ximena is currently an Associate Professor and has served the department in varying levels of administration and responsibility.

4.6 Analytical Summary

In this introductory section, the women in this study share their own experiences as it relates to graduate school and their arrivals at TU. This brief overview provides us an idea of who they are and where they have come from. Additionally, it allows us a glimpse into some of the ways that they entered academia. While sometimes one's career trajectory is done strategically and purposefully like in the case of Ximena, circumstances can impact one's agency in making these decisions like in the cases of Valentina and Emma.

At the beginnings of her career, Valentina had to move from institution to institution to accommodate her spouse and his professional endeavors. Emma's trajectory had also changed course twice: the first when she broke up with her long-term boyfriend, and then again when her advisor did not support her application to work at the National Institutes of Health. For both of these women, these external forces limited the amount of power they could exercise in determining where they wanted to go or do.

Moreover, the reason they were brought to work at TU were part of a deliberate hiring efforts from their respective departments. Regardless of their original career plans or whether they initially envisioned academic work for themselves, all four professors have indicated that their positions serve as an opportunity to serve and mentor students in positive ways. The following section goes on to describe each woman's journey through the tenure and promotion process.

4.7 Emma's Tenure Testimonio: A Tale of Multiple Personalities

Emma is third generation American who returned to Star City and TU after graduating from an elite institution on the East Coast and was hired as a target of opportunity based on her

race and gender. When asked about how she would describe the process of tenure and promotion, Emma recalled a meeting hosted by higher administration to new faculty:

[Y]ou have to be Mother Theresa on service, you've got to be Albert Einstein on research, and you have to be Gandhi in teaching. That's kind of the way they explained it. Literally. The provost explained it that way at that time. ... I'm like 'yeah, sure, I can't really do one of those, much less all three.' [And] you just bust your butt for all of it because you have to do all of it.

Now they make it a little more explicit. It really comes down to how much money you're bringing in and how much research you're publishing. But even so, I think academia in general keeps it somewhat nebulous. Because the way the president explained it once, it's like getting married. You've got to decide whether you can live with this person for the rest of your life... And a lot of that can't be quantified or even given a description, so sometimes that's why they just say you've got to excel at this, excel at this, excel at this. I think really what it comes down to, as long as you're getting all of them done fairly well [it's okay]. You are bringing money into the institution, you're an asset to them as far as it comes to your teaching and support of students, and that you fit, whatever that is, then the tenure process isn't so difficult.

Emma recognizes that working at an HSI has provided her with a certain level of comfort that may not be afforded to colleagues at other types of institutions in other parts of the country.

But as she explains, TU is not without its own issues:

Gender is an issue when you get into academia. ... In a place like this ... being a female was a huge problem, and sometimes still is. We don't get equal pay, we get more service. Our ideas tend to be dismissed. I've actually had a chair tell me once when I first got

here, it was about 2001, 2002 ... Asking me if I was aggravated. He actually outright told me, "What's wrong with you? I've never seen you this upset before, is it the wrong time of the month for you?"

It's surprising the kind of stuff that still exists. And it still exists.

Since part of her tenure packet requires securing funding from external agencies, Emma had made it a point to work with other colleagues in her department to submit numerous grant applications. It was through this work that she was confronted with another uncomfortable situation:

[T]here was a fellow faculty member, he was white. We had offices next door to each other. Came in at the same time, the exact same starting salary. Two years later, we decided to work with each other on a grant. We had only been here two years, he was already earning like \$8,000 more than I was. ... We taught the same number of classes, we had brought in the same amount of money, we had both been doing the same amount of service, but he had gotten bigger raises than I had in two years. [I] went to the chair about it, said all of that's beyond him, there's nothing he can do about it. Went to the dean about it, and he said, "Oh well you know, we don't really have any documentation to support this or that, but we'll take care of it when you come up for tenure."

So [the] time comes for tenure, it's a different chair, it's a different dean, and the guy was no longer here. ... [I]t never was addressed. I'm mean I'm sure it was because I was female. Even though we were equal in all parameters, I'm sure I wasn't seen the same, because I was female.

Emma found this to be especially frustrating, not only because it was blatant disparate treatment, but no one seemed willing to rectify the situation even after it was brought up to two

different sets of administrators. She also insinuated that the prevailing idea was that because there were women in prominent positions at TU, that her feelings of being slighted were unfounded:

[I]f you talk to higher administration at [TU], what they'll tell you is, "Oh yeah, but you've got a female president. How could it possibly be gender inequity? Oh, you've got a female full-time professor in the department and she earns more than the dean. How could there be gender inequity?"

So, they point out one example to kind of show that, oh we're not mistreating women. We're not treating other people differently. It's not enough to really justify their arguments, but it's enough to kind of for them to be able to like, okay, we're not going to do anything about it.

In this instance, Emma was being gaslighted by those up in higher administration, who justified inaction through the tokenization of the higher-positioned women at TU. This excuse, along the guise of bureaucratic inefficiencies were used as a means to placate her complaints. She has resolved that these incidents, though hurtful, did not merit her harboring long-term animosity and made her think about how fortunate she is to be here in the first place:

I think in the end, I don't feel overly mistreated, I guess really is what it comes down to. It hasn't happened to me enough that I feel like, that I've hit my threshold that I no longer want to deal with it... So, it's not like I really have a lot to complain about. And I'm home, my families here, my sister's here, my grandparents were here before they passed away. But unfortunately, it's still systemic.

This gratitude was due, in part to her experience in graduate school and how she was treated there:

When I went to [my doctoral program], they made it very obvious to me that I was not the same. I mean, to me, I was American ... And that's because everybody else made me see how different I was. They made fun of the way I talked. They made fun of the way I moved my hands. They made fun of the care packages my abuelos used to send me ... Because they would send me like ... frijoles, and chorizo, and handmade tortillas, and they would make fun of me. And you would think like so, who cares? But at 22, 23 years old, it was really ... It was hurtful and it was hard for me to feel like, "I'm just like you." [They said] I had fellowships that were provided to me because I was a minority. And then there w[ere] rumors ... "Well she has the right name."

I actually had a faculty member that came up to me once after class and pulled me aside [and said]. "Who do you think you are? Just because you're Hispanic you think you're supposed to get special treatment?"

I had never done anything to this man, but something was eating him up, because it bothered him [that I was there].

As difficult as those interactions were for her, Emma also found it difficult to find solace from some of her family when she would visit:

... I'd come home for holidays, and my cousins used to make fun of me. They used to tell me I was a coconut. I was brown on the outside, and I was white on the inside. Why did I have to go to school in [the east coast]? I should have stayed somewhere where it was brown like in California. ... I had this huge disconnect between being too brown in [grad school], and too white in El Paso. And then I was a scientist, ... nobody really understood what it was in my family anyway. Trying to put all that together was extremely challenging. Unbelievably challenging.

These interactions further alienated Emma, who was searching for a space where she was not one thing or another:

... I fe[lt] so alone, because I was in ... grad school [and it] got difficult... With all those other stressors, and that's how I found [my professional organization] ...specifically by Chicanos ... to specifically support each other. And I became a member. And I've been part of that ever since.

... [I]t really helped me put all [these issues] together. That I don't have to create different worlds for myself, to exist independently of each other. That I could be all of them. It took me a long time to figure out how to do that comfortably.

In reflecting on the wait between her dossier submission and notification of the decision, Emma remembers trying to keep a positive mindset:

[Her and her colleagues] always used to say “Well, I've done everything I can possibly do. As far as I feel that I could have done. And if I don't get tenure then that just means it wasn't any deficit of mine. It was just that it was not a good fit. And this particular relationship wasn't meant to be.”

And that's how we kept talking to ourselves ... this is how I'm going to see it. Because otherwise you just drive yourself kind of nuts. What more could you have done? What more could you do? Who else could you have asked?

It was not until the decision came back that she was recommended for tenure that Emma realized the amount of stress she was carrying in part, because of the implications of what it meant to be denied:

[The tenure decision] like when you were a kid and woke up Christmas morning. It's the best present ever because you don't realize how much tension you're holding. Because if

you don't get tenure, you [have] got to leave. ... [Y]ou've got to spend a year trying to find another job and when you're looking for jobs and they ask you, "Why do you want to move?" "Well, it's because I didn't get tenure."

And they're like "Well ... If you weren't good enough for them why would we want to take you on?"

So, when the time comes, and you find out you get tenure it's just this huge sigh of relief. And then once all of that tension kind of releases you're just like yes. This is just great. ... Because you're just so happy. It just feels like okay, I found my place, I found my home, they're not going to fire me.

For Emma, obtaining tenure was that much more important because of the fact that she grew up in Star City, has strong ties to the community and as a former director of a national advocacy group for underrepresented minorities. For Emma, the academy is a way to serve something bigger than herself:

I do think [the academy] worthwhile. I think it's unbelievably fulfilling because of the commitment that you have to so much more that's beyond you. Because you have a commitment to the students that you're training, to the faculty and the staff that you work with, to the goals of the institution. ... I really think just the realm of possibilities is quite extensive in academia. Although a lot of people see it as this ivory tower type of thing. I don't think it really falls that way at all. Just depends on how you use that platform.

She is quick to point out, however, that her position situated within an HSI affords her certain opportunities not available elsewhere, "...[My] world's come together very comfortably for me. It'd probably be different if I was not in a minority serving institution. It probably wouldn't be the same."

The original advice of being Mother Teresa, Einstein, and Ghandi were not particularly helpful in clarifying the nebulous criteria and expectations to submit a successful packet for tenure. While she affirms that TU has a climate that is more amenable than most other universities across the country, she has indicated instances that TU is not immune to unequal treatment amongst its faculty or the stress that is built-in the tenure process.

4.8 Valentina: Surviving the Revolving Door of Department Chairs

When Valentina began at TU, her college had a very clear directive for a successful tenure packet:

When I first came on, there was an emphasis on research, and I was told flat-out, “You need to have a certain dollar amount in your research by the time you get to tenure, otherwise, they're not going to approve you.” It was made very clear to you, at least in the research aspect, that it was going to be kind of explicitly more or less X-amount of dollars.

However, when the time came for regular feedback, Valentina had difficulty getting reliable advice from her department chairs during her reviews:

[M]y first chair ... was neither critical, nor did he give kudos. It didn't matter what I did, it was always on the scale of one-to-five, it was always a three, didn't matter what I did ... I could not believe that I had just, not just from my own perspective, but in comparison with other people who were already on the treadmill, so to speak, ... I think I hit it out of the ballpark, you know? I really did a lot, and I was very successful and blah, blah, blah, and he gave me a three.

I found out that somebody else who had started like the year before I did who didn't even do a third of what I had done, and his teaching was poor, and his research may have been

wonderful, but as far as bringing in dollars or publishing papers, he wasn't doing so good, and, yet, he got a five. Then, another colleague who started two years before I did, now, he really didn't do anything, really didn't do anything. Everybody thought he was just the best thing since sliced bread, but he didn't do anything. He was included on his friend's papers, his friends were at all these institutions, and he was included on their papers, but he wasn't doing anything and, yet, he would get fives.

Even after a change in department leadership, Valentina was not able to find relief. The second chair, according to Valentina was in fact worse than the chair she reported to when she first started, "...[H]e was from a seventh-layer from hell. It was like every annual performance ... he would always find something."

That "something" was a constant devaluing of her work and her accomplishments, and not being supportive of her endeavors. The relationship had become so toxic that it potentially threatened her application for tenure:

He [would say], "You know that the best teacher in the world is walking out there in the street, and I can hire them for \$4,000 a semester. They're cheap. They're a dime-a-dozen. I don't care about that. What matters is the research." Then if I would get a research award, he would tell me, "So what? Your teaching is horrible," which it wasn't. There was no pleasing him, so it made me appreciate the guy that didn't say anything, one way or the other.

Then when it came time for tenure, this was to be expected, but I was so stressed out because that same person who always found fault in all my annual reviews, he said, "You think you're getting tenure here? You're crazy." He says, "You're not getting tenure here.

I'm not supporting you for tenure." He says, "You better start looking for a job somewhere else."

Up to this point, Valentina had had to cope with an ambivalent chair who did not care whether or not she put forth an effort and a chair who was overtly hostile towards her. She was equally stressed under both chairs, adding to what she admits was already a strenuous situation for her in working towards tenure. For her, the possibility of being denied worried her for more immediate reasons:

The stress was cumulative, I think I was nervous enough on my own part because of the environment that the chair had created for me. It was almost bullying, actually, that he had created. I don't think that I gave that much thought. I just gave it thought to my particular situation. I was pretty nervous about that, yeah, because at that moment in time I had two young children, and I thought that it would be really quite hard to pack everything up and move them somewhere, but it was what it was. I was pretty stressed out.

Further complicating matters was the department and college Valentina is affiliated with. As she describes it, Valentina believes that some of the struggles she had in her department were in part due to her perseverance and the fact that she was one of the first women in a College that was struggling to retain its female faculty:

[The department] had been 100% boys club until ... I came wanting to apply for the job. I think they had a real hard time adjusting to having a woman in the department. Not only that, the college didn't have a very good track record either because another department had hired its first two females not too long before [me]. I know that during my, I guess it was first couple of years here, one of them did not get tenure. It didn't look fair to me,

and so she was so angry, so she left TU. Then the other one couldn't stand it ... her personality is different than mine.

I've always had a very persistent personality where if people tell me, "No, you can't do that," it's my natural reaction to say, "Why not? Why not? If he's doing it why can't I do it?"

That's always been my personality, and I think her personality was slightly different. She didn't have that fighter attitude. She was just very maligned and very annoyed, and she got to the point where she said she wasn't enjoying life, and so she left to another institution without going up for tenure.

Adding to this, there was an added element of mystery to the entire process which did little to calm her anxiety:

The whole tenure process was very secretive, and very, very negative that you turned in your materials, and that was the end of it. You didn't hear anything at all until you were notified ... There was no feedback at any point in the system. Even when I got [notified in] May, it was very, very weird ... I was passing in the departmental office, and the chair was going in the other direction. He goes, "Oh, wait, just a minute. The provost told me to give you this."

I pulled [the envelope] out, and it was a strip of paper, and it was like cut [small] ... It wasn't even a [full] page. It was stuffed in, folded in this little, tiny envelope. Written in pencil it said, "Pending the approval of the regents, you've been granted tenure." ... This little slip of paper written in pencil. I was thinking, "Oh, my god. What is this? This is like a cloak and dagger society?" But, indeed, that was all I got until I got my contract for the next academic year that said, "Tenured associate professor."

Armed with her little sliver of paper, Valentina could still not believe that she was promoted, nor could she really process and enjoy her accomplishment:

[I felt] relief. It was relief. It wasn't joy. I wasn't even happy. I wasn't even in a celebratory mood. I was just like, "Whew! It's over." ... Furthermore, there was still a niggling little doubt, "Is it really true?" Because it was handed to me ... In the mail room. ... It was with pencil, like what, in order to erase it so that they could put [you] are not [tenured] as opposed to are, granted [tenure]?

The climate of the department and stress of the promotion process prevented Valentina from being able to enjoy or celebrate her accomplishment. The pattern of disrespect exhibited during her time as an Assistant Professor only continued after she was promoted the first time, until a new chair worked to rectify her situation:

I was two or three years beyond tenure... I was a tenured associate professor, and from the day that I was hired until that [third department] chair took over, I was the lowest-paid person in the department all the time, every single academic year. Our very first departmental meeting he came, and he said, "Yes, there's a pot for raises this year. ... But, really, I've already looked at people's situation, and there are some very big inequities in this department. As soon as I take care of those, then what's left over will be used for raises."

I went home, and I danced a gig. I went in through the laundry room and threw my stuff, and I was dancing a gig. The girls came in, and they were like, "Mother has gone completely insane. ..." Remember I told you that for achieving tenure I felt relief? I didn't feel joy. I didn't feel like celebrating, but in this case, I went home, and my purse flew in the air. My briefcase flew in the air, my books and papers everywhere, and I was

dancing. ... I got a 12-thousand-dollar increase. 12 thousand dollars just so that I could be in line with the associate professors, just so that I could surpass the assistant professors because all of them were up here [with me in salary].

Valentina at that point in time had a departmental leadership that was more supportive and encouraging. The same thing could be said for the new Dean, who was fully supportive of Valentina applying to be promoted from Associate to Full Professor, “Going for full, well, that one was just a piece of cake. I just had to prepare my materials.” She had indicated that clear markers for success allowed her to understand what the expectations were, and what she needed to include in her promotion packet.

4.9 Sofia’s Testimonio: Easier the Second Time Around

Like Emma, Sofia was introduced to TU and the tenure expectations via the annual welcome luncheon, which helped shape her understanding on how best to prepare her materials. While she had her packet in mind, Sofia struggled in dealing with the political demands of the department:

One of the things that happened to me is that ... I'm pregnant [at the time]. I hid away in my office. I had my three little grad students. I totally, 100% kept to myself. I didn't say much in faculty meetings. I didn't go to any of the coffee departmental, blah, blah, nothing, nothing, either because I didn't feel good or I was overwhelmed or whatever, but I didn't do it. I think the expectations, especially if you're Latina, are that you're open and everybody knows your stuff. ...[They] said to me ..., “We really weren't sure that we knew you.”

I understand that a little better now because they're committing to having you in their faculty family forever. They want to know the interpersonal side of you, but that really bothered me at that point in time because it shouldn't matter, but it does.

Here, Sofia demonstrates some of the invisibility/hyperinvisibility that Women of Color in the academy have to manage. The lack of People of Color in the academy oftentimes renders them invisible. However, they become hypervisible when they do not live up to stereotypical expectations (Buchanan, Settles, Buchanan, & Dotson, 2018; Mowatt et al., 2013). For Sofia, she was not being the open friendly Latina that everyone expected:

They didn't like ... that I was successful without them. I got in my little office, and took my little space, and wrote my grants and didn't go to all the happy hour parties, coffees. I didn't have time; I did not have time. It was not mal intended, but I didn't do it like a woman you might stereotype would do it.

The lack of interpersonal interactions characterized Sofia as cold and distant between her and her departmental colleagues, and it left her feeling discouraged especially after noticing that not everyone in the department is being viewed in similar fashion:

I would just feel so frustrated. I don't think it's something [a standard] that people say or hold male faculty to. ... Especially now because I hear the reviews of other [junior faculty] and I'm like, "Yeah, I was definitely held to a different standard." I was. It's hard to give you exact examples other than to say when I see males doing the very same types of things that I did or the same approach to it that I did, it's not ever brought up as an issue. It's just not. I find that to be very frustrating. My third-year review, my collegiality was questionable. I've done a lot of research on this. I love reading about it because in a way it makes me feel better, but there's really hard data showing that as a

female becomes more successful people perceive her as less likable, but the opposite is true for a male. I've seen it. I've felt it. I joke a little bit about it with [departmental colleague] Erik⁴, because [he] behaves himself pretty much similarly to me. That guy's revered as the nicest person on campus. I don't ever get that.

These difficulties in interpersonal relationships made Sofia uncomfortable. Colleagues did not appreciate her lack of openness, but also did not appreciate her voicing her opinions. She silenced herself in order to avoid ruffling any feathers and potentially garner any negative reactions from faculty who would eventually vote on her tenure decision.

At the same time she was being silenced, her male co-workers did not have to deal with a similar problem. As she explains it:

...The sense [is] that you have when you're pre-tenure you're being evaluated. ... It can be like a power play chip that people use. ... There's a lot of people that go through that process, and just don't say anything. I was given the advice not to say a word pre-tenure in faculty meetings. That sucks, but I think the reason people advise that is that you do have to play it safe because of the importance of this political thing. ... I probably did [speak up] when it was relevant. It's not that I didn't say anything, but I probably spoke out much less than I do now. ... My point is that those arguments are harder to have when you feel like you have less power.

This situation demonstrates the power that more senior faculty are able to exert over newer, junior faculty. For Sofia, the path of least resistance was to keep quiet so as to not offend. She also made it a point to note the difference between hers and another department at TU, calling the separation between those tenured and non-tenured a “mild form of hazing.” Here is an

⁴ A pseudonym

example of outside factors potentially influencing what should be a meritocratic endeavor (Urrieta et al., 2014).

For her application to be promoted to Full Professor, Sofia still was not sure of the metrics but her experience in reviewing other promotion packets crystallized the process for her. Armed with seeing what others have done, along with the renewal of her multi-year grant Sofia felt ready to submit. “Once I renewed my RO1 [grant] here... I felt like I could prove that I had a reputation, a full professor reputation... I felt like I was making an impact in ways that merited full professor.”

After her promotion to full professorship, Sofia has been able to find and use her voice for the benefit of those who were in a similar position as her not too long ago:

I have less tolerance when people talk about anything personal about the female faculty [at tenure meetings]. I don't let it happen. Stuff that's like, "Hold on, that's a criterion?" That's the beauty of being the full professor is that you can call people on their stuff.”

Though she now holds the title of Full Professor, Sofia is even now still having to manage other people’s ideas and stereotypes of her at TU:

[When I brought up a concern] ...one of the people in my department ... said at a meeting, "Well, we need to come up with solutions." I looked at him, and I said, "Okay, now you're asking me to help clarify the problem and solve it?" I'll leave, that's not my job. Stop telling me to solve it, 'cause that just pisses me off now. That's not fair, that's not fair.

Do you think that they would ask the white male star scientist to come up with the solutions? They probably would be like ... this is my cynicism, admittedly, "Oh, we're so

sorry. How could we put you through that?... What are your issues? Okay, ... we fixed that one."

Even in addressing legitimate institutional or departmental concerns, Sofia finds it difficult to get her point across to people:

Chicanas are supposed to ... picture the abuelita that makes you *cafecito* and gives you a cookie and that is always loving and understanding. When I say to my colleagues, or I have a tough conversation, ... it's cognitive dissonance with what they expect me to be as a Latina female. I am not that all the time, hardly.

Then it's like worse for me, 'cause then I'm easily put into that perhaps, angry Latina category. There's a lot of ... one thing I would share with you, 'cause I read the Sheryl Sandberg book ... which I like very much. One of the things that she said cut like a knife to me, she said that you should smile. I'm like, "Fucking smile?"

That means that people also need to feel ... that we're approachable, and that we're connected. Now, a smile is an easy, cheap way to do that. ... I understand that, I get that. That means that I do allow people to connect with me, and I am open to that connection. If that requires a smile in the beginning, so be it, but yesterday I had a tough conversation [with a colleague]. I'm not going to fucking smile in that meeting, I'm sorry, 'cause I'm not feeling smiley.

In describing how she felt in these situations, Sofia refers to Angela Mae Kupenda's chapter in *Presumed Incompetent* (2012) in reference to the dilemma she faces at TU:

Do you remember the chapter of the black woman who talked about the ghosts? One of her ghosts that she deals with is this nanny ghost. The nanny ghost means that everybody

in her department assumed that she was gonna be the, "Aw." [makes a comforting motion in the air].

That's not who she was, but she lives with that ghost, and people expect that from her.

When she's not nanny-like, people are like, "Hm, what category do I put her in?" I think that happens to Latinas, were expected to be good cooks, we're expected to be warm, we're expected to be the laughing... that's probably the reason it hurts you is if you're not those things, you're like [thinking to yourself], "... [D]o I have to be that person?" Hard working, ... Self-sacrificing, constantly taking one for the team.

Sofia evokes the image of the stereotypical Mammy when asked about the expectations placed upon her by others. Viewed as a domestic worker, the mammy is the principal caregiver and nurturer, whose sole purpose in life is to serve others even at one's own expense (West, 1995). In that same vein, Sofia describes how people at TU expect her to be the abuelita that gives everyone coffee and cookies all of the time.

Sofia is expected to be comforting and accommodating to department colleagues regardless of the situation or interaction, and never allowed to demonstrate any feelings other than happiness- any deviation from this brings forth adverse reactions. Stereotypically speaking, Sofia should extract fulfillment only through subservience to others, if not to children then to men (Andrade, 1982).

The expectations associated with these stereotypes prevent Sofia from being her authentic self with certain people, and hinders her from sometimes making meaningful connections with others in her department (Reynolds-Dobbs, Thomas, & Harrison, 2008). Even then, she has grown accustomed to negative feedback from students and colleagues alike:

People have told me to my face that I'm aggressive. ... Grad students, faculty. That's a word that's used for me a lot. Does it hurt? Eh. One out of 10, like a six. Depends on the day, depends who says it. Then I'm starting to own it a little bit. Where in my own growth and development I can say, "I am aggressive. I am aggressive."

Sofia has also used situations and instances outside of TU as learning experiences in how to handle insults and invalidations of others. She recalled a situation she faced as an invited speaker:

I went to [a school in the Southern United States] and gave a talk in the medical school. I start to give my presentation, and the woman puts down the flyers on the table. I look down, and I see the flyer It's my face, ... on the flyer. Somebody drew a Bigote ... on my face. Like a curly mustache. I look at it, and I'm just confident enough that I think it's funny. It's actually funny, and it's evil, it's mal intended, and I know that the person that did that is an ass clown, I'm pissed too.

I picked it up, and I said, "Who did this?" Right before my talk. ...The people in the room started laughing 'cause I'm laughing, but it made some people very uncomfortable. The guy that invited me was like, "I am so sorry."

But I thought, "Here's a moment for me to put them in a zone of [dis]comfort." You dragged my ass out [here] and look what you do. Maybe it wasn't effective, I don't care. [But] I found that inner confidence to go like, "Wow." ... I wish I had kept [the poster]. Part of my perhaps, conceitedness was just leaving it there, but I did take a picture of it. Yes, [these things] still happens.

For Sofia, it is a journey in finding her voice through the invalidations of so many others, both in and outside of the university.

4.10 Ximena: Navigating the Academy and the Naturalization Process

Coming to work at an American university required some learning on Ximena's part to familiarize herself with the environment, system, and culture of her new university:

I came from [South America], [there were] so many things to learn. It was a new system for me, the higher education system is very complex, and I didn't know it, so I had to learn a lot about what to expect now. ... [back home] I got a very, very little salary. I was earning \$400 I remember at that time with a PhD, a month. And although it's less of course, the cost of living is less anyway, \$400 for a PhD is nothing right?

Besides having to adjust to an entirely new situation, Ximena also had to deal with faculty members who were not part of the "new wave" of research faculty who did not view her research methods as legitimate:

There was ... a group of people that I couldn't relate with, that usually what I found is that they [did] not understand my work. ... Because I think that they were maybe from another generation, or another research perspective.

For example, I remember one [colleague] that was focused on quantitative methodologies, and he couldn't really understand the ethnographic piece. I tried to explain, and explain, and explain but it was really frustrating to me that some of our colleagues could not understand ethnography and could not value it. ... I don't understand quantitative research, but I value it. I understand its place, but I was an ethnographer, I am a qualitative researcher and sometimes I did not feel that some of my colleagues understood it or even valued it as valid research.

Ximena was forced "prove" her work and research to faculty members who had no interest understanding or accepting what she did. This notion of epistemic isolation serves as a

form of gate keeping to exclude People of Color from the academy (Buchanan et al., 2018).

These informal interactions do not necessarily have to be given through formal evaluation processes, but do serve as a means to make faculty feel devalued and unwelcomed (Buchanan et al., 2018).

While Ximena may not fully understand quantitative methods, she can still appreciate the role it plays in her field. Ximena was keenly aware that this attitude was amongst a number of members that were going to vote on her decision for promotion:

... [A] piece of stress that I remember is that I knew a couple of people did not like me. Not only personally, but as I said, I felt misunderstanding of my work, and I was a little concerned about that. I thought at least three or four people were not really valuing my kind of work. They wanted something in quantitative research, or they wanted something more status quo. And in my case, my work is ethnography, and some people could not see the value. And so, I had four votes against my tenure.

In spite of the regular delegitimizing of her work from faculty colleagues, Ximena found the stress of applying for residency weighed more heavily on her than worrying about whether or not she would be awarded tenure. It also put the process in perspective for her:

... There was a lot of fear at that time [in the college] of not getting tenure. So that's something that was around, right? I did not experience it myself. I did not. ... there's always that worry [of not getting tenure], always. Even if you have a solid case there is always fear okay? And in my case, I was also applying for residency. And the residency paperwork is worse than the tenure paperwork, it's three times worse. You have to really demonstrate that you're an internationally recognized scholar.

I did that one year before my tenure, and I was able to convince the immigration officers that I was worthy enough to give me residency. ... So after that process then, of course it was easier for me to do the tenure package! That helped me deal with the stress a little bit. But I guess my stress because of my personal situation was more related to, am I going to be able to stay in the country or not? Am I going to be able to have the residency? Because without the residency, the tenure did not mean anything.

When Ximena turned in her portfolio, she was resigned to letting the chips fall where they may and go with whatever the committee has decided:

[Submitting my portfolio] took a huge burden [off], because I said, “Well, I have done my best now. I did all the work now, there's nothing else I can do.” Now it's in the hands of somebody else, and so that helped me a lot to live through those six, seven months [for a decision].

Through every step of the way, Ximena was communicating with college administrators on every decision and status of the process. The majority department voted in support of her promotion, and she knows who the four were that either abstained or voted no. With every step forward in the process, the weight became more manageable. She continued working, and churning out more work, “I continued being very productive. So, I always think that the tenure process, although it's stressful, it's really good in order to train you, to prepare you for academia.”

Now after some time has passed, Ximena is looking to build up her portfolio for promotion to full professorship. Now familiar with the process, Ximena still has it in the back of her mind that she will face challenges similar to what she experienced the first time around. As she explains it:

I already know what to expect, so I think that in that sense I am fine and very comfortable with my own role in the process. The role of the evaluators is one thing that I am concerned about in some ways because we have a very small number of full professors in the college. ... these are people that have been full professors for 20 years, 30 years already there, and there are few new full professors. So the only thing that concerns me a little bit is, are they going to be able to really judge my work fairly, right? And again, it's tied to what we were talking before, are they going to really understand my work?

Preparing for the potential delegitimizing of her scholarship once again, Ximena is approaching this review with a different mindset:

I'm going to prepare this packet for the nation, for the U.S., any U.S. university, and if it doesn't fly here, I'll go somewhere else. ... I'm very comfortable with what I have done here, that my work really focuses on the border, and also, I think benefits the border a lot. So, I'm very comfortable with that, but at the same time it's always good to have that opportunity that if it doesn't work here. I may think about another university if I cannot be a full professor.

Here, Ximena is showing a willingness to leave if the committee and college are not willing to recognize her work in a way that she feels she deserves. In framing it as an opportunity to go elsewhere, not being promoted to Full Professor can be viewed as a personal and professional benefit for Ximena. However, that will negatively impact the diversity of a College that is already limited in numbers and differing methodological and epistemological perspectives.

4.11 Analytical Summary

This section included the experiences of Chicana faculty members as they navigated the process of applying for tenure. From Anzaldua's perspective on *conocimiento*, these women's stories, memories, and experiences are used as a way to help others (Anzaldua & Moraga, 2002). Their stories demonstrate the different ways that they experienced systemic oppressions and hegemony during and after their probationary periods. The types of microaggressions they experienced were based on their race, ethnicity, gender, career choices and research methods. The contexts in which these microaggressions occurred varied and included situations on campus, in faculty meetings, and social interactions with other faculty colleagues and advisors. These women were subjected to acts of hostility, antagonistic climates, and disparate and differential treatment.

These women have found different ways to redistribute power dynamics as they navigate the tenure and promotion process. Once promoted, many of these women have used their power to access these male-dominated spaces for the betterment of those rising up in the ranks after them. Occupying these spaces has afforded them the chance to redistribute power through acts of resistance and defiance- as positive forces for change against hegemony and other forms of oppression. They also serve as mentors and examples to the students they serve and being an affirming presence. Chicana Feminist Epistemologies remind us that we must use these liberating methodologies to center and humanize these women's experiences in the professoriate (Deglado Bernal, 2002; Huber, 2009). It is from their first-hand accounts that we are shown how to persevere and create voices for change.

Table 4.1: Table of Microaggressions, Effects, and Responses

Chicana	Type of Microaggression	Context of Microaggression	Effects of Microaggression	Responses to Microaggression
Emma	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexism • Racism • Differential treatment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behind closed doors • Informal conversations with students and faculty • on TU campus • at family functions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disappointment • Anger • Frustration • Not belonging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External support networks • Picking your battles • Gratitude
Sofia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexism • Racism • Intimidation into silence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behind closed doors • Formally via evaluation meetings • Informally with colleagues and students • On TU campus • Other institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disappointment • Self-policing • Frustration • Anger 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External support • Strategic invisibility • Micro-affirmations for junior faculty and students • Confronting those who are delivering the insults

Chicana	Type of Microaggression	Context of Microaggression	Effects of Microaggression	Responses to Microaggression
Valentina	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intimidation • Verbal abuse • Differential treatment • Unethical conduct • Sexism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behind closed doors • Formally via annual evaluation process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stress • Fear • Self-Doubt • Frustration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resistance • External Support Networks • Micro-affirmations for up and coming faculty
Ximena	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Epistemic isolation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behind closed doors through informal channels • Tenure review committee process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stress • Fear 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resilience • External support networks

4.12 Chapter Summary

This chapter examined professional experiences of Chicanas as they experience the tenure and promotion process. Their testimonios illuminate some of the experiences while managing complex power relations, privilege and racism in the academy. The testimonios of these women demonstrate the different ways they managed to persist toxic environments that devalue them based on factors such as race, gender, sexual orientation, immigration status, and

phenotype. These examples of microaggressions they have experienced demonstrate the ways that institutional racism permeates, reproduces, and further marginalize oppressed groups.

Different tactics worked in consort to silence and intimidate these women. Some of these women experienced hostile climates at the department and college level. Others still witnessed differential treatment. Sometimes affirmed through university practice, others through narrow-minded perspectives on scholarship, these women were forced to survive in an environment that did its best to make them not feel welcomed. They managed to identify different ways of managing these invalidations and insults, sometimes through external supports or through their work supporting others.

The process of tenure and promotion was described with words such as “hazing,” “secretive,” “negative,” and a “relief” to hear of a decision- an insinuation that the tenure and promotion process for these women served as more of a laborious undertaking as opposed to a recognition of one’s academic work. And yet, in spite of the struggle, these women persisted and are politicizing these unwelcoming spaces for the benefit of those that are coming up after them. The following chapter provides a discussion of the findings, limitations of this study and opportunities for future work.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter includes a discussion of the research questions in relation to the data reported in the previous chapter. The chapter will begin by reintroducing the questions that guided this study. After which, I will present implications of this work for faculty, university administrators, and Chicana Scholars that are considering a career in the academy. I will conclude this chapter with a summary of the limitations of the study, as well as opportunities for future work and concluding thoughts.

This study sought to answer two questions as part of this study:

- How do Chicana faculty describe their experience of going through tenure and promotion?
- What were their experiences with racial and gendered microaggressions?

The Chicana faculty experiences in this study shared through their testimonios as a way to reflect on their experience of going through the tenure and promotion process at a Hispanic-Serving Institution. Their experiences, personal and varied, provide a better understanding of the difficulties as well as success they have had on their journey to promotions. The stories they share also contribute to larger discussions related to power, gender, race, and class. What follows is a theoretical analysis of the research questions based on their testimonios.

5.2 How do Chicana faculty describe their experience of going through tenure and promotion?

Tenure and promotion is described as a valued sign of accomplishment (Perna, 2001); a means of rewarding faculty for their contribution to an institution's values and goals (Wolcott,

1994). These four Chicana tenured faculty described the tenure process with words such as “negative,” “secretive,” a “cloak and dagger society.” The notifications of their respective decisions were met with sighs of relief. Indeed, while it should be viewed as a time to reflect on one’s accomplishments, these four women found it to be extremely difficult, based in no small part to the climates they had to navigate, but also the confounding and confusing expectations related to achieve tenure.

General guidelines for achieving tenure were provided to all four of these women as they began their careers at TU. However, institutions oftentimes keep these requirements purposely vague, and what is valued at one university may not carry the same weight at another (Baez, 2002; Urrieta Jr., Mendez, & Rodriguez, 2015). This makes it difficult to hit that “moving target,” (Urrieta et al., 2014), because you are not certain what you are working towards. The level of uncertainty creates pressures on faculty to continually publish, with no well-defined goal to attain. In their testimonios, all four Chicanas shared that they were given “guidelines” as to what they needed to do to be promoted - for the most part, get the university money and publish. This allows for subjective measures to be inserted in what many assume to be a meritocratic process.

The process of evaluating faculty is secretive and not divulged, but is always portrayed as a process that is just and objective (Baez, 2002; Urrieta et al., 2014). Tenure review committees at all levels - from the department level up to the university levels - evaluate through their own subjective interpretations. This is especially important to remember, because here is where the cultural norms and regulations of academia are reproduced, due in part to the lack of diversity in academia as a whole. Ximena is a prime example of this. In describing those in her committee, she mentioned that they were older and white- and still are. Voting against tenure for people that are

not like them, only reinforces these hegemonic norms and further impedes diversification of faculty.

As such, it remains a space where white, patriarchal, heteronormative modes of knowledge production are privileged (Baez, 2002; Pérez Huber, 2009; Robus & MacLeod, 2006; Urrieta et al., 2014). This subjective process disguised as objective practice creates fear and uneasiness for those at the mercy of these decisions and allows for unfriendly, sometimes abusive environments to flourish. From this perspective, faculty can potentially be treated in disparaging cruel ways, with the expectation being that faculty just withstand it.

Urrieta, Mendez, and Rodriguez (2014) describe tenure as the “tool of fear,” used by the institution as a means of compliance. Using Emma as an example, she was aware that the “politics” of the department served as a driving force of any potential tenure decision. Pre-tenure, she did her best to not offend her colleagues in faculty meetings, while at the same time try to be “collegial” and approachable. The situation was tenuous for Emma, trying to do enough and yet not enough to upset anyone, while at the same time cognizant that this expectation is not required by her male counterparts who are also going through the process.

Ximena had regular interactions with a full professor who did little to conceal his lack of appreciation for her use of critical and alternative research methodologies. Also being part of a new group of faculty that were to push TU towards the level of top-tier research university status added to the unfriendly tone she had to deal with. This older faculty member was part of her committee, who did not take her work “seriously” and would end up deciding to keep her there and implicitly affirm the university’s new aspirations. Even though she was approved for tenure, Ximena knows that there are still people in her department who still delegitimize her work, which will again become a factor when she applies for full professorship. Even after being promoted,

Ximena still has to walk this tightrope. While she has gone through the promotion process already, she is still preparing herself in case she is not approved for another promotion when the time comes. This is because tenure and promotion, with no set rules or expectations, serves as a tool of compliance towards white, heteronormative professional norms (Urrieta et al., 2014).

5.3 What were their experiences with racial and gendered microaggressions?

The challenges experienced by these Chicanas included various types of oppression through complex power relations and privilege. These were manifested both covertly and overtly, depending on each Chicana's individual context. The types of microaggressions levelled at these women were over traits such as race, gender, and epistemologies. The acts exhibited demonstrated different departmental climates that were intimidating to these women in different ways. These departments demonstrated acts of differential treatment, intimidation, and lack of support.

Devaluation and invalidations were a constant in Valentina's experience. Her department chairs never gave her constructive feedback and one reminded her regularly that she was replaceable. As the lone woman in a department that was openly hostile towards her, she never felt confident in her tenure application even though the explicitly given expectation was to generate a certain amount of grant funding, which was an expectation she met. Her promotion still did not bring her respect; three years after her promotion, she still had to be given a substantial raise to be on equal financial standing with other Associate Professors in the department.

Emma experienced gendered microaggressions when she was upset, with insulting comments directed towards her as a means to disarm negative feelings directed at her chair at the time. She also was alerted to the fact that she was subject to disparate treatment by earning less money than a white, male colleague who was hired at the same time she was. University administrators shrugged off her complaints pointing to other women in top leadership positions at

TU and directed her to wait until tenure for them to be able to rectify the situation. Yet, they never did.

Emma was characterized as not being collegial and felt as though she was under a constant surveillance that her male peers were not subjected to. She silenced herself to avoid further perpetuating that perception of her, with the hopes that it would change people's minds. Ximena's conversations with her older colleague demonstrated a lack of support and disapproval of what she did- which is still the case. After being notified of the approval of her promotion, Valentina still was not sure that it was real.

The different types of microaggressions these women experienced served as examples of being in, but not a "full member" of the academy (Urrieta et al., 2014) establishing a type of second-class citizenship in the academy. In these cases, there is a push to bring in "brown bodies," but do little to support and encourage them as ways to retain them (Bell, 2014; Ponjuan, 2011; Urrieta Jr. et al., 2015). As the testimonios from Valentina and Ximena show, sometimes these attitudes do not change after the promotion. Asking them to suppress parts of their identity only further alienates Scholars of Color while trying to navigate the academy (Trucios-Haynes, 2000).

Sobrevivencia and Micro-Affirmations

Another lesson learned from these testimonios is the idea of *sobrevivencia*. From the Spanish word *sobrevivir*, or survive, it is defined by Galvan (2011) as a state that is beyond just surviving and allowing us to see how People of Color embody resilience, creativity and resourcefulness in difficult situations. The different suggestions from these women, discussed in the previous chapter, have shown us the ways in which they have been able to not only survive but thrive in spite of the obstacles.

Micro-affirmations are defined as gestures or actions that, though small in nature, have an encouraging impact on others (Rowe, 2008; Topor, Dag Boe, & Larsen, 2018). Sofia recruits Hispanic students from all over the country and makes it a point to advocate for marginalized groups in committees she is a part of. Emma served as a director for a national organization that advocates for People of Color and advises her students to take opportunities available to them because of their backgrounds. All of these acts have small, but cumulative positive effects on their students and TU.

Building networks of support, establishing and cultivating relationships are some of the ways that these women are adapting in this environment. Different contexts call for different tools, and these women have also found that mentoring other students and junior faculty provides them gratification and joy. Serving on tenure and promotion committees at the department and college level gives all of them the chance to promote change from within, exemplifying ways that they make the academy a more hospitable space for themselves and those who will follow, even in limiting circumstances (Trinidad Galvan, 2011; Urrieta et al., 2014).

5.4 Implications for Policy and Practice

The testimonios of these Chicana faculty provide practical suggestions to improve the climate and situation for other Chicanas. It is here that implications can be found for faculty, administrators, and Chicana Scholars who are thinking of a career in academia.

Implications for Faculty

Faculty need to take a reflective approach in how their interactions with Chicanas reinforce these institutional oppressions. When discussing notions of privilege, the first step is acknowledging one's own privilege (McIntosh, 1988). Without that acknowledgement of privilege, it will remain unspoken, unchallenged, and unchanged (Jayakumar et al., 2009;

McIntosh, 1988). For faculty on these committees to not take seriously the work or knowledge Chicana faculty create continues to ignore the systems of oppression that these Chicana have had forced upon them throughout their primary schooling, in graduate school, and now in the professoriate. When the push becomes for junior faculty to conform, the message is sent that these women should be more like “us” and not “themselves”- the “us” being defined from a white, male perspective.

Redistributing power in this case creates a space for open dialogue and a better understanding of different backgrounds, disciplines, and perspectives. It is also important to provide Chicanas and all faculty from marginalized groups different levels of support. These testimonios have demonstrated instances where these women were hired to be in their departments, but then not provided adequate networks or guidance on how to succeed in academia. This laissez-faire approach can be difficult, especially for those who do not have the types of capital necessary to traverse the academy (Yosso, 2005). The forms of capital these faculty are expected to possess are forms that are not their own, as they have never been allowed access to the forms of capital a white heteronormative society holds. Conversely, the capital that these groups of faculty do have are not recognized, appreciated or acknowledged.

Implications for Administrators

The tenure process fosters a culture of fear and secrecy, in part because of the mystery surrounding the criteria and requirements for tenure (Urrieta et al., 2014). If you want to retain faculty from traditionally marginalized groups, criteria should be explicit and unambiguous. If tenure is to be truly meritocratic and objective, clear guidelines have to be in place. In line with the faculty recommendations, notions of privilege are oftentimes not visible, which is why it is equally important for administrators to identify areas where unequal power dynamics exist.

Administrators also have to be willing to address issues of unequal treatment when they are raised by faculty. In the case of Emma, no one was willing to correct or rectify the blatant discrepancy in pay between her and her colleague. Not only were they not willing, her feelings were also negated by mid-level administration's suggestion that the blatant discrepancy was not possible as evidence by other women holding powerful positions at TU. In cases like these, it behooves administrators to take these allegations seriously, exercise due diligence in investigating, and performing actionable change. Anything less than implies the university's complicity in this discriminatory behavior.

Diversity has to be something more than just a numbers game; it needs to be given the fidelity it deserves to be something that is beyond in name only. There has to be a recognition that hiring faculty of color is not enough. Without affording them proper support and creating oppressive institutional structures will not "fix" the diversity problem. In these cases, notions of diversity are exercises in discursive nonperformativity against racism (Ahmed, 2006; Espino, 2015). It is also of value to consider that even the perceptions of hostile climates in the academy also dissuade potential candidates from marginalized communities to even consider applying for faculty jobs. This creates a limited pool from an already-limited population of would-be candidates (Camacho & Lord, 2011; Delgado-Romero, Flores, Gloria, Arredondo, & Castellanos, 2003).

Milem, Chang and Lising Antonio (2005) strongly suggest a multidimensional and intentional approach towards achieving diversity on campus. Such a process requires a purposeful reflection on internal and external forces as well campus climate and culture to identify different ways to achieve what they call inclusive excellence. Numbers are not enough,

and we have to consider how we treat not only Faculty of Color, but also our students to ensure that everyone feels incorporated in the institution.

Implications for Up and Coming Chicana Scholars

The testimonios presented here provide practical guidance to Chicanas who are looking to continue on to the professoriate. While it is clear that path is not easy, these stories of *sobrevivencia* demonstrate that this type of professional success is attainable. Making connections with other People of Color helps to build comradery and resistance of racist ideologies (Ek et al., 2010). Creating social circles also helps in giving individuals something beyond academia, an identity outside of the work (Ek et al., 2010; Urrieta et al., 2014). The need to be able to escape the constant stress is important to replenish the body, mind, and soul. Failure to do so can lead to long-term consequences both mentally and physically (Anzaldúa & Moraga, 2002; Ek et al., 2010; Gutierrez y Muhs et al., 2012)

Attitudes like that of Ximena and Emma, who asked “What more could I have done?” also highlight another aspect of self-care in the academy. For both of them, the submission of their tenure packets came with an acceptance that they had done their best and the decision was out of their hands. Regardless of the outcome, not getting tenure while difficult to accept, is not a reflection of one’s worth. The entire process is a prolonged microaggression itself, replete with what is described as: “The hegemony of patriarchal, heteronormative, white racism in academia, disguised as individualism, competition, and merit, impedes a fair tenure evaluation because critical, cooperative, and collaborative practices are often viewed in deficit and perceived as weaknesses, rather than strengths” (Urrieta et al., 2014, p. 1165).

5.5 The Focus on Gender and Not Race

It is important to note that while my study focuses on racial and gendered microaggressions, these women through their testimonios focused on mostly gendered interactions. According to Sarah White (2006), when discussing issues of difference, gender often takes precedence over race. As has been seen in traditional forms of feminism, a white middle-class perspective is viewed as the “norm,” often to the detriment of other forms of inequality. Viewing difference from this perspective recharacterize the “local” to the “global,” removing all context from these experiences, and pushes an agenda of “tolerance” towards those that do not fit the ideal.

Part of this focus is also due to the context of TU and Star City. Both the university and city are over 80% Hispanic (National Center for Education Statistics, 2018a; United States Census Bureau, 2018) which makes it difficult to find racial differences amongst such homogeneity. Though these testimonios reflect negative gendered interactions, this does not make their stories any less valid or important. They still provide many lessons to learn from, and I argue that their bodies taking up these exclusionary spaces serves as its own form of resistance to power and hegemony (Anzaldúa, 2013).

5.6 Limitations of the Study

This section describes some of the limitations of this study. First, the sample used was relatively small. This was due in part due to an already small population to recruit from and scheduling conflicts with those that wanted to participate but were not available. The majority of participants in this study are also from science and engineering disciplines; these disciplines provided a very specific type of expectation with regards to tenure and promotion. As active faculty members, they also were very afraid to share some of the more personal experiences and

asked me to keep them off the record. I understand their reasoning as to why, but it is also a stark reminder of how the academy has power over its participants and extending into the personal sphere, impacting how they recount their experiences, and influencing their definitions of self.

5.7 Potential for Future Work

There are many avenues for future work. There is an opportunity to interview faculty that are not in the science or engineering disciplines and their experiences with tenure and promotion, as well as those women who went up for tenure and did not get promoted. Of equal importance would be listening to the stories of men of color and their experiences. From an intersectional perspective, we cannot assume that these stories of oppression will all be the same. Different stories add more nuance, textures, and layers to one event. Incorporating more voices helps us examine different perspectives and the different ways oppression establishes itself in the academy.

More work needs to be done around how practices of tenure and promotion compare and contrast between minority serving institutions and predominantly white institutions on faculty of color. Further studies need to be conducted as to how HSI's and their identities and culture reproduce such exclusionary practices and whether or not they are Latina/o- serving institutions. In a similar vein, research needs to probe how microaggressions occur between different marginalized groups. Additionally, while the focus is on microaggressions and their negative impacts, the scholarship discussion needs to further interrogate micro-affirmations and the impacts these positive instances have on marginalized groups in the academy.

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Appendix A: Interview Protocol

What led you to the Professoriate?

How did you end up at TU?

What were the initial expectations when you started?

Can you talk about the relationship that you had with those in your department? Did any interactions stick out to you in particular?

Did you have a third-year review? What was that like?

How many years did it take for you before you when up for tenure? What was the submission process like? And how was it finding out the decision?

Do you plan on going up again for promotion? Why or why not?

What are your plans or goals now that you have been promoted?

Upon reflection, what is your view on the tenure and promotion process? Would you change anything?

What advice do you have for a Chicana that is thinking about entering the professoriate?

Appendix B: Follow-up Interview Protocol

Describe the campus environment as you experience it. Has it changed over time? If so, how?

How would you describe the institutional culture here? What would you change?

How do you think the culture of the city influences how we do things at the university?

How has being a Chicana influenced your role at the university and what you do?

How satisfied are you with your decision to become a faculty member at TU. Do you think it would have been different had you chosen to work at a PWI?

How do you think TU deals with issues related to race/ethnicity? Do you think that they do a good job of supporting Women of Color?

[Introduce the concept of microaggressions]; can you recall of some of the times that you may have experienced microaggressions? How did those situations make you feel? What did you do?

How do you think your experience may have differed as a Woman of Color?

Are there any situations that you have experienced where you felt particularly aware of being a Woman of Color? Visiting other universities, at conference, etc.?

How do you think more Persons of Color can be drawn in to the university faculty?

Appendix C: Recruitment Email

Dear Dr. «Last»,

My name is Karina Canaba and I am a doctoral student in Educational Leadership and Foundations Department at the University of Texas at El Paso. I am working on a dissertation focusing on the experience of Latina faculty at a Hispanic-Serving Institution. The purpose of this study is to gain a better understanding on how female Latina faculty experience the process of tenure and promotion.

I am looking for volunteers to share their individual experiences anonymously, about being at one time or another on the tenure track.

If you consent to participate, we would schedule an interview session at a time and location of your convenience and choosing. I would record the interview without using your name and keep the recording and transcription secure.

Your participation in the study would be kept anonymous with a pseudonym, and nothing about you as an individual would be reportable or discoverable. You would be able to opt out of any question and/or the entire interview at any time.

If you are willing to contribute to my research about Latina faculty please let me know, and if you have any questions or would like to learn more, you are welcome to contact me by emailing me at kccanaba@gmail.com or you may call me at (xxx) xxx-xxxx.

Thank you very much for your support and advancement of my research.

Sincerely,

Karina Canaba
Doctoral Student
Department of Educational Leadership and Foundations

Appendix D: IRB Approval Letter



THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO
Office of the Vice President for Research and Sponsored Projects
Institutional Review Board
El Paso, Texas 79968-0587
phone: 915 747-8841 fax: 915 747-5931

FWA No: 00001224

DATE: September 27, 2017

TO: Karina Canaba, M.Ed.

FROM: University of Texas at El Paso IRB

STUDY TITLE: [1126687-1] Testimonios of Latina/Chicana Faculty on Tenure and Promotion

IRB REFERENCE #: College of Education

SUBMISSION TYPE: New Project

ACTION: DETERMINATION OF EXEMPT STATUS

DECISION DATE: September 27, 2017

REVIEW CATEGORY: 45 CFR 46.101(b)(2)

Thank you for your submission of New Project materials for this research study. University of Texas at El Paso IRB has determined this project is EXEMPT FROM IRB REVIEW according to federal regulations.

Exempt protocols do not need to be renewed. Please note that it is the Principal Investigator's responsibility to resubmit the proposal for review if there are any modifications made to the originally submitted proposal. This review is required in order to determine if "Exemption" status remains.

We will put a copy of this correspondence on file in our office.

If you have any questions, please contact the IRB Office at (915) 747-8841 or irb.orsp@utep.edu. Please include your study title and reference number in all correspondence with this office.

cc:

VITA

Karina C. Canaba was born in El Paso, TX to Rosa Holguín and Fidel Canaba. She graduated from Andress High School. After high school, Karina earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in print media from UTEP in 2008. In 2011, she received her Master of Educational Administration degree in higher education from UTEP. She was accepted into UTEP's doctoral program in Educational Administration in 2012. She was a University Council for Educational Administration Barbara L. Jackson Scholar from 2012-2014. She is currently appointed as the Assistant Director of the Campus Office of Undergraduate Research Initiatives (COURI).