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To Intervene Or Not To Intervene: A Qualitative Study On Combating Sexual Violence Through Bystander Intervention In The U.S.-Mexico Border Region

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TO INTERVENE OR NOT TO INTERVENE: A QUALITATIVE STUDY ON COMBATING SEXUAL VIOLENCE THROUGH BYSTANDER INTERVENTION IN THE U.S.-MEXICO BORDER REGION

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Dedication

To my father and mother, Reinaldo and Maria Simón.

Este tesis doctoral está dedicado a ustedes, que con su apoyo, motivación, y amor pude realizar este sueño de ser Doctora Simón. Ustedes me han apoyado en todos mis objetivos y son la base de mi estabilidad.

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by

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Abstract

Sexual violence is a public health problem affecting high rates of college students (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2014). Per the National Sexual Violence Resource Center (NSVRC), "one in five women and one in 16 men" are survivors of sexual assaults while attending college (National Sexual Violence Resource Center [NSVRC], 2015, p. 2). Unfortunately, over 90% of sexual violence incidents are not reported to university officials (NSVRC, 2015). Sexual violence is pervasive; as such, higher education administrators have established educational programs to prevent incidents from occurring on campus. The purpose of this qualitative study aimed at understanding how first-generation Latinx participants felt about bystander intervention and their understanding of the bystander intervention role at a Hispanic Serving Institution in the United States-Mexico border region.

The *Situational Model*, also known as the Model of Helping, was developed by Latane and Darley in 1970. This model guided my research study, as this theory focuses on bystanders' decision to intervene (Bennett, Banyard, & Garnhard, 2014; Burn, 2009; Coker, Cook-Craig, Williams, Fisher, Clear, Garcia, & Hegge, 2011). Data was collected through semi-structured interviews from seventeen first-generation Latinx undergraduate students. The qualitative method was used to obtain individualized participant experiences and information on bystander intervention.

Data analysis identified five major themes: 1. mind your own business, 2. health or physical safety risks, 3. bystander connection to the victim, 4. comfort levels with intervention, and 5. empowerment to take action. This research study offers implications for educational research and practice.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Sexual violence is a public health problem affecting high rates of college students (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2014). Per the National Sexual Violence Resource Center (NSVRC), "one in five women and one in 16 men" are survivors of sexual assault while attending college (National Sexual Violence Resource Center [NSVRC], 2015, p. 2). Unfortunately, over 90% of sexual violence incidents are not reported to university officials (NSVRC, 2015). Sexual violence is pervasive; as such, higher education administrators have established educational programs to prevent incidents from occurring on campus.

Recent reports indicate an uptick of reported sexual violence incidents on college campuses (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2014; McMahon & Banyard, 2012). In 2017, over 260 men and women professionals were accused of sexual harassment, assault, or other sexual misconduct across the nation (North, Grady, McGann, & Romano, 2019). The professional careers were categorized as follows: "Arts & Entertainment, Media, Business & Technology, Politics, and Other" (North et al., 2019). The "other" category includes sports administrators, restaurateurs, and higher education professors and administrators.

The *Me Too* movement became a call to action in 2017 when 12 million women were empowered to voice their experiences, giving people a sense of the magnitude of the problem (CBS News, 2017; Garcia, 2017). The *Me Too* movement empowered women to stop sexual violence incidents; overall, to change the culture of the nation (metoomvmt.org, 2019). Although the *Me Too* movement became a trending topic in 2017, the movement initiated in 1997 when a 13-year-old girl named Heaven shared an experience of being sexually abused by her stepfather with Tarana Burke (metoomvmt.org, 2019).

The *Hunting Ground* (2015) documentary portrayed higher education institutions for their inadequate sexual violence investigations and subpar treatment to complainants. Some of the higher education institutions depicted in the documentary were Florida State University, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Amherst College, Harvard Law School, and Notre Dame (Ziering & Dick, 2015). Other higher education institutions have had negative media attention due to the mishandling of sexual violence investigations and implications of university officials' failure to disclose incidents for investigation: Baylor University, the University of Montana, Penn State University, Michigan State University, to name a few ("Title IX Tracking Sexual Assault Investigations," 2019).

In order to combat this increase, laws and policies were enacted to combat sexual violence incidents. Specifically, the Campus Sexual Violence Act [Campus SaVE Act] (2013) mandates institutions to educate university community members on prevention and to provide awareness programming on sexual assaults, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking (U.S. Department of Education, 2013). In 2014, President Barack Obama and Vice President Joe Biden created the *White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault* to focus on "the seriousness and urgency of addressing sexual misconduct at colleges and universities" (U.S. Department of Justice, 2017, p. 2). The guidelines for the task force were to:

- Raise awareness of the frequency in which sexual assault occurs at all school levels;
- Let survivors of sexual assault know that they are not alone and that there are resources to help;
- Ensure that colleges and universities across the country know how to develop a comprehensive plan to keep students safe from sexual assault; and

- Help schools live up to their obligations under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX) and effectively respond when sexual assaults occur (p. 3).

The Obama and Biden White House Task Force also created the *Preventing and Addressing Campus Sexual Misconduct: A Guide for University College Presidents, Chancellors, and Senior Administrators* (2017) as a foundation to develop a comprehensive response plan for sexual violence incidents instilling the unique needs and characteristics of the college or university, student body, and community (U.S. Department of Justice, 2017). The guide identified six primary elements that should be incorporated within the higher education comprehensive plan to address sexual assault incidents:

1. Coordinated campus and community response;
2. Prevention, education, and training;
3. Policy development and implementation;
4. Reporting options, advocacy, and support services;
5. Climate surveys, performance measurement, and evaluation; and
6. Transparency (p. 4).

Within Section 3: Prevention, education, and training, higher education institutions are encouraged to implement bystander intervention programs and training for all incoming students and throughout students' education (U.S. Department of Justice, 2017).

Bystander intervention programs at higher education institutions serve to educate university community members on intervention skills during witnessed incidents (Banyard, Moynihan, & Plante, 2007; Burn, 2009; Coker, Cook-Craig, Williams, Fisher, Clear, Garcia, & Hegge, 2011; Kingkade, 2016; McMahon, Postmus, & Koenick, 2011). For the sake of this study's objective, *a bystander* is defined as "a person who is present when an event takes place

but is not directly involved" (Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network [RAINN], 2019, para. 2). Bystanders can be present when sexual violence incidents occur or witness the circumstances leading up to the violent incidents (Banyard et al., 2007; RAINN, 2019). Whereas *bystander intervention* is defined as "someone recognizing a potentially harmful situation or interaction and choosing to respond in a way that could positively influence the outcome" (Step Up! Program, 2019, para. 3).

Significance of the Problem

Within the context of this study, Bordertown University is defined as a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI). HSIs are defined as "an institution that has an enrollment of undergraduate full-time equivalent students of at least 25 percent Hispanic students" (U.S. Department of Education, 2019, para. 1). Per Laden (2001), only six percent of total higher education institutions are categorized as HSIs and educate nearly 50 percent of Latinx college students. The term Latinx is used as a gender-neutral identifier of individulas of Latin American descent (Salinas & Lozano, 2019). Latinx college students is currently the largest population of ethic minority students enrolled in higher education (Nuñez, Hooer, Pickett, Stuart-Carruthers & Vasquez, 2013). Relatedly, the majority of HSIs are considered commuter campuses, as over 95 percent of the student population commute daily to school.

Sexual violence and sexual misconduct incidents are a national concern. Higher education institutions must educate all university community members; students, faculty, and staff of the policies and procedures associated with reporting sexual violence incidents, and the ability for university community members to intervene during potential witnessed incidents occurring on a college campus. The current research that exists of bystander intervention was conducted at public four-year higher education institutions with a large on-campus residential

population. Specifically, Bennett, Banyard, and Garnhart (2014) conducted their research of barriers and facilitators of bystander intervention in the context of sexual violence where the sample of participants identified as Caucasian and the students were not first-generation college students. Approximately 33% of students enrolled in higher education in the United States are first-generation students (Caltaldi, Bennett, & Chen, 2018). Nuñez and Cuccaro-Alamin (1998) define first-generation students as those whose praents never attended higher education.

Although bystander intervention programs have been implemented at many higher education institutions, there has not been a study conducted to examine whether or not students attending an HSI within the United States – Mexico border region are intervening within potential witnessed incidents on university campuses. Furthermore, this study seeks to understand the role of bystander intervention in preventing sexual violence incidents on campus. As such, findings from this study have the potential to contribute to the existing literature in order to better understand how first-generation Latinx students understand the role of bystander intervention and how they feel about intervening. The outcomes, if adapted effectively, can assist Bordertown University within the overall education of students within bystander intervention programming.

Statement of the Problem

Sexual violence incidents continue to occur at higher education institution campuses (CDC, 2014; McMahon & Banyard, 2012; NSVRC, 2015). The reason incidents occur is beyond the scope of this study. Several laws, regulations, and guidelines have been enacted to assist higher education administrators with the procedures of investigating sexual violence cases and providing resources to all involved parties. This study is an attempt to support the bystanders; not the people directly involved in violent incidents. Higher education

administrators should teach university community members; students, faculty, and staff, when they can act as bystanders and intervention strategies (McMahon & Banyard, 2012). Banyard, Plante, and Moynihan (2004) state, "bystanders can help create new community norms for intervention to prevent sexual assaults, increase others' sense of responsibility for intervening" (p. 780).

Several higher education institutions were found culpable of mishandling sexual violence investigations and administrators failing to disclose incidents for investigation ("Title IX Tracking Sexual Assault Investigations," 2019; Ziering & Dick, 2015). Since then, higher education institutions have incorporated sexual violence and misconduct prevention, education, and training programs for university community members. The bystander intervention programs were established to assist higher education institutions in changing the culture of higher education institutions and stop all incidents of sexual violence. Many of these bystander intervention programs have been established within higher education institutions to combat sexual violence incidents. The bystander intervention programs include the *Step Up!, Bringing in the Bystander, Green Dot, Bringing in the Bystander: Culture of Respect* and *Men Can Stop Rape.*

While there are several studies that examine bystander educational training programs and the barriers associated to higher education students not intervening (Banyard et al., 2004; Banyard et al., 2007; Banyard, Moynihan, Crossman, 2009; Bennett et al., 2014; Burn, 2009; Coker et al., 2011; Gidycz, Orchowski, & Berkowitz, 2011; McHanon & Dick, 2011), there is a lack of literature that addresses Latinx first-generation commuter college students. The past studies conducted have been at primarily white institutions, residential campuses, and the majority of participants are Caucasian students. This study aimed to address this gap by

researching whether or not first-generation Latinx students understood the role of bystander intervention and how students felt about intervening at a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) in the United States – Mexico border region.

The purpose of this study was to understand how undergraduate students at a HSI, Bordertown University, in the United States – Mexico border region understand the role of bystander intervention in preventing sexual violence incidents on campus. This purpose prompted the following questions that guided this study:

- How do first-generation Latinx students at a Hispanic Serving Institution in the United States – Mexico border region understand the role of bystander intervention?
- How do first-generation Latinx students feel about intervening?

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Recent reports indicate an uptick of reported sexual violence incidents on college campuses (CDC, 2014; McMahon & Banyard, 2012). Campus sexual assault statistics state only ten percent of victims report assaults to university campus administrators (CDC, 2014; NSVRC, 2015). There are various elements higher education administrators can implement to educate community members on the goal of reducing violence and ensuring students' safety on campus (U.S. Department of Education, 2015). These educational programs can be facilitated through student and faculty orientation, registered student organization meetings, faculty senate, and student government meetings, to name a few. Passive programming events can be posted via campus bulletin boards, social media pages, and within other electronic means. The University of Texas System Initiative: Cultivating Learning and Safe Environments (CLASE) research states 61% of students received education about intimate and interpersonal violence (IIPV) prior to enrolling in higher education; however, first-year students reported lower confidence level of intervening than upperclassmen (Busch-Armendariz, Wood, Kammer-Kerwick, Kellison, Sulley, Westbrook, Olaya-Rodriguez, Hill, Wachter, Wang, McClain, & Hoefer, 2017). As such, higher education institutions should also focus on programming to educate students on effective intervention methods.

Within the following sections of the literature review, I will outline the higher education policies related to sexual violence incidents, bystander intervention, why undergraduate students are choosing not to intervene during witnessed incidents, the situational model and how it connects to bystander intervention. Finally, to understand how undergraduate students at an HSI in the United States – Mexico border region understand the role of bystander intervention in preventing sexual violence incidents on campus.

Higher Education Policies

Higher education institutions are required to comply with the Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX), this federal law promotes equal opportunity for all individuals by assuring that no student will be subjected to discrimination on the basis of sex in any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance (U.S. Department of Justice, 2020, 20 U.S.C. §1681). Title IX originally applied to the unequal treatment of student athletes based on gender. However, Title IX is more than the equality of funding for student athletes. Title IX includes ten key areas: "access to higher education, career education, education for pregnant and parenting students, employment, learning environment, math and science, sexual harassment and standardized testing and technology" (TitleIX.info, 2019, para. 1).

The key area of focus within this study will be the Title IX sexual misconduct, which includes sexual harassment and sexual assault (U.S. Department of Education, 2015). If a university official becomes aware of an incident of sexual misconduct involving students or employees, Title IX requires the higher education institution to take immediate action to stop and prevent reoccurring behaviors (U.S. Department of Justice, 2020, 20 U.S.C. §1681). In order to address the sexual violence increase on higher education campuses, the Office of Civil Rights implemented the following policies to aide university officials on responding to sexual violence incidents within campuses:

- *Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972* (Title IX) which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in federally funded education programs or activities (U.S. Department of Education, 2015);
- *The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA)* was initially implemented in 1994. VAWA seeks to improve criminal justice and community-based responses to domestic violence,

dating violence, sexual assault and stalking in the United States. In 2013, President Obama reauthorized VAWA with new provisions to protect Native Americans and LGBTQ community members (U.S. Department of Justice, 2020);

- *Revised Sexual Harassment Guidance: Harassment of Students by School Employees, Other Students, or Third Parties* provides the principles that educational institutions should respond to sexual harassment of students (U.S. Department of Education, 2001);
- *Dear College Letter* is a supplement letter of the 2001 Revised Sexual Harassment Guidance by providing educational institutions with additional guidance and practical examples of Title IX requirements related to sexual violence (U.S. Department of Education, 2011);
- *Campus Sexual Violence Act* (Campus SaVe Act) mandates educational institutions to educate community members on prevention and provide awareness programming of sexual assaults, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking (U.S. Department of Education, 2013);
- *White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault* provides a foundational guide to developing a comprehensive response plan for sexual violence incidents (U.S. Department of Justice, 2017).

There are an array of policies and task forces that have outlined educational and prevention programming to assist higher education institutions on lowering the number of sexual violence incidents that occur on campuses. However, on-campus incidents continue to occur. In order to increase awareness and provide information to university community members on reporting incidents, the U.S. Department of Education established the Campus SaVE Act.

The Campus SaVE Act (2013) mandates universities to educate university community members on prevention and provide awareness programming of sexual assaults, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking (U.S. Department of Education, 2013). For example, some institutions provide educational awareness programming through monthly campaigns; such as, January is known for stalking awareness, February for dating/healthy relationships awareness, April for sexual assault awareness, October for domestic violence awareness, etc. Research suggests these monthly awareness programs are not effective at changing negative cultures on college campuses (Barone, Wolgemuth, & Linder, 2007) while bystander intervention initiatives are a more effective approach to minimizing violent incidents (Foubert, Langhinrichsen-Rohling, Brasfield, & Hill, 2010; Langhinrichsen-Rohling, Foubert, Brasfield, Hill, & Shelley-Tremblay, 2011; McMahon et al., 2011; Peterson, Sharps, Banyard, Kaukinen, Gross, Decker, & Campbell, 2016). Bystander intervention seeks to increase the willingness and preparedness of a person who is present but not involved in an event to act and intervene (Foubert et al., 2010; Langhinrichsen-Rohling et al., 2011; Peterson et al., 2016). For the purpose of this study, CDC (2019) defines *sexual violence* as a "sexual activity when consent is not obtained or freely given" (p.1). Sexual violence includes incidents of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking.

Bystander Approach

Researchers state while people may witness an emergency situation occurring, they will take some sort of action to assist the person in trouble (Cherry, 2018). Psychologists suggest that whether or not people intervene might depend on the number of people present; known as the bystander effect (Burn 2009; Cherry, 2018). The bystander effect became known in 1964 when Catherine "Kitty" Genovese was murdered after being sexually assaulted by a man with a knife

when she was returning home from work (Cherry, 2018). Over 38 bystanders heard Genovese's repeated calls for help; however, no one called the police until thirty minutes after the first call for help (Cherry, 2018). This is an example of how people sometimes fail to react to the needs of others based on social influence, bystanders' emotional state, nature of the incident, and presence of other people (Burn, 2009; Cherry, 2018).

Sexual violence educational programs were developed to educate students on how to diminish the bystander effect; as sexual violence incidents are occurring within campuses more frequently (Hill & Silva, 2005). Higher education policies are now requiring higher education institutions to implement bystander intervention programs.

Bystander Intervention Programs

Bystander initiative programs are nationally known and many universities have chosen to adopt such programs (Banyard, Plante, & Moynihan, 2004; Foubert & Perry, 2007; McMahon & Dick, 2011). Specifically, numerous universities have adopted bystander intervention programs to provide participants with the skills to effectively intervene during witnessed incidents (CDC, 2014; Storer, Casey, & Herrenkohl, 2016). To fund these programs, universities request funds from the Board of Directors, educational grants, or state departments to adopt and maintain bystander intervention programs at their college campuses. For example, the University Of Texas System (UT System) Board Of Regents approved a $1.4 million Bystander Intervention Initiative empowering academic institutions to implement bystander intervention programming "tailored to institutions' culture, needs, and resources by aiming to unite all UT schools towards creating a safer, more inclusive environment" (UT System, 2014). The UT schools were able to establish and support the bystander intervention program for three years with the Bystander Intervention Initiative budget. Other universities received federal funds through the Office on

Violence Against Women (OVAW). In 2016, OVAW granted over $15 million to fund 45 projects across the nation to "create effective, comprehensive, and sustainable strategies to prevent and respond" to violent incidents on campuses (U.S. Department of Justice, 2017). As another example, Florida State University was awarded a five-year, $600,000 grant from the Florida Department of Health's Sexual Violence Prevention Program (Florida State University, 2015). These are only a few examples of how universities have secured funds to adopt and maintain bystander intervention programs on their respective campuses.

There are various programs universities have adopted to reduce incidents from occurring on campus, the three most utilized programs are the Green Dot, the Men's Program, and Bringing in the Bystander. The Green Dot program is designed to "increase active bystander behaviors and reduce power-based violence" (Coker et al., 2011, p. 780). The mission of the Men's Program is to be a "sexual assault prevention and education program to provide men and women with the knowledge, skills, and support systems needed to become active participants in the prevention of rape" (Foubert & Perry, 2007, p. 71; Gidycz et al., 2011). The focus of the curriculum of the Bringing in the Bystander is to teach "bystanders how to safely intervene in instances where sexual violence, relationship violence or stalking may be occurring or where there may be at risk that it will occur" (Banyard, Moynihan, & Crossman, 2009, p. 451).

The three bystander intervention programs are similar in that they focus on training students to become active bystanders. The differences that exist among the bystander intervention programs are the targeted population. In spite of the differences, the three bystander intervention programs all incorporate similar mission statements focused on reducing and preventing violent incidents on college campuses (Banyard et al., 2004; Foubert & Perry, 2007; McMahon & Dick, 2011).

Bystander intervention programs have emerged as a preferred strategy for reducing violent incidents on campus; the programs "provide hope that students can prevent other people from engaging in bad behavior" (Kingkade, 2016). Coker et al. (2011) and Banyard et al. (2004) assert that bystander intervention programs are effective in imparting knowledge to participants. Yet, current studies have failed to yield results on participants' willingness of empowerment to intervene during witnessed incidents (Banyard et al., 2009; Exner & Cummings 2011; Foubert & Perry, 2007; McMahon et al., 2011).

The research on bystander intervention programming at college campuses are mostly quantitative studies that solicit information attained at the bystander educational programs and whether or not participants would recommend the program to friends and acquaintances (Banyard et al., 2007; Barone et al., 2007; Burn, 2009; Coker et al., 2011; McMahon & Dick, 2011). The limitations of these studies are that while bystander intervention programs are meant to empower participants to intervene, factors facilitating or prohibiting participants from intervening are not being investigated (Foubert & Perry, 2007; McMahon et al., 2011). Thus, a qualitative study will further gauge, in more descriptive detail, the factors that would encourage participants to take action and understand participants perspectives on the role of bystanders (Seidman, 2013).

Barriers to Intervening

The barriers within current research studies indicate bystander barriers include shyness, fear of negative evaluation, and a large presence of bystanders at the incidents (Bennett et al., 2014). Burn (2009) conducted a research study examining the bystander barriers within the Situational Model. The barriers identified were "failure to notice the situation, failure to identify

the situation as high-risk, failure to take intervention responsibility, failure to intervene due to skills deficit, and failure to intervene due to audience inhibition" (Burn, 2009, p. 789-790).

As it relates to barriers of first-generation Latinx students, the barriers listed within past studies may apply (Bennett et al., 2014); however, other barriers that have not been researched are whether or not college students choose not to intervene on how they were raised. For example, past participants have indicated they would choose not to intervene because they will be known as squealers (Bennett et al., 2014). Another barrier may be perceived as students' not having the time to stop and intervene during witnessed incidents (Hill & Silva, 2005). This could describe a commuter student, as students are on campus to attend classes but immediately leave to go to work or address other personal situations. Research of approximately 66% of annual violent incidents that occurred throughout the nation, a bystander was present and chose not to intervene (U.S. Department of Justice, 2002). The next section will discuss the literature of bystander intervention initiatives and how the initiatives may assist with teaching bystanders how to intervene with their personal barriers.

How and Why College Students Intervene or Choose Not to Intervene

In the published bystander research studies that are primarily quantitative, participants are asked if they have intervened during witnessed incidents (Bennett et al., 2014; Foubert et al., 2010; Langhinrichsen-Rohling et al., 2011; McMahon, Palmer, Banyard, Murphy, & Gidycz, 2017). However, the studies do not ask participants information on why they chose to intervene or not to intervene; and what may have interfered with participants intervening during witnessed incidents. Additionally, the existing research studies were mainly conducted within residential higher education institutions and sample participants are majority Caucasian.

Bennett, Banyard, and Garnhart (2014), for example, used interpersonal variables, factors within the individual characteristics, and contextual variables, factors within the situation, that may impact bystander intervention for sexual violence incidents. As it relates to individual characteristics, research studies indicate men are more likely to assist within emergency situations (Bennett et al., 2014; Foubert et al., 2010 & Langhinrichsen-Rohling et al., 2011). Whereas women are more likely to intervene in situations involving sexual violence (Banyard et al., 2009) if they witness a pattern of behavior that may lead to sexual violence.

In the context of the situation, many factors exist that may lead a bystander to intervene or not. Research studies denote bystanders are more likely to intervene during violent situations and when bystanders are familiar with the victim or complainant (Bennett et al., 2014). However, are bystanders likely to intervene when they are not familiar with the victim of the witnessed incident? Higher education campuses are known to have a *sense of community,* where students' wellbeing matters to all university community members. Yet, the rise of sexual violence incidents on college campuses are still occurring and college students are not intervening during witnessed incidents. As such, one begins to wonder if sexual violence is a cultural norm within university communities.

Theoretical Framework

Current research studies on bystander intervention programs typically base the framework of the training programs on particular theories. Some theories used for the intervention programs are the conceptual model (Banyard, Plante, & Moynihan, 2004), the community responsibility model (Banyard, Moynihan, & Plante, 2007), situational model (Bennett, Banyard, & Garnhart, 2014; Burn, 2009; Coker, Cook-Craig, Williams, Fisher, Clear, Garcia, & Hegge, 2011), theory of planned behavior (Banyard, Moyniham, & Crossman, 2009;

Exner & Cummings, 2011; McMahon & Banyard, 2012; Peterson et al., 2016), and the belief system theory (Foubert & Perry, 2007). Prevention programs grounded in theories are the most effective at preventing sexual violence (Elias-Lambert, 2013). These theories focus on the overall sexual violence prevention programs. The Situational Model by Bibb Latane and John Darley (1970) guided my research study, as this theory focuses on the bystanders (Bennett et al., 2014; Burn, 2009; Coker et al., 2011). Within this research study, bystanders are first-generation Latinx college students at Bordertown University. Bystanders can help create new community norms for intervention to prevent sexual violence incidents from occurring on campus and being role models with helping community members (Burn, 2009).

Situational Model

The Situational Model, also known as the Model of Helping, was developed by Latane and Darley in 1970 (Bennett et al., 2014; Burn, 2009; Coker et al., 2011). The five-step model suggests that bystanders' decision to intervene must (Figure 1):

1. Notice the event.
2. Interpret the event as an emergency (or intervention appropriate).
3. Take responsibility for acting.
4. Decide how to act.
5. Choose to act.

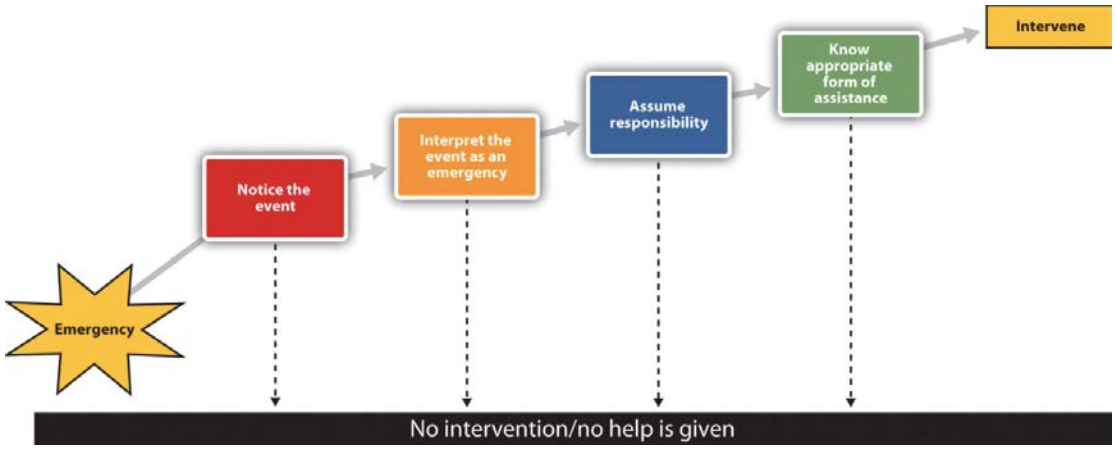

Figure 1: Bibb Latane and John Darley's Situational Model or Model of Helping (1970).

If bystanders have barriers that may interfere at any step, this may prohibit bystanders from intervening during the witnessed incident. In addition, "social and physical environments may affect how they [students] intend to behave" (NSVRC, 2013, p. 28).

According to the situational model, the first step is for bystanders to notice the event. A potential barrier that may prevent bystanders from noticing a potential violent incident is their self-focus; bystanders are focused on their own activities (Burn, 2009). As it relates to college students, a few examples of self-focus are students rushing to get to class or work and students tend to walk around campus wearing earpieces. The next step is for bystanders to interpret the event and determine the incident necessitates intervention. At times, incidents or situations may be ambiguous and bystanders must interpret the situation to understand what they really mean (Burn, 2009; Coker et al., 2011). However, this can be challenging as all bystanders may have a different perspective on what they would consider an emergency or intervention appropriate. For example, college students may hear a couple arguing and will look at other people's reaction to decide whether or not the incident would be considered an emergency, this is known as pluralistic ignorance (Burn, 2009).

Taking responsibility is the third step of the situational model. The barrier associated within this step is when bystanders fail to take intervention responsibility (Burn, 2009). There are three influences that may prevent bystanders from taking responsibility of the situation (a) other people are present, (b) relationship to the victim or perpetrator, and (c) attribution of worthiness (Bennett et al., 2014; Burn, 2009; Coker et al., 2011). Within this step, the bystander effect may come into play if more than one bystander is present during the situation or incident; meaning bystanders may choose not to intervene because "others" are present to intervene. Additionally, if the bystander has a relationship with the victim or perpetrator, they may choose not to take responsibility to respond because it may cause a rift in the relationship (Burn, 2009). Per Burn (2009), bystanders are more inclined to intervene if they only have a relationship with the victim. Lastly, bystanders may be inclined to not intervene because they are waiting for the victim to remove themselves from the situation.

The next step is deciding how to act, whether bystanders have what it takes to assist within the situation (Bennett, 2014; Burn, 2009; Coker et al., 2011). Within this step, if a bystander does not know what to say or do to intervene, they will fail to intervene due to skills deficiency (Burn, 2009). For example, if a shy student witnesses a dating violence situation where someone is being physically assaulted; they may choose not to intervene because they do not know how to intervene.

The final step of the situational model is choosing to act or intervene. Burn (2009) states bystanders can be impeded to act if they "fear embarrassment, awkwardness, and social concerns;" leading to the failure to intervene due to audience inhibition barrier (p. 782). All bystanders have a role to play within witnessed violent incidents. This model stresses the

importance of educating people how to appropriately intervene during situations and inform them of the role bystanders have in lowering incidents from occurring in the future.

Sexual violence prevention researchers are increasingly recognizing the need for theoretical base approach on all bystander programs (Elias-Lambert, 2013). The situational model is useful for this research study as it outlines the steps for bystanders to intervene during violent situations. Researchers propose that bystander intervention should gauge participants' experiences, skills on how to intervene, shifting beliefs, and their sense of empowerment to refer students (Banyard et al., 2009). To reach these aims, providing knowledge during bystander intervention educational programs for participants to work through identified personal barriers is an effective strategy (Bennett et al., 2014) and programs should be tailored to the individual campus community (Keeling, 2006; McMahon & Banyard, 2012). Research shows bystander intervention is effective at "changing participants' attitudes, beliefs, efficacy, intentions, and self-reported barriers" as long as they are attuned with the campus population (Peterson et al., 2016, p. 2), and the situational model will empower the bystanders by effectively educating on intervention techniques. As stated, this research study aims to understand whether or not participants are aware of the role of bystander intervention and how bystanders feel during incidents they may witness.

Chapter 3: Methodology

This study utilized a qualitative research approach. Qualitative research seeks to understand participants' perspectives and in-depth experiences on the specific phenomenon of intervention (Creswell, 2013). Per Merriam and Tisdell (2016), the overall purpose of qualitative research is to "achieve an understanding of how people make sense out of their lives, delineate the process (rather than the outcome or product) of meaning-making, and describe how people interpret what they experience" (p. 15). A qualitative approach was the best methodology for this research study because first-generation Latinx students had the opportunity "to interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their experiences" (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 15). Specifically, the important factors to my research questions are first-generation Latinx students and the bystander intervention.

Setting

Bordertown University possesses unique characteristics appropriate for this study. The first fact is that 85 percent of students attending Bordertown University are Latinx; making Bordertown University a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI). Second, over 95 percent of students commute to school daily. Finally, the location of Bordertown University is within the United States – Mexico border region; known as the second largest binational community of the nation (The Borderplex Alliance, 2019). The unique student population presented a great opportunity to expand the literature by examining how first-generation Latinx students at an HSI understand the role of bystander intervention.

As a higher education practitioner, my primary role is to investigate and adjudicate sexual violence incidents at Bordertown University. This higher education institution has seen an increase in sexual violence incidents; additionally, bystanders have been present at the time of

the incidents and have chosen not to intervene. The student responses during the investigations have encouraged me to dig deeper into understanding the reasoning of why students are choosing not to intervene during witnessed incidents. Students have described various barriers that prevented them from intervening during witnessed incidents: not knowing what to do, afraid they would get hurt, are they misinterpreting the incidents, they did not have time to assist, and students feel the incidents are 'not their business' and choose to ignore the situations (Bennett et al., 2014; Busch-Armendariz et al., 2017).

Some of the challenges of the institution's student population is that approximately 95 percent of the students are commuter students where 60 percent live at home with their parents or guardians (Busch-Armendariz et al., 2017). Additionally, the majority of students are employed outside of campus, meaning students attend classes and leave campus afterward to their employment site. As such, students do not have time to read campus flyers of upcoming events or information on campus safety posted throughout campus.

The CLASE: Bystander Intervention Engagement and Perceptions reported twenty-five percent of students have been informed of the institution's bystander intervention program (Busch-Armendariz et al., 2017). These results, similar to other research reports are quantitative studies; as such, it is my desire to provide Bordertown University administrators with potential recommendations for the institution to enhance the bystander information at the institution.

Participants

This study included seventeen participants. The participants identified as first-generation, Latinx, and commuter students. Merriam and Tisdell (2016) recommended "sampling until a point of saturation or redundancy is reached" (p. 101); meaning no new insights are forthcoming from the interviews. As such, the sampling size of seventeen

participants was a good range for the researcher to reach the point of saturation within the study. Bordertown University's students were recruited to participate in the study through purposeful sampling. I used snowball or chain sampling; considered the most common forms of purposeful sampling (Kirchherr & Charles, 2018; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Per Merriam and Tisdell (2016), this strategy involved locating study participants, interviewing the participants and asking the participants to refer other participants. "By asking a number of people who else to talk with, the snowball gets bigger and bigger as you accumulate new information-rich cases" (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 98).

Snowball or chain sampling was the best method of recruiting study participants. I used professional contacts that advised or oversaw programs serving first-generation Latinx students at Bordertown University to build a diverse snowball sample to commence the individual interviews (Kirchherr & Charles, 2018). There were two specific departments serving students with the sampling criteria: the College Assistance Migrant Program and the Federal TRIO Student Support Services Program. Once I received a list of potential participants meeting the participation criteria, I sent an email to the students meeting the criteria describing the type of study that was being conducted to encourage the students to participate.

Once I interviewed the starting point participants, participants were able to name other students who exemplified the characteristics of the study (Kirchher & Charles, 2018; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Additionally, the starting point participants were knowledgeable of students who were first-generation Latinx students, and recommended friends or classmates to participate in the study. Before individual interviews commenced, I asked participants questions to build rapport. The participants were asked about their major, classification, age, nationality, and gender. The information is listed in Table 1.

Table 1: Research Participants

Pseudonym	Gender	Age	Classification	Major	Nationality
Reyes	Male	17	Freshman	Biological Science	Mexican-American
Penny	Female	18	Sophomore	Social Work	Mexican-American
Priscilla	Female	22	Senior	Health Promotions	Mexican-American
Lisa	Female	18	Sophomore	History	Mexican-American
Jose	Male	19	Sophomore	Philosophy	Mexican-American
Gabriel	Male	21	Senior	Biochemistry	Mexican-American
Evan	Male	22	Senior	Biological Science	Mexican-American
Daniel	Male	32	Senior	Media Analysis	Mexican-American
Carl	Male	35	Junior	Mathematics	Mexican-American
Brandon	Male	19	Junior	Communication	Mexican-American
Adrian	Male	21	Senior	Accounting	Mexican-American
Victoria	Female	21	Senior	Mechanical Engineer	Mexican
Nayeli	Female	22	Senior	Environmental Science	Mexican
Marie	Female	20	Senior	Environmental Science	Mexican
Linus	Male	20	Senior	Biological Science	Mexican
German	Male	18	Freshman	Finance	Mexican
Antoinette	Female	19	Sophomore	Applied Learning & Development	Mexican

Data Collection

I conducted individual qualitative interviews to gather data on participants' experiences (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The individual interviews ranged between 60-90 minutes and were audio-recorded through a hand-held device and the interviews were transcribed with Otter.ai software, a tool used to transcribe audio files using artificial intelligence technology. The one-on-one interviews were conducted semi-structurally and the interview protocol (see Appendix C) established the process for asking probing questions to gain follow up data on the students' experiences (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Key open-ended questions included in the individual interviews were:

- What is your understanding of bystander intervention?
- Since you started attending classes at Bordertown University, have you ever witnessed a violent incident or situation occurring on campus?
- What type of incident or situation would cause you to take action on a witnessed incident?
- What would cause you not to act or intervene during witnessed incidents?
- What conditions need to be present for you to intervene?
- If it was a public setting, with other people present, would you intervene?
- If it was in a private setting, with no one else around, would you intervene?
- In which setting would you be more likely to intervene?
- What would motivate you to intervene, or not?
- In your opinion, can bystanders' assist with lowering incidents from occurring on campus? Tell me why or why not.

I asked participants probing questions, depending on how participants answered the questions (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Saldaña, 2016; Seidman 2013). The probing questions sought to invoke in-depth explanations of participants' responses. Such probing questions included the following: how so, what would that look like, can you provide an example, and why do you think that is? Overall, the words and expressions used by participants during the individual interviews assisted with understanding the participants' barriers and the role of bystander intervention in preventing sexual violence incidents on campus.

I also collected data for the study by showing videos to student participants. The *What Would You Do?* television series depicts "how ordinary people behave when they are confronted with dilemmas that require them either take action or to walk by and mind their own business" (Leicht & Dowd, 2019). I sought to know how participants would respond to the situations within videos depicting sexual violence incidents. As such, the *What Would You Do: Husband verbally abuses wife in public* and *Teen boy physically and verbally abuses his girlfriend* videos were shown to participants during the individual interviews (Dowd & Leicht, 2016, 2018). I opted to show dating violence videos with distinct age differences; the age-difference depicted the student population at Bordertown University. Participants were asked questions after viewing the videos to gather information on whether or not and how they would intervene.

Per Kindon (2003), "the use of video[s] as a method of qualitative research and representation has become 'revived' as a topic in discussions of qualitative methodologies" (p. 145). As it relates to *Participatory Video* (PV), it is regarded as an effective tool for research and Kindon (2003) states, "cannot imagine a more effective method to quickly comprehend the often-complex perceptions and discourses of local people than to produce, watch, discuss and analyze PV material together with them" (p. 143). As it relates to the Kindon's (2003) research

study, the participants had the opportunity to provide their responses to the videos. I aimed to gather explicit and honest feedback from the participants on how they would respond if they were a bystander of the incident portrayed within the video.

During the one-on-one interviews, I wrote short-hand and observational notes of the participants' non-verbal expressions as they were watching the videos. Although the interviews were audio-recorded, I jotted down notes of occurrences and interactions within the interviews. Per Richards (2015), memos and notes can assist the researcher with recollecting the individual interviews, participants' responses to the questions, and the data analysis. The content of the notes included the setting of the interview, interruptions that occurred, and participants non-verbal reactions of the videos.

Following the interviews, I recorded analytic memos that described the initial "making sense of the data" (Creswell, 2013, p. 187). Per Saldaña (2016), "memos are a place to dump your brain about the participants, phenomenon, or process under investigation by thinking and thus writing and thus thinking even more about them" (p. 44). Additionally, Saldaña (2016) reminded me of the overall purpose of analytic memos, originally designed by Birks, Chapman, and Francis (2008):

- M – Mapping research activities (documentation of the decision-making processes of research design and implementation as an audit trail)
- E – Extracting meaning from the data (analysis and interpretation, concepts, assertions, theories)
- M – Maintaining momentum (researcher perspectives and reflexivity throughout the evolutionary journey of the study)
- O – Opening communication (for research team member exchanges) (p.53).

All participants were invited to attend a follow-up interview a few months after the initial interview, as I sought to gather more explicit information from participants on their cultural upbringing and personal barriers that impeded them from intervening during witnessed incidents. Due to the national pandemic, COVID-19, only five students responded to the follow-up interview request and one student decided to stop partaking within the follow-up interview. Overall, the follow up interviews generated in-depth descriptions to questions from the participants' initial responses that assisted the researcher with learning more information about the participants' experiences.

Finally, I reviewed the *Green Dot Prevention Strategy for Colleges* initiative documents. This initiative was adopted by Bordertown University for bystander intervention training. Per Merriam and Tisdell (2016), the term document is viewed "as an umbrella term to refer to a wide range of written, visual, digital, and physical material relevant to the study, including visual images" (p. 162). As such, I reviewed key documents associated with the bystander intervention strategy: college-based curriculum, instructors' manual of the curriculum, and website of the bystander initiative updated by the Bordertown University administrators. Those documents aided by helping me understand student exposure to bystander information at Bordertown University and provided recommendations to administrators at the conclusion of the study.

Data Analysis

Data analysis occurred concurrently with data collection, and various methods were applied to organize the data. The interviews, short-hand notes, and memos were dis-identified, transcribed and coded with the NVivo qualitative data analysis software (Creswell, 2013). The transcribed data were interpreted and the coding techniques used to conceptualize the data were attribute, descriptive coding, and pattern coding (Saldaña, 2016). Attribute and descriptive

coding are known as first-cycle coding methods. The attribute coding served as a management technique and assisted the researcher in arranging the data set (Saldaña, 2016). I assigned a word or short phrase for the documents listed within the data collection (Saldaña, 2016); this is known as descriptive coding. Pattern or focused coding was then used during the second-cycle coding; assisted with identifying major themes from the data (Saldaña, 2016).

Per Saldaña (2016), researchers should not rely on their memory and are encouraged to document thoughts of the interviews, documents, and other aspects of the study. Preliminary jottings are "words or phrases for codes on the notes, transcripts, or documents themselves" (Saldaña, 2016, p. 21). Hence, I coded the notes written during and after the individual interviews; specifically, as it related to the non-verbals of the participants while the participants were watching the *What Would You Do?* videos. The participants' non-verbal reactions were important to jot-down as this provided an insight of participants thoughts and responses to the incidents depicted within the videos. I wrote analytic memos after each coding cycle of the documents and transcribed notes, memos, and interviews.

Overall, the goal of data analysis was to describe how participants felt about bystander intervention and their understanding of the bystander intervention role. This would answer the research questions and would substantiate the reasoning for selecting a qualitative method to obtain the individualized participant experience.

Trustworthiness

Triangulation was the most common strategy to ensure trustworthiness. Triangulation, as a process, incorporates "multiple sources of data means comparing and cross-checking data collected through observations at different times or in different places, or interview data collected from people with different perspectives or from follow-up interviews with the same

people" (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 245). I used three types of triangulation for this study: data triangulation, investigator triangulation, and member checks.

Within data triangulation, I conducted individual interviews, wrote memos, and reviewed documents relevant to the purpose of the study (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Through investigator triangulation, I incorporated peer debriefing, also known as analytic triangulation, to affirm or probe the researcher's decision within the data analysis (Nguyen, 2012). The peer review was conducted by someone connected to the topic of the research study. This review aided my credibility and trustworthiness of interpretations (Creswell, 2016; Saldaña, 2016).

Finally, member checks served as a validation technique to explore the accuracy of data and interpretations (Birt, Scott, Cavers, Campbell, & Walter, 2016; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). I emailed participants their interview transcripts, including my interpretation of specific quotes, and requested their feedback and thoughts about the analysis. I solicited the participants' reaction to the data analysis by setting up follow-up meetings via phone. Five participants responded and meetings were scheduled. Merriam and Tisdell (2016) state:

> This is the single most important way of ruling out the possibility of misinterpreting the meaning of what participants say and do and the perspective they have on what is going on, as well as being an important way of identifying your own biases and misunderstanding of what you observed. (p. 246)

Overall, Creswell (2016) states "when researchers locate evidence to document a code or theme in different sources of data, they are triangulating information and providing authenticity to their findings" (p. 251).

Researcher Positionality

Positionality refers "to the stance or positioning of the researcher in relation to the social and political context of the study, the community, the organization, or the participant group" (Coghlan & Brydon-Miller, 2014; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016); as such, I offer a statement about my positionality that informs my engagement within the present study. As described earlier, my role at Bordertown University is of director for the office of student conduct. Within this role, I investigate and adjudicate reported incidents of sexual violence and serve as a certified facilitator through the *Green Dot Institute for College Strategy*. The majority of the students that I assist within this scope identify as first-generation college students and are of Latinx descent. I have a vested interest in creating safe college environments and empowering all university community members to assist with changing the campus culture. When I conducted research on the bystander initiative, I was unable to find research encompassing the Latinx community, currently the largest minority group (U.S. Census Bureau, 2019). As such, I conducted this study to add to the existing literature to provide insight on bystander intervention within the Latinx community.

I identify as a first-generation Mexican-American student. My parents migrated from Mexico as undocumented migrant farm workers, then worked in the industrial factories on the east coast of the nation. In order to build rapport with participants, I self-disclosed this information before the interview questions began. Having participants know this about me made me an "insider" to the purpose of the study; participants felt more comfortable sharing their personal experiences or feelings about intervention (Hill Collins, 1986). At the same time, however, I was an "outsider," as I was not a student and serve as the director for the office of student conduct (Hill Collins, 1986). Such positionality, enabled me to understand students' perceived barriers to intervening better.

Chapter 4: Findings

This study took place at a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) in the United States – Mexico border region with an 80 percent Latinx student enrollment and 50 percent are first-generation college students. This study aimed to understand how first-generation Latinx students at this institution understood the role of bystander intervention and how students felt about intervening. The main research questions that guided this study were: How do first-generation Latinx students at a Hispanic Serving Institution in the U.S.-Mexico border region understand the role of bystander intervention? And, how do first-generation Latinx students feel about intervening? For this study, I used the qualitative methodological approach to understand first-generation student experiences on bystander intervention (Creswell, 2013). The *Situational Model*, also known as the Model of Helping, was the theoretical framework used to frame the individual interview questions. The student participants recounted their understanding of bystander intervention, past experiences, cultural stigma, decision-making struggles, and motivations.

Student Understanding of Bystander Intervention

One of the early findings with gathering the data was that several students struggled with the understanding how to define bystander intervention. Four out of seventeen students were unable to provide a description on the concept of bystander intervention. Priscilla, a senior Health Promotions major, shared,

> I'm not very, very familiar on what bystander intervention refers to…I am a first generation student and I don't think I really grew up with the concept of [bystander intervention]. So the very little I know, it talks about…giving everyone a fair chance. Again, if I'm correct. I guess it puts everyone with the same expectations

> despite…stopping or preventing issues from happening or being treated differently or not being given the same exact opportunities as others.

Priscilla stated she was unaware of the term of bystander intervention. As a first-generation college student, she did not hear the terminology of bystander intervention at home. However, she understood that the purpose was to ensure that others could have a "fair chance" in the context of a public conflict or dispute.

Lisa, a sophomore History major, similarly stated, "So, I'm not going to lie. Intervention is like to stop something. Can you provide me with the definition of bystander?" Lisa was familiar with the definition of intervention; however, was unsure about the definition of bystander. Per Lisa, this was the first time she heard the terminology. Similarly, another two students shared they never heard of the words bystander intervention. Not having the language of bystander intervention was indicative of the students' limited exposure to the training and cultural distance from the concept. For this reason, all students were provided a working definition of bystander intervention.

Students expressed unfamiliarity with the terminology but understood the meaning of the concept. The majority of students were able to convey an understanding of bystander intervention. Gabriel, a senior Biochemistry major, for example, stated the following:

> So my understanding of bystander intervention is…how likely you are to intervene in any given situation where, like, I guess somebody else would be in trouble, but like that they would need help. So it would be more as to like, how a person would intervene in that given situation.

Gabriel's sentiment regarding bystander intervention was echoed by other students. Gabriel shared how he was familiar with the definition of bystander intervention, but described

uncertainty regarding his own comfort intervening. Linus, a senior Biological Science major, for example, described feeling very comfortable and shared the following incident type examples:

> So my understanding of bystander intervention is…say I'm walking towards a class and I see that two students are, let's say a couple, are having a fight and then I guess yeah, no one's helping, like everyone's just looking [at the situation]. I would get in between and break up the fight so it doesn't escalate or so the fight doesn't continue. Situations don't only involve couples, it could be a fight between two students that are not in a relationship, or could be a situation within education. For example, if I see someone cheating on an exam. I would stay something to stop the cheating [before] continuing.

Linus shared he was familiar with bystander intervention as it relates to sexual violence incidents and other type of incidents, including academic integrity. For such incidents, Linus described feeling comfortable enough to intervene to stop an incident from continuing. Linus stated if he witnessed an incident and other bystanders were not intervening, he would definitely step in. In this way, Linus alluded to the bystander effect. The bystander effect refers to an individual's likelihood to intervene "when other people are present" (Burn 2009; Cherry, 2018). Such statements acknowledged the culture surrounding Bordertown University and how not all students would feel comfortable intervening in a given situation.

Overall, thirteen students were knowledgeable of the bystander intervention definition. Students shared how some of their local independent school districts had bystander intervention programs, where students were offered weekly intervention lessons. However, because students at Bordertown University came from different school districts, some students were learning about the topic for the first time at the University.

In the following sections, I summarize the findings gathered from seventeen student participants using a qualitative research approach. Five main themes emerged from students' responses. The five themes are (1) mind your own business; (2) health or physical safety risks; (3) bystander connection to the victim; (4) comfort levels with intervention; and (5) empowerment to take action.

"Mind Your Own Business"

Mind your own business refers to how bystanders tend to resist getting involved when witnessing conflict. Students described how personal barriers prevented them from intervening within witnessed incidents. Examples of personal barriers expressed by the students were of misinterpreting incidents and cultural upbringing. *Cultural upbringing* is defined as, "the way a child is raised, or the lessons, instructions and teachings that parents impart of a particular group of people encompassing language, religion, social habits, music and arts" (Merriam-Webster, 2019). Students expressed that based on their cultural upbringing, factors within an incident may cause students to question themselves or hinder their ability to intervene. For example, Chris, a Senior Finance major, stated,

> As it relates to bystander intervention, my understanding of it is that if you see an incident, try to make sure tensions do not get too high and to decrease them as best as possible. However, I was also raised if [an incident or situation] doesn't involve you, then you shouldn't be too involved in it sometimes. That's how I was raised and it wouldn't surprise me if others were raised the same way.

Chris stated he was aware of the definition of bystander intervention and knew the steps to appropriately intervene. However, he also shared how the way he was raised posed a conflict for actually intervening. Chris described not feeling a sense of responsibility for intervening based

on his cultural upbringing and out of respect for the private lives of others. This sentiment was also shared by other participants and ultimately described the distance between personal and social responsibility for several participants. Antoinette, a sophomore Applied Learning and Development major, for example, stated the following:

> The way I was brought up, if it doesn't concern you - you shouldn't intervene. I feel like that's just the way Hispanics are raised. Based on my upbringing, I don't know what I would do if I see a situation occurring and I would be afraid to get involved because…well, what if I misinterpret the situation and then it becomes worst? If someone gets in trouble because they were in an argument – would someone then try to retaliate against me or would my parents become mad at me? I'll give you an example, when I was young I would always hear my neighbors fighting and arguing. I would tell my parents, it is 3AM and this guy won't stop yelling – we should call someone or the police. And my parents would always tell me, no, don't do that. It is not our problem. So, they told me to ignore the situation…if I misinterpret a situation and it comes back on me, I think I would get blamed. This is a difficult…for me to change.

Antoinette's experience mirrors Chris' account. Both students described being raised to not intervene during witnessed incidents. Antoinette, specifically, provided examples of incidents where she felt the need to call the police, but was discouraged by her parents to do so because that was "not our problem." These experiences highlighted the cultural disconnect between her family upbringing and what she was socialized to do via schooling. Acknowledging such dissonance led Antoinette to question what she would do if she witnessed a similar situation on campus. Both Antoinette and Chris expressed loyalty and respect to their parents by not

intervening within public concerns, as this was part of their cultural upbringing. This expression mirrored the construct of *familismo.*

Familismo is defined as "strong in group feelings, emphasis on family goals, common property, mutual support, and the desire to pursue the perpetuation of the family" (Calzada, Tamis-LeMonda, & Yoshikawa, 2012, p. 1697). *Familismo* is known to include attitudinal and behavioral manifestations (Calzada, et al., 2012). Attitudinal *familismo* is defined as "feelings of loyalty, solidarity, and reciprocity among family members; such as, belief that family comes before the individual and belief in family honor" (Calzada, et al., 2012, p. 1698); whereas behavioral *familismo* refers to, "behaviors that reflect the beliefs, such as family help with child caring" (Calzada, et al., 2012, p. 1698). Behavioral *familismo,* as it correlates to students' accounts, prevented students from intervening in certain situations. The concept of "not our problem" or "mind your own business" was defined in various forms by each student. Chris and Antoinette were raised to respect the private lives of other individuals and not to get involved in people's personal lives, which was explicit in the above examples.

Penny, a sophomore Social Work major, shared how her family asked her not to get involved in other's business because she could get dragged into the situation and could potentially get hurt. Penny recanted a situation that occurred with her cousin that has hindered her ability to intervene within incidents. Specifically, Penny shared the following statement:

> One of my cousins witnessed an incident of domestic violence and decided to call the police. The husband was arrested and incarcerated due to family domestic violence. The next day, the victim came after my cousin…blamed and fought with my cousin because her husband was jailed. I'm scared something similar may happen to me…I don't want someone to blame me for doing what I think is right. I would then be afraid on campus

> thinking someone would retaliate against me for standing up for them…it's sometimes confusing. Right now, if I witness an incident on campus or around the community, I would mind my own business and move past the situation [not intervene].

Penny shared how her cousin's past experience has frightened her to intervene within situations. She is afraid of being blamed for her actions; even though her actions may be of good intent. Experiences like the one shared by Penny are important as many Latinx students have similar experiences and need educational training on working through their personal barriers of being afraid to intervene. Penny shared she was willing to participate in training to develop skills on effective intervention strategies. Aileen, a sophomore Social Work major, similarly stated how her cultural upbringing impacted her ability to potentially intervene.

> I wouldn't know if I would do anything in a situation just because it is in a public setting. I feel like, at least for me, I grew up in the northeast – part of town that is not the safest or worst, it's more like in between. So I would always hear my neighbors fight like, arguing and possibly physical [incidents]. Like, I always hear the husband yelling at the wife and like, I always tell my mom like hey, like, it's late and like, this guy's like yelling I want to call like somebody. And I was always told like, no mija [interpretation: my daughter], don't do that. Don't do that…that's not our problem. So like, I feel that's why I don't feel like I would do anything if I witnessed an incident. Like, another reason may be that I just wouldn't know how to intervene because I was always told to not do anything…like when I wanted to call the police to stop a situation and was told not to. Like what can I do to help out…besides calling the police, you know?

For Aileen, intervening in a public setting made her feel uncomfortable as she grew up in an unsafe neighborhood. Corchado (2016) identified the northeast neighborhood of a west Texas

border city, as the Devil's Triangle due to the "high crime rates of drug dealing, prostitution, and gang violence" (para. 3). When Aileen witnessed incidents growing up, she was discouraged by her mother to call the police department because they feared the uncertain repercussions of the neighbors retaliating against their family. Aileen described being unlikely to intervene during witnessed incidents as she did not know how to intervene and felt uncomfortable due to fear and uncertainty of how the perpetuators would react. Aileen was asked if she would be willing to learn how to appropriately intervene and Aileen stated she would. Furthermore, Aileen shared she was willing to learn how to appropriately intervene to assist her community and to verify these incidents were not occurring on campus. Aileen's willingness to learn intervention techniques acknowledged she was ready to break through the symbolic borders of her cultural upbringing. Aileen shared she was interested in gaining more knowledge to be a good community citizen.

The comment of "mind your own business," while not disclosed by all participants, was very prevalent within my interview data. Daniel, a senior Media Analysis major, stated that he was raised as other Latinx students to not intervene in "other people's business." However, after growing up, getting married, and having his own children, Daniel did not teach the same model to his children. Daniel stated,

> As an adult, as a father, my role is perhaps different…maybe of what it was when I was 19 or 20. My parents would tell me to not get involved in people's personal business. If I saw an argument or fight, I was told to ignore the situation or to mind my own business. Now that I have kids, I think my role should be more active. Whereas maybe back then I would have just ignored it because it was none of my business but not so much anymore. Because I would hate for someone to take advantage of my own kids and I have to do

> something about it. So my role now would [be to] do something about it or say something. Because I would hate for someone to keep their mouths shut if it was my kids in that position that need assistance and no one would defend them. In a way, I want my kids to feel comfortable with getting involved in these type of situations. So, if I witness an incident…I would intervene so my kids can see the way to intervene within situations and be comfortable doing so. When I first became a father, I was afraid…because I wanted to make sure my kids were okay first. My partner and I started having active conversations on what we would do if we witnessed incidents in the future…and we decided to become more active.

Daniel shared how he, too, was brought up to not get into people's business; to mind his own business. But now as an adult and father, he felt the need to challenge that perspective to be the change agent he wanted to see in the world. Having children changed Daniel's thinking about actively intervening to preserve the safety of the community which his family is a part of. Hence, he described taking a more active role in intervening when witnessing an incident. For Daniel, the distance between his personal and social responsibility lessened after realizing the role that community plays in preserving safety and security, particularly for the most vulnerable (e.g., children).

Adrian, a senior Accounting major, also stated that as he grew up; he started to break his cultural upbringing habits of "minding his own business" when he witnessed situations where individuals were getting physically or mentality harmed. Adrian recanted his cultural upbringing and shared the following:

> I am very familiar with the statement of "this is not your problem…mind your own business." This was not just in my own household; other people have the same mindsets

> you know. We were taught as kids, if it doesn't involve you then don't get involved. One of my parents always told me that…just don't intervene if it has nothing to do with you regardless of the situation. When I was in school I would witness incidents and "my gut" was telling me to stop the situation…then, I would recall my upbringing and my parents saying to mind my own business and I would walk away. I remember asking myself, should I really intervene or was I misinterpreting the situation. For example, I know couples' tend to argue within their relationship. If someone is only having a disagreement and I intervene, would my misinterpretation or decision look bad on my family. But as I got older, I started to realize…that's not the right thing to do. You know you should intervene if someone is getting hurt. I mean it could be a matter of life or death and you being involved could potentially change the outcome for the better. When I was in high school, we were provided with various scenarios on how to intervene and I started to realize, I had the ability to start breaking the habit of minding my own business by intervening if it was necessary.

Learning experiences, such as classes or trainings, are often a gateway for students to learn new techniques. Adrian shared the scenarios he learned in high school taught him a new perspective from pushing against his cultural upbringing and now has the ability to analyze a situation and intervene accordingly.

Overall, this theme related to students shared experiences on how they were culturally raised; specifically, students were raised to not involve themselves within other peoples' situations and to live by the motto of "minding their own business." However, through students' lived experiences, some students were able to make their own decisions on intervention; whereas others remained unsure about whether or not to intervene and how to do it during witnessed

incidents. This led students to identify incident variables, health or physical safety risks, that guided their decision making.

Health or Physical Safety Risks

According to the Model of Helping, the first step is for bystanders to notice the occurring incident. Health or physical safety risks refers to bystanders' calculation of the risk of the conflict shifting toward them. A potential barrier that may prevent bystanders from noticing a violent incident is their self-focus, or the ways bystanders are focused on their personal activities (Burn, 2009). As it relates to college students, a few examples of self-focus are students being aware of their surroundings. The student population at the research site was primarily composed of commuter students. Students traveled to campus daily to attend classes. After classes were completed, students often left campus for work or to accomplish other personal obligations. About this, Carl, a junior Mathematics major, stated,

> If I am in a hurry to get somewhere, I will probably not directly intervene. As I am walking away, if I see something is escalating I would call the campus police. That is something my mother has always told me.

Carl shared if he became aware of an incident, but was in a rush to arrive at a certain location, he would not intervene directly. However, he also shared if the level of gravity looked dangerous or the incident was escalating, Carl shared he would call the campus police department as a more passive intervention strategy. Carl was asked a follow-up question on what he meant by "something is escalating" and Carl shared that if he witnessed a verbal argument, he would ignore the situation, as he defined these incidents as normal behaviors. However, Carl added that if the incident was becoming physically violent, he would contact the campus police department.

Carl shared he would not feel comfortable directly intervening and would delegate intervention methods to the police department.

Students expressed a variety of reasons that would cause them to merit intervening. For example, some students shared if they witnessed a couple arguing, they would not intervene as they would be afraid to misinterpret the situation. Carl shared "if [the incident] doesn't involve you, then you should not be involved in it. That's how I was raised. However, if I see that someone is being physically harmed, I will intervene directly or call the police." While Carl also referenced the influence of his cultural upbringing to not intervene, for him, there was a clear distinction between what he should and what he needed to do. Specifically, he talked about intervening if he saw physical harm being done, even if it did not involve him.

Another student, Lisa, shared she would intervene if she witnessed an incident of bullying occurring. Lisa stated she was bullied while she was attending middle-school and hoped someone would have intervened and stopped the bully from harming her during her situation. Lisa stated,

> I would get involved in an incident, if I witness like when people just make fun of someone else, insult someone else, or who talks bad about someone else. It [is] just like, well it reminds me when I was bullied at school. So I understand how it feel[s] to want someone [to] intervene when it was happening to me. So I will like prefer to be that person to help people by stopping a fight or a situation from occurring or getting worse.

As Lisa stated, she would intervene if the incident was related to bullying, as Lisa had a personal connection to the incident type stemming from middle school. Lisa shared she would identify any bullying incident as needing intervention because she would have appreciated students intervening during her experiences with bullying. Lisa shared she takes time to analyze a

situation to determine if intervention is needed; she would not ignore a situation. Lisa's past experiences have guided her philosophy towards intervening and Lisa shared she would intervene instead of being a passive bystander. Nayeli, a senior Environmental Science major, similarly shared her philosophy about intervening. Nayeli stated,

> I guess if I saw an argument between two people that was getting heated I would just go up to them and say, "oh, your car is getting towed" if the situation was involving a man and a woman. But if it's like two guys involved in the incident, I wouldn't be as comfortable. I would like another way to intervene, for example I would probably call campus police. It is hard to say what I would do right now because I am not currently witnessing a situation. The moment I see an incident, I may react differently. But if I see a physical fight, I would call [the] police and if an argument is getting heated and someone is yelling or something, I would probably say something to them…it is my hope to be able to assist, but I guess I would have to feel safe myself to be able to intervene.

Nayeli shared that before intervening, she would analyze the incident to determine if her safety was at risk. If she determined her safety was at risk, she would delegate the intervention by calling the campus police department. Nayeli specifically shared she would question herself about intervening if two males were involved in the incident, as this would make her uncomfortable as her safety may be at risk. Gabriel shared a similar comment,

> I would have to see if the situation will cause me harm before intervening…if I would have seen something more than just like a verbal fight then I would have probably intervened or like gotten close up and asked "Is everything okay?" Or, made another similar comment. If there is [a situation] that is escalating towards a point that it is getting worse and worse, I feel that's where I would like actively intervene. [I would]

> actually go up to where the situation is happening to do something…or call the police or administrator[s] for assistance. I don't want the situation to cause me harm, but if the situation is getting worse and no one is around to stop it, it would cause me to directly intervene.

Gabriel shared how he would determine whether his safety was at risk before making a decision. Gabriel's statement varied from other participants as he shared he would intervene even if the level of gravity became harmful. Specifically within the statement, "…if the situation is getting worse and no one is around to stop it, it would cause me to directly intervene"; meaning Gabriel would directly intervene to stop the incident from becoming more severe.

Similarly, Marie, a senior Environment Science major, shared the following regarding her approach toward intervening:

> So first, I would assess if me intervening would put my health at risk or my physical safety. If I can separate the involved parties and talk to them I will do so. It is my hope their friends would come along to assist me or the police. If the situation is too dangerous for me to physically separate them, then I will ask someone to help me separate them…overall, so at first glance, if [a] man is screaming or doing something to a woman, I think that I would not think about it, I would just intervene. But if I see, for example, two males in a physical altercation, I [would] double think what I can do, or should I do something. But definitely if someone is in physical danger, I would intervene somehow.

Marie also shared she would assess if her health or physical body were at risk before intervening. Marie's statement mirrors Gabriel's account. Both students described they would intervene if the victim was in physical danger. Specifically, Marie shared she would ask other bystanders for

intervention assistance to stop the incident and provide an opportunity for the victim to leave the scene. Jose, a sophomore Philosophy major, stated "I would intervene if I see there is a sense of danger or potential danger for somebody." As previously shared by participants, Jose would intervene within any incident if he identifies a sense of danger for the victim. Jose identified danger as the incident becoming a physical assault. Antoinette added,

> I would analyze the situation and really think about what I would do. I would ask myself, is this person going to fight and hit the person or are they only bluffing? I would determine if the situation is dangerous or not before I intervene…however, if someone's life is in danger, or someone is going to be in any type of danger. So, if I see blood, if I know someone is going to be hurt by [the incident], or if I know it is going to inflict any type of damage to the person or someone else – I will intervene.

Students have varied responses from checking for their personal safety to immediate decision making. In this case, Antoinette stated she would make an immediate decision to intervene if she interprets the incident as an emergency. Antoinette defined an incident as an emergency, if someone was in imminent danger. Antoinette also shared that unless she determined a situation is an emergency, she would not intervene. Penny talked about intervening if she witnessed physical violence within an incident.

> The thin[g] that would cause me to intervene is [witnessing] physical violence. I believe that's when you really need to intervene. Because this is going to affect someone physically or even in a mental way. Words alone can cause someone to be affected in a mental way; so, if I witness a verbal argument that turns into a heated argument, and then physical fighting, at this point I would definitely intervene.

Penny shared she would intervene if she witnessed physical violence. Penny also stated she is knowledgeable that "words alone" can affect someone mentally. However, Penny shared the incident variable that would cause her to intervene is witnessing physical violence occurring. A senior Mechanical Engineer major, Victoria noted that someone being physically harmed will cause her to intervene. Victoria stated,

> I guess whenever a person is being harmed in some sort of way and I can tell that the [victim] doesn't feel like they can do something about it themselves to stop the situation, the [victim] may be feeling reliant on their surroundings [other people] to do something about the [incident], because they're not feeling that assurance that they can do something about it themselves. So, yeah, if someone seems like helpless, that would be the case where I would want to step in…I would also ask myself if I would be putting myself in danger or make the situation worst because I made the wrong decision. This can be counterproductive.

Within Victoria's statement, she stated she would analyze the victim's state-of-being and would determine if she would intervene. Victoria expressed that the victim may be depending on bystanders to intervene as the victim may not know how to resolve or alleviate the incident themselves. As such, Victoria may intervene but would analyze if intervening would cause her self-harm. Incidents or situations may be ambiguous and bystanders must interpret situations appropriately (Burn, 2009; Coker et al., 2011). However, this can be challenging as a bystander may have different perspectives on what they would consider intervention appropriate (Burn, 2009). For example, German, a freshman Finance major, stated the following,

> If I identify a situation that is hopeless or a situation that is completely out of my control, then I would consider not intervening. Another example that would cause me not to

> intervene is if I think intervening would make the [incident] worse, then I would definitely not intervene.

Similarly to Victoria, German shared he would challenge himself about intervening if he determined the incident or situation could get worse. Both Victoria and German shared, they were concerned about over-analyzing incidents or misclassifying incidents. Adrian, a senior Accounting major, shared, "sometimes there can be cases where students are just having a normal conversation. If they start arguing or talking louder, I may not intervene because that is two people [having] a discussion or verbal argument." In the previous example, Adrian shared he would not intervene during the incident as he interpreted the couple were having a verbal argument. Priscilla also shared she would not intervene if she was unfamiliar with the "full story" of the incident. Priscilla stated,

> I think my biggest fear is to say something when I don't know the full story. So I would never want to get involved in something that the way I see it is completely different to what the situation might actually be like. So, for example, if I see someone that I don't know, maybe look sketchy I would never confront the situation I may see because I don't know if the person usually acts in that matter or are they actually causing someone harm. I will give you an example, if I see a sketchy [awkward or unfamiliar] person in a building I don't know if they are following someone or actually have a class in that building. I want or need to know the context to a situation before I decide to intervene or do anything…the act of violence is not needed and can be harmful to everyone that sees the incident occurring. But I want to make sure I am certain what I am noticing before I make the decision to intervene.

Priscilla and other participants stated they analyze the situation before intervening to understand the context of the incident. Now, if situations became alarming or dangerous, this cemented the decision to intervene for most participants. However, Evan, a senior Biological Science major, stated, "If something is going to cause me harm, I honestly would not intervene in that incident. I would try to find other ways to help the situation [the victim]. Again, my safety and safety of other bystanders is important." Evan, unlike other participants, shared he would not directly intervene if the intervention would cause him harm. However, Evan stated he would find other ways to assist within the incident. Carl also stated,

> If there's an altercation [that is] getting out of hand, such as raising their voice, or they're getting too close to the other individual, the victim in that case. If you start seeing that the person [accused] [is] holding the [victim] really tightly, or in any [part] of their body, specifically their arms or maybe their neck, arms, etc., that's probably a point where the victim is screaming out for help. But I am unsure of what I would feel comfortable doing that would not cause me harm. If I get in between the victim and accused, will I get hit or slapped…or will the accused assault me for getting involved in their situation.

Carl shared he would not know what to do if he witnessed a victim being physically harmed. Carl stated he would be uncomfortable intervening because it may put him in danger for intervening within the conflict. Carl's experience differed from the majority of participants, as other participants shared how physical violence would cause them to intervene.

Overall the data indicated there are several barriers preventing students from intervening. Specifically, the majority of students shared they would not intervene directly if their personal safety was at risk. Students also shared they would intervene if they knew how to intervene appropriately, as some students shared they were unaware of how to confidently intervene during

witnessed incidents. In addition, students stated they wanted to verify they were interpreting incidents correctly. Students shared they did not want to overanalyze situations or intervene because this might create a "bigger issue" or escalate the situation.

Bystander Connection to the Victim

Another theme that developed was the bystander's connection to the victim. This theme related to participants' cultural upbringing to protect their family members or loved ones. Students shared how they would be more likely to intervene if they witnessed incidents involving a family member or loved one. Comparatively, if students witnessed a situation involving strangers, they stated they would take more time to determine if intervention was needed.

Daniel shared, "if I saw a loved one in an incident, I would probably lose all my senses and I will definitely intervene to assist them because it is my family that is potentially being hurt." Whereas Antoinette shared, "I would stand up and directly confront the attacker, I would tell the [attacker] you can't talk to this person like that. I would intervene because like, I know them." These participants shared they would directly step into the situation to defend their loved one because they have a personal connection with the victim. Students identified personal connections to the victims as developing through time or individuals being a part of the same family. As Evan shared,

> It would just make me angrier [kind of], it would make me kind of act on emotion rather than on analyzing the situation, because I already feel a sense of connection with the person [the victim], it is a stronger connection than just a stranger. I would go directly to the victim and pull that person out of that situation; I really wouldn't talk to the abuser. I would not hesitate or think twice about intervening…I would do so

> immediately…because it is someone I know that is being harmed. No. No, I couldn't stand around to see if the situation would stop…I would stop it myself.

Evan shared he would intervene within the incident as a protective instinct or fearing the victim or loved one may be harmed. German added,

> I would probably intervene, yes. I'll probably allow more of my emotions; I'm just thinking how that would work. If somebody I love is being attacked in any way then I will probably get more emotional about it. I'll be more volatile to use less words and more of a physical language and I will be more prone to using force to deescalate [the incident]. If I know and care for someone and I witness them being attacked, verbally or physically, I'll get in the way and try to push the [attacker] with my stance [get in between the victim and attacker], use my words, or physically attacking the perpetuator because they assaulted someone I care for.

For Evan and German, the decision to intervene when they are familiar with the victim was easy. Both participants shared they would remove their loved one from the incident for protection and to diffuse the incident. Both participants shared, they would directly intervene and use physical force on the perpetuator. Marie also shared the following statement,

> If I witness a situation with a friend or family member, I would intervene immediately. I would get in between them and I would limit or cut the interaction…then I will call the police. I will be a little more aggressive towards the aggressor, like screaming at him…. Yea, I would not be able to calm myself down if I saw a friend or family member being hurt, you know.

Marie's intervention techniques mirrors Evan and German's execution to intervene, as Marie shared she would directly intervene and become aggressive with the perpetuator to protect her

friend or loved one. The three participants were firm about their first-hand perspective on assisting their friend or loved one. These responses were a solid contrast to the students' cultural upbringing, of not getting involved within incidents that did not involve them.

Students described what would cause them to change their decision making of getting involved. Students shared that if their family members or loved ones were involved in any harmful situation, the situation would be categorized as "it involves family…it's my business." Other students shared their reaction time would decrease if a loved one was involved within an incident; however, they would intervene if a stranger was in physical danger, too. For example, Brandon, a junior Communications major, stated,

> If I saw a friend was involved in a situation, I would react faster. I would step in to defend them to make sure they are okay. You know, if the person is close to you, you understand and know the person and they don't deserve what is occurring…so I would intervene to stop the incident. Now, if it is a stranger or people in general, I don't know when or if I would do something to intervene because I don't know them and I would have to see if the situation becomes a physical danger to the victim. If I don't witness the incident becoming a physical danger, I don't think I would get involved.

Brandon also stated he would intervene within the situation if it became physically violent, regardless of whether or not he knew the victim. Brandon shared the timing of his intervention would differ if he is familiar with the victim. The participants shared it would take him more time to determine if intervention is needed when a stranger is the victim. Other students shared whether the victim is a loved one or a stranger, they would react the same way. Adrian shared,

> If I saw a loved one within a situation, it would be a personal encounter, but you still handle it the same way if I don't know the person. Specially, I mean, regardless if it [is]

> someone [that] is a complete stranger or family friend, you still have to intervene. I cannot see myself not intervening just because I do not know the victim…that is not right. That person is getting harmed, I would do something to stop the incident. But it will be a personal situation if you see somebody you know that is involved within an incident. Regardless of whether or not I know a person in the situation, I would do what I can to intervene. That's the right thing to do, you know.

Adrian echoed Brandon's statement, where he stated he would intervene if he noticed a friend or stranger within an incident. Adrian stated if a loved one was involved within the incident, it would become a personal situation for Adrian. Carl echoed the sentiment and added,

> I would react the same way [if the victim is a stranger or loved one]. I would, like, separate my friend from the situation and tell the other person not to follow us or I will call the police. And I will take my friend to their home or anywhere they want to go. If I know the [victim] really well, I will let them know that I am here to assist them in any way possible. If it is a stranger, I would remove them from the incident and ask them what else I could do to assist them; like walk them to their car, give them a ride home, or take them to the police department.

As it relates to the bystanders' relationship to the victim, Carl stated he would intervene without hesitation. Carl also shared he would escort his friend or loved one to a secure location and would remove the stranger from the incident location. The decision to intervene when bystanders are knowledgeable of the victim was driven by participants' love and respect for the involved party. Due to their connection to the involved parties, participants stated if they witnessed an incident that involved friends or family members, they would intervene without hesitation.

As previously stated, Bordertown University is a commuter school that reflects the town's demographic composition; eighty-three percent of students are from the local community (The Borderplex Alliance, 2019). Although students have personal connections with some students, they may not know other students on campus. As such, if they witness incidents with students without personal connections; participants shared they would hesitate with intervening within those incidents. In the next section, students shared their views with intervening within incidents of specific group demographics, leading to the following theme comfort levels with intervention.

Comfort Levels with Intervention

During the individual interviews, participants were shown two videos depicting dating violence incidents with distinct age groups; the age differences depicted the student population at Bordertown University of traditional and nontraditional students. Traditional students are defined as students between the ages of 18-23 and nontraditional students are usually 24 years of age or older (National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 2002). Students were asked questions after viewing the videos to gather information on whether or not and how they would intervene. Students shared their experiences of intervening during these witnessed incidents and stated if they witnessed incidents involving people of a different age-group, older than the participants, this would cause the students to change the way of intervening; however, they would intervene nonetheless. For example, Brandon shared, "there is no age limit to domestic violence or any abuse at all, I would intervene regardless of their ages." Similarly, Carl shared, "depending on the situations, if someone is 40 or in their 20s, the situation should not be occurring at all. The ages of the involved parties may change the way I intervene, but I will intervene somehow" and Jose stated, "abuse is the same no matter the age." Finally, Penny

shared, “it doesn’t matter how old the individuals are…if you see something wrong, you should step in and stop it. You have to stand up for people, you can’t just leave them like that.” These four participants expressed that violence was not appropriate within any age group and would intervene accordingly to stop incidents. They shared that abuse is the same within any age group and should not be occurring; as such, these participants stated they would intervene to effectively stop the situation from pursuing. Adrian also stated,

> Nobody’s too young or too old within those type of situations. Some people within my age group at times act like they are salty people [people that are upset, angry, or bitter] and decide to comfort others for silly things like if their girlfriend is on her phone while they are on a date or something. And somebody can be old and think they can belittle people, that’s not okay. Any person, no matter the age, can unfortunately assault other people and I will intervene if I witness situations.

Adrian shook his head while he was watching the videos. He shared how assaults occur within any age demographics and he would intervene if he witnessed incidents. Adrian shared he would intervene because the incidents should not be occurring. Whereas, other participants stated the age difference, older age demographics, would cause them to question themselves on whether or not they would intervene because the people in the incident may not respond to the participants. For example, Evan stated,

> To a certain degree [I] would just assist young people because I can kind of relate to them and they will be able to relate back. And they can kind of feel more secure in me intervening, like the victim would feel more comfortable trying to ask for help, rather than an older couple. The [older couple] might just dismiss me as someone who can help. So that’s why it would be best for me to get someone else who can actually help

> that person or situation but I would still intervene. I guess my age could affect their perception of me and that I will probably not be able to assist them.

Evan shared older individuals may deem Evan as not being able to assist within the situation due to the age difference; causing Evan to delegate instead of directly intervening. Students described being raised to respect elders, so they felt hesitant to intervene within incidents involving older students. Similarly, Victoria stated

> You know, if it's an adult couple, maybe I wouldn't intervene…just like ages, relationships kind of change. And, you know, couples don't talk the same way to each other in different parts of their lives. So like, I don't, I wouldn't want to intervene and then be like, "Oh no, what's going on why are [you all] fighting?" and they can respond "We're fine" …I guess it wouldn't feel, like, comfortable doing this to an older couple because I feel like I don't relate as much to them, as a younger person.

Victoria watched the videos shaking her head, and her facial expressions conveyed she was sad and uncertain on how she would intervene. Victoria shared she would hesitate or question herself with intervening as she may not understand the relationship or behaviors of an older couple. Similarly, Gabriel shared the age difference is the area that would cause him to intervene differently, as he stated,

> Honestly, this is the only way that I would intervene differently…it is the age group [older couple] I think it would be like the only factor that would make me intervene differently because well, the age of the involved parties may need or want me to include like campus police. In the incident within the video [domestic violence with an older couple], the guy looked like he would literally hit her and he may hit me or knock me out, too. And like it's just something like that…how intimidating does that older person look

> that would cause me to automatically call the police instead of directly stepping in – this is something I would ask myself.

Gabriel's belief was centered around his concern for his personal safety. The age and physicality of the attacker would be a main factor in deciding whether or not he would intervene. Like Gabriel, other participants shared it would take them longer to decide whether or not they would intervene. For example, Marie related,

> I think definitely, I would feel more comfortable approaching a younger couple than I would to an older couple…I think it would take me a little bit longer to approach and assess the situation but I also ultimately think, if intervention is needed or not. Regardless I would intervene but it would take me a little longer to determine what I should do.

Marie shared she felt more comfortable intervening when younger couples were involved within incidents. Marie stated it would take her time to determine if intervention was needed within an incident involving an older couple. However, Marie stated she would intervene during either situation. Likewise, Priscilla shared the age difference would intimidate her causing a delayed reaction. As such, Priscilla stated,

> I think sometimes I would be a little more intimidated when it comes to someone older. Just because you know, it always comes to the situation of knowing your plays [actions] when it comes to older people and respecting them. But I don't know if I would have respect for someone acting hostile to another person. I think I would be a lot more challenging when making a decision when it comes to, like, an age difference. If I encounter a situation with an older couple, I might hang around just a little bit, just in

> case things get worse, like I would be there in order to like stop it. But I think the age would definitely just kind of like scare me a little bit from standing up.

Priscilla's sentiments mirrors Marie's statement of intervening within situations involving older individuals. When Pricilla was watching the videos, she shook her head. Her facial expressions were of sadness, anger, and fear. Priscilla's eye contact was dominant as she looked at the details of the incidents. She started to tear up and stated she would intervene within any situation to stop the incident from escalating. However, she stated incidents involving an older couple would take more time for her to analyze if intervention is needed.

Participants, shared they would not hesitate to intervene within any situation that they witnessed. However, other participants shared it would take them longer to determine if they are able to intervene during incidents where older students or community members were involved. The reasons ranged from respecting or looking up to older people and students being afraid that older people looked scarier, causing students to fear for their safety. Students shared if they were to intervene, they would feel more comfortable delegating to the campus police department. In the next section, participants described the concept of bystanders empowerment and the ability to lower campus incidents by intervening.

Empowerment to Take Action

In the final theme, participants described bystanders' empowerment to take action and the ability to lower campus incidents by intervening. Reyes, a freshman Biological Science major, stated it was his hope bystanders could lower incidents on university campuses; however, he believed student bystanders must learn to overcome their cultural upbringing to "mind their own business" and feel more comfortable intervening. Reyes referenced cultural upbringing as the

way he was raised; his parents asked him to mind his own business and not to intervene within incidents that were not his business. Carl detailed,

> I hope bystanders can lower incidents on campus. But in reality, I don't think they could because I think we live in a society or live in a location, our region, where we are raised by our parents that we should just mind our own business. What people do is their business, what we do is our business. I feel strongly that other [community members] are probably raised like that in this area. So because of that, as much as I would like for someone to speak up or you know, speak out when they witness something I don't know if it's going to happen. Maybe if it [bystander intervention] became more popular in the sense that we really need to step it up. But even then, I think it would take a lot longer than a few weeks, or even a full school year to really make a significant change. Another thing that may help is for the university to have a meeting or program for parents to inform parents they should support their children if they [students] choose to intervene within a situation, oppose to blaming us [students] for intervening in incidents. This, for example, would probably change my way of thinking and I would be comfortable intervening because I would not be questioning what my parents taught me, you know.

Carl shared, his hope is for bystanders to lower incidents from occurring on campus. However, due to the cultural upbringing of the majority of the student population, this may be difficult, as students were culturally raised to "mind their own business." Carl added the university should consider adopting a bystander program for parents to support their children to intervene and assist victims if students witness incidents. Carl stated having his parents' support would encourage him to intervene, as opposed to questioning himself if intervening is the correct

response based on his cultural upbringing. Chris resonated with the previous participant stating the following,

> Definitely, yes, in my opinion, I think they [bystanders] probably could specifically [lower incidents], depending on the population within the university or the campus. That could happen just sometimes people are just too afraid or scared to do anything about [the incidents] because they were never taught to stand up, either for themselves or for other people. As I shared beforehand, I was raised to "mind my own business" and my parents did not support me or encouraged me to intervene when I was young. When we were witnessing incidents and I would make the statement of needing to call the police department or intervene personally…you know I was discouraged by my parents. As I grew up I started to change my way of thinking and now I feel I should intervene within incidents…but at times I discourage myself because I don't know how to do so [intervene].

Chris' statement disclosed bystanders have the potential to lower incidents on campus if the bystanders are able to effectively intervene. Chris shared how barriers, such as being afraid or not being knowledgeable of appropriate intervention techniques, could potentially hinder intervention, as most students were culturally raised to not intervene. Chris shared how growing up challenged his upbringing, but he needed more information about intervention techniques in order to overcome his personal barriers of fear. From Gabriel's perspective, bystanders have the ability to lower incidents if they remain invested and attentive of their surroundings.

> I think bystander[s] could [lower incidents]. I feel that people like around campus sometimes, like, literally are not aware of what's happening around so that's something students should take into consideration. It's not just whether they would help or not. I

> think it's more of, like, that a lot of people when they're walking around they literally have their mind in other areas and they are not really super, super aware of what's happening around [them] so they might not see a potential [incident].

In general, Gabriel shared bystanders have the ability to lower campus incident if bystanders were aware of their surroundings and able to notice events or incidents—the first step of bystander intervention. Gabriel shared bystanders are personally distracted and unaware of situations occurring within their vicinity requiring intervention strategies. Participants also shared feeling a sense of regret if they chose not to intervene within a situation. Penny shared the following,

> I do, I really think they [bystanders] can [lower incidents] ...that just one simple phone call can really help. And you know, you really want to help that person and you kind of feel you know you get that feeling of regret, like not being able to help that person. But the best thing is to, again, call someone. I mean, that's, your best bet. And afterwards, I guess be there for that person if they need it.

Penny believed that bystanders had the ability to lower incidents, similar to other participants' statements. She described how bystanders could have the courage to intervene by making "one simple phone call" to address the incident and help the victim. For Penny, intervening would prevent her from feeling regretful for not assisting within the incident. Lisa also shared,

> Yes, for example I look at the situation. And if I see like, oh, something bad is going to happen, like, I just call the police or tell someone hey help me with the situation or tell the attacker to stop their actions. Just by saying "stop" can tell someone to think about their actions because it's not okay to be, like, fighting in school or in public. Or just

> fighting overall is not okay and someone is always on campus that could potentially assist with stopping fights or separating the involved parties.

Lisa's statement acknowledges Gabriel and Penny's statement about bystanders having the ability to lower campus incidents by directly intervening, asking the attacker to "stop." In conjunction with Penny and Lisa, Marie also shared her personal perspective on bystanders' being able to lower campus incidents. Marie stated,

> Oh, yes, definitely. And also, it's from a point of view from the persons in the situation. Maybe, they would think, "let's not do that here." Or "let's not do it at all because people are watching." So I think it plays a role first in the [involved parties] heads. But if it's to a point where they don't care anymore and they just started fighting…I think people would do something to stop or intervene within the situation, or that's my hope. I haven't been able to experience such a thing because people think about where they are situated and others [bystanders] may feel confident in calming down the people involved within the incidents.

Lisa and Marie shared distinct perspectives on how they will interpret and take action within certain incidents, one would delegate intervention and the other would directly intervene. Marie shared she has not witnessed incidents, but feels confident and motivated to intervene when she witnesses an incident. Overall, these students shared their empowerment to take action to stop incidents.

As it relates to Antoinette's perspective, she stated "bystanders can definitely lower incidents. If I were in a position where I was in a violent position, like, I don't know if I would go to the police or I don't know what actions I would take. But if a bystander were to do that for me [intervene and direct me] I would be like, I'm going." Antoinette shared if she was a victim

of a violent incident, it would be her desire to have bystanders understand how to effectively intervene within her situation. This correlates with students being able to interpret incidents appropriately. Two students, Evan and Victoria, stated bystanders should be careful of not misinterpreting events they may witness. For example, Evan stated "[bystanders] could if they analyze the situation correctly, and they are not just adding to the problem and causing more chaos." Whereas Victoria shared that,

> I do not know if bystanders can lower campus incidents simply because there are a lot of factors and variables that can go into situations. As I stated before, sometimes it could be counterproductive where maybe you are not really helping; rather making the situation worst.

Both Evan and Victoria shared that students should be taught on how to identify incidents correctly. Participants shared beforehand, there are various factors utilized by students to identify if incidents are dangerous or if incidents are viewed as normal within the community standards. Depending on the participants' cultural upbringing or age group, they may have their own personal perspective of identifying incidents. Overall, students shared that bystanders have the ability of lowering incidents by simply being present. Jose stated that,

> Just the presence [of bystanders] on campus, especially like some students that are here to attend late classes, conduct research, or work in the evening just having someone around is safer. And maybe there's somebody that's out to cause trouble, they would be less likely to cause problems if there are witnesses around. And even if they [cause concerns], a [bystander] that may not be able to directly intervene can do the next best thing which is calling for help…I think we all have cell phones now.

Jose shared the presence of other community members on campus can make an environment feel safe, as people are around to intervene if needed. Jose stated that community members can intervene directly or by delegating, calling the police department. Overall, based on the students' perspectives, bystanders have the ability to lower incidents that may occur on campus. Students shared this had the potential to be conducive if bystanders were able to effectively intervene, are aware of their surroundings, and feel confident to stand up and do something.

Chapter 5: Summary, Discussion, and Implications

The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine how first generation Latinx students attending a Hispanic Serving Institution within the U.S.– Mexico border region understood the role of bystander intervention in preventing sexual violence incidents on campus and how the students felt about intervening. The Situational Model, Model of Helping, by Bibb Latane and John Darley (1970) guided this study, as this theory focused on bystanders (Bennett et al., 2014; Burn, 2009; Coker et al., 2011). Such lens provided a descriptive understanding of Latinx students' personal experiences with intervening and their comfort level.

The Situational Model has grounded previous bystander intervention trainings across the country (Burn, 2009; Coker et al., 2011; Sulley, Rabideau, Jimenez, Dube, Wood, Susswein, & Busch-Armendariz, 2020). The Situational Model is used to explain bystander intervention (Sulley et al., 2020) and how potential barriers can prevent bystanders from intervening (Banyard et al., 2004; Bennett et al., 2014; Sulley et al., 2020). Universities seek to empower campus community members to overcome personal barriers and intervene during witnessed incidents. Bystander intervention is defined as "evidence and theory-based, and works to prevent violence by engaging community members to actively interrupt and respond to harmful language, acts, and behaviors" (Sulley et al., 2020).

I conducted semi-structured interviews with 17 students at Bordertown University. Data were analyzed based on the following research questions:

- How do first-generation Latinx students at a Hispanic Serving Institution in the U.S.-Mexico border region understand the role of bystander intervention?
- And, how do first-generation Latinx students feel about intervening?

Five interrelated themes were identified in this study, addressing how the participants at Bordertown University understood the role of bystander intervention and how they felt about intervening. The themes were: (1) mind your own business, (2) health or physical safety risks (3) bystander connection to the victim, (4) comfort levels with intervention, and (5) empowerment to take action.

This study aimed to understand how first-generation Latinx students at a Hispanic Serving Institution in the U.S.–Mexico border region understood the role of bystander intervention and how students felt about intervening. Per Sy and Romero (2008), the transition to college represents a "developmental transition with increased independence, distance from family members and greater personal responsibility" (p. 213). First-generation Latinx students also transition into a higher education level and endure or come into contact with situations they do not have previous experience with addressing. Cultural upbringing, particularly for first-generation Latinx students, has received limited research on college campuses and further research would assist universities on understanding students decisions on witnessing incidents (Sy & Romero, 2008). As it relates to the participants of this study, students relied on their cultural upbringing when making decisions to intervene. If participants decided to intervene, some probed how they would intervene as some participants felt they did not possess the skills to properly intervene to stop incidents.

The first theme, Mind Your Own Business, described participants' reflections of their childhood to determine if they should intervene during an incident. Participants shared how they would question their ability to intervene as they were discouraged by their parents to intervene within incidents when they were younger. Parents often informed participants that the incident was not their problem and re-enforced that the participants ignore the incident. Furthermore,

participants shared they would second-guess themselves on determining if a situation needed intervention and their decision to intervene, as they were often not knowledgeable on how to properly intervene due to their cultural upbringing. This finding is related to *familismo* and this concept is defined as "strong in group feelings, emphasis on family goals, common property, mutual support, and the desire to pursue the perpetuation of the family…belief that family comes before the individual and belief in family honor" (Calzada et al., 2012, p. 1698). Participants identified cultural upbringing as a defining factor on whether or not they would intervene within a witnessed incident. Sy and Romero (2008) found the role of family was an integral part to students' transition into higher education; however, students' personal developmental experiences during college could also assist students with becoming more independent. Personal developmental experiences can assist students with becoming more comfortable and open to intervention strategies (Sulley et al., 2020). This finding relates to literature regarding institutions implementing programs for targeted and culturally-specific communities. Specifically, the *It's Your Business: HBCU Bystander Intervention Curriculum* was developed to "empower students, faculty, and staff at HBCUs with the skills and strategies to prevent campus gender violence" (Johnson, George, Meek, & Caldwell Jenkins, 2018, p. 11). Similarly, it is important for universities to incorporate bystander curriculum that can assist other communities, including first-generation Latinx students, with making intervention decisions.

The second theme, Health or Physical Safety Risks, described how students questioned their decisions to intervene within an incident. Specifically, participants described how they would approach an incident with caution, second-guess themselves, and often respond out of fear. Participants identified they would feel uncomfortable intervening if the people involved were males and perceived to be physically stronger, or the incident was physically violent and

participants were uncertain on the proper intervention techniques or methods. Specifically, female participants were more inclined to second-guess themselves fearing health and safety risks, due to the physicality of the attacker. Sulley et al. (2020) found that self-efficacy and university support is needed for students to feel comfortable executing intervention techniques. Student support could result in students' increased intentions to intervene. Bystander trainings can provide community members with knowledge on how to address barriers (i.e., fear) and offer students strategies to overcome personal barriers to intervening (Banyard et al., 2007; Coker et al., 2011; Sulley, et al., 2020).

In the third theme, Bystander Connection to the Victim, participants shared how they would actively intervene if they knew the victim; for example, if the victim was a family member or personal friend. The findings revealed how participants would overlook their cultural upbringing to intervene within an incident where they had a personal connection to the victim; participants described how the incident would become "their business." Participants stated it was important to intervene because they would not stand by to watch their love ones be mentally or physically abused. Within *familismo,* some students stated being afraid to intervene due to possible misinterpretation, resulting in negative repercussions. However, participants shared they would get involved and intervene to remove the victim from the incident. This finding described how participants valued relationships with family members and friends. This finding aligns with the Green Dot and Men's Program bystander educational program, where undergraduate participants reported becoming active bystanders when witnessing incidents involving people they have a personal connection or awareness to (Coker et al., 2011; Gidycz et al., 2011).

The forth theme, Comfort Level with Intervention, regarded the perceived age of the perpetrator. The majority of participants shared they felt uncomfortable intervening if the perpetrator was perceived to be older. Within the research, participants viewed two videos depicting dating violence incidents with distinct age groups. Participants shared how, regardless of the age of the perpetrator, they would intervene to cease the incident. However, the comfort level and method of intervention would change based on the age of the perpetrator. The age of the perpetrator would cause the participants to observe the incident longer to determine if intervention was needed. This finding revealed how participants incorporated their Latinx cultural upbringing, as they were taught to respect their elder; however, upon observation of the incident, participants stated they would make the decision to intervene. This finding aligns with the factors that influence the bystander efficacy and intentions to help once participants are trained on intervention strategies (DeGue, Valle, Holt, Massetti, Matjasko, & Tharp, 2014; Katz & Moore, 2013; Sulley et al., 2020). Participants shared the likelihood to delegate the incident to campus authorities as a safety precaution, if the incident was physically violent, regardless of age.

The final theme, Empowerment to Take Action, was identified based on the students' perspectives on intervention. Bystanders have the ability to lower incidents that may occur on campus if bystanders are knowledgeable of effective intervention strategies, aware of their surroundings to notice incidents, and feel confident to stand up and do something. Overall, to intervene, participants shared students at the university should learn how to effectively intervene by attending a training or seminar. The significance of the findings viewed through the Situational Model lens revealed students require knowledge of bystander intervention and training on how to effectively intervene within witnessed incidents. This was made evident as

students initially shared they would not be open to intervening due to their cultural upbringing. Students shared how growing up, they were socialized to "mind their own business." However, upon entering higher education, they acknowledged the need for a shift in their thinking in order to be able to respond to incidents on campus. As evidenced by Chris, for example, growing up allowed him to interrogate his parents' teachings regarding not getting involved in other people's business. Overall, the majority of participants agreed that they were more likely to be active bystanders if they were to be trained (Banyard et al., 2004; Banyard et al., 2009; Bennett et al., 2014; DeGue et al., 2014; Foubert et al., 2010; Katz & Moore, 2013; Sulley et al., 2020).

Institutions of higher education have adopted bystander intervention initiatives/programs over the past couple of decades; however, findings reveal the importance of the cultural responsiveness and appropriateness of these programs for the student population they serve. The student population at Bordertown University is over eighty percent Latinx and has a large percentage of first-generation college students. Because of the strong bicultural and binational influence on students' socialization, students need support to become active bystanders and learn to work through personal barriers. Bystander intervention programs that do not take into consideration cultural influences and cultural upbringing may not be as effective for empowering students to intervene. Assuming that all students are the same is a pitfall that bystander intervention programs must avoid.

The Situational Model stresses the importance of educating people to appropriately intervene during situations. The Situational Model was useful for this research study as it outlines five-steps to intervene during witnessed incidents: 1. Notice the event, 2. Interpret the event as an emergency (or intervention appropriate), 3. Take responsibility for acting, 4. Decide how to act, 5. Choose to act (Bennett el at., 2014; Burn, 2009; Coker et al., 2011). Based on my

research study, participants shared some personal reflections that closely aligned with the first two steps of the Situational Model. However, the remaining steps were not clearly evident through the various responses. Taking responsibility for acting came at varying degrees of actions by the participants as some were hesitant due to social and cultural practices and lack of experience in taking appropriate measures. Ultimately, the need or expectation to act did not develop due to lack of awareness or self-confidence in their decision making. Furthermore, some first-generation Latinx participants were not inclined to take responsibility to intervene as they were culturally raised to mind their own business. Per the research study, participants were unsupported by family members when they witnessed incidents growing up and asked not to get involved in other's business; thus, preventing students from acting during witnessed incidents. Additionally, some participants stated they were unknowledgeable on how to intervene, causing them not to act or intervene.

As noted in chapter one, there has been a significant amount of research due to the uptick of sexual assault cases in higher education institutions. In addition, there has been a growing interest in sexual assault and sexual violence statistics by media outlets in response to the MeToo movement. For example, attorney John Clune filed a lawsuit on behalf of Baylor University complainants regarding "52 acts of sexual assault by more than 30 football players from 2011-2014" (Tracy & Barry, 2017). As a result of higher instances of reporting by news outlets, there has been an elevated interest by campus administrative authorities in providing trainings that address sexual assault and how to effectively report instances of sexual assault and sexual violence for proper university investigations (e.g., Texas SB 212 of 2019).

Implications for Future Research

Current bystander intervention research studies have focused on the exploration of cultural diversity, reflecting on gender and changing cultural norms (Banyard et al., 2004; Barone et al., 2007; Busch-Armendariz et al., 2017; Coker et al., 2011; Langhinrichsen-Rohling et al., 2011). This study was conducted at a commuter campus of a Hispanic Serving Institution with over 50% first-generation and over 80% Latinx students (University of Texas at El Paso [UTEP], 2021). Future studies conducted at other institutions with different demographics could be beneficial for comparing or contrasting across contexts.

The findings of this study identified how first-generation Latinx students hesitated to intervene in witnessed incidents due to their cultural upbringing. The majority of study participants had personal experiences and understanding of their cultural upbringing; however, all participants shared similarities on being taught to "mind their own business." Bennett, Banyard and Garnhard (2014) conducted research on personal and relationship barriers bystanders may experience. However, further research should continue to investigate the cultural upbringing factors for first-generation Latinx students.

One could interpret, based on previous studies, that Latinx students are not the only ones to have the general barrier of "mind your own business" (Bennett et al., 2014; Burn, 2009; Busch-Armendariz et al., 2017; Sulley et al., 2020). In fact, other studies indicate non-Latinx students possess a similar barrier but detailed investigation is limited on how this barrier is manifested (Banyard el at., 2009; Bennett et at., 2014; Keeling, 2006; McMahon & Banyard, 2012; Peterson et al., 2016). Further research should be conducted on how such personal and relationship barriers are manifested for students. Additionally, further research can also incorporate the Situational Model and how students are responding to witnessed incidents. For

example, students are using technology, specifically cellular phones, to record incidents and upload the videos via social media. Do students feel more comfortable intervening with technology or would they continue to second-guess themselves due to their cultural upbringing.

As it relates to cultural upbringing, there are two theories that can be incorporated as theoretical frameworks in future research, assisting with in-depth understanding on cultural upbringing and learning to work through this personal barrier: Theory of Planned Behavior and Theory of Reasoned Action (Sulley et al., 2020). According to the Theory of Planned Behavior "attributes toward a behavior, perceived expectations, and perceived behavioral control influence both the intent to behave in a particular way and actually behaving in that way" (Banyard et al., 2009; Exner & Cummings, 2011; McMahon & Banyard, 2012; Peterson et al., 2016; Sulley et al., 2020). Similarly, according to the Theory of Reasoned Action "attributes toward a behavior and perceived expectations (known as subjective norms) regarding a behavior determine a person's intention to perform that behavior. Intentions are in turn assumed to cause the actual behavior" (Sulley et al., 2020, p. 88). The Theory of Planned Behavior and Theory of Reasoned Action as frameworks for bystander interventions address perceived behavioral control, social norms, and students' intent to intervene (Banyard et al., 2009; Exner & Cummings, 2011; McMahon & Banyard, 2012; Peterson et al., 2016; Sulley et al., 2020). Based on critical information garnered through individual interviews within this study, these theories could further contribute to the understanding of first-generation Latinx students' lived experiences and how students can become knowledgeable of intervention techniques.

The impact of videos on participants provided strategies of intervening and equipping them with additional resources (e.g., increased awareness, suggested pathways to responding and knowledge of reporting entities on campus). The use of this medium allowed participants to

process the situations better and understand their discomfort and desire to intervene. Future studies should continue to incorporate the use of videos in research methodologies in order to explore the impact of such interventions for student learning, growth, and development.

Implications for Practice

The implications for practice recommended in this section were drawn from participants' comments about bystander intervention. This research study contributed to the literature on bystander intervention as it relates to first-generation Latinx students at a Hispanic Serving Institution. The first recommendation is for university administrators to establish a working relationship with K-12 administrators in the border region to recommend bystander intervention training to be conducted at their schools. For example, the Olweus Bully Prevention Program, is a program within a local independent school district that prevents and reduces bullying in school settings (Socorro Independent School District, 2021). Students are provided weekly lessons to promote safe and supportive learning environments at the K-12 grade level. In addition, schools should include the concept of bystander intervention within parents' meetings; so they are aware of the importance of supporting their students. If more first-generation Latinx students were familiar with bystander intervention and learned about personal barriers, they would be able to effectively learn to intervene.

Second, faculty and staff at the university should also be strongly encouraged to complete the bystander intervention trainings or seminars. Findings show how first-generation Latinx students want to feel supported on their college campus; faculty and staff members could serve as advocates for students. Now, it could be challenging to get all faculty and staff to attend bystander trainings as most are busy teaching, conducting research, and actively involved in service. However, it would be beneficial for universities to add the bystander intervention

training as an annual training component for faculty and staff; this could potentially assist with creating a culture of intervening and educating faculty and staff to serve as mentors for students. Additionally, in accordance with the Texas Education Code § 51, Senate Bill 212, all employees in state public higher education institutions who witness or receive information regarding incidents that constitute "sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, or stalking against a student or employee" are required to promptly report the information to the institution's Title IX coordinator (Texas Senate Bill 212, 2019, section 51.252). Employees who fail to report or falsely report incidents can be terminated (Texas Education Code § 51.255, 2019).

The bystander training should be culturally relevant as their cultural upbringing continues to be relevant to first-generation Latinx students' decision to intervene (DeGue et al., 2014; Sulley et al., 2020). In 2014, the UT System Board of Regents approved funding for bystander intervention initiatives on all academic institutions. The institutions were tasked with creating or adopting an individual program that was "uniquely tailored to the institutions' culture, needs, and resources" (Sulley et al., 2020; The University of Texas System, 2014). This finding expands on existing literature focused on bystander intervention on college campuses; specifically there is limited research on Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSI); however, bystander intervention research exists at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (Johnson et al., 2018) and Tribal Communities (Lefebvre, 2016). The bystander initiatives within an HSI should include components culturally relevant to first-generation Latinx students to increase the awareness and to assist with lowering of campus incidents.

Lastly, Bordertown University should adopt a bystander intervention program that incorporates learning techniques related to cultural upbringing and how students can be educated on proper intervention strategies with that specific barrier. First-generation Latinx students

would be introduced to the bystander intervention program during new student orientation, through freshman seminar courses, and specific programs or departments: TRIO Student Support Services Program Center, College Assistance Migrant Program and the Entering Student Program (UTEP, 2021). Students would be encouraged to attend the full bystander trainings to learn effective ways to intervene with personal barriers, methods on being active bystanders, and effective intervention strategies. This could potentially assist students with becoming knowledgeable of bystander intervention during their first week at the university and the constant reminders could keep students interested within learning techniques on effectively intervening on the college campus or local community. However, an important aspect to keep in mind, is that first-generation Latinx students tend to work full-time jobs off campus and may have limited time on campus. This may result in students having limited time to participate in bystander initiative programs. Relatedly, Bordertown University's status as a commuter campus needs to be taken into consideration. Sy and Romero (2008) found the role of family was an integral part to students' transition into higher education; however, students' personal developmental experiences during college could also assist students with becoming more independent.

Unfortunately, commuter students find themselves on campus less and, thus, engage in sponsored programs and activities at a lower rate than students who live on campus. As such, the Bystander Intervention department can connect with students through email or social media on a monthly basis. The monthly communications can consist of bystander intervention tips to provide students reminders on becoming active bystanders and to create a sense of community with the commuter student population. Additionally, the Entering Student Program can assist first-year and transfer students by exposing them to information and materials relevant to bystander intervention throughout their transition (UTEP, 2021).

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Appendix A

IRB Approval Letter

Institutional Review Board

Office of the Vice President for Research and Sponsored Projects
The University of Texas at El Paso IRB
FWA No: 00001224
El Paso, Texas 79968-0587
P: 915-747-7693 E: irb.orsp@utep.edu

Date:	August 27, 2019
To:	Jovita Simon, MS
From:	University of Texas at El Paso IRB
Study Title:	[1472001-1] To Intervene Or Not To Intervene: A Qualitative Study On Combatting Sexual Violence Through Bystander Intervention In The U.S.-Mexico Border Region
IRB Reference #:	College of Education
Submission Type:	New Project
Action:	APPROVED
Review Type:	Expedited Review
Approval Date:	August 27, 2019
Expiration Date:	August 26, 2021

The University of Texas at El Paso IRB has approved your submission. This approval is based on the appropriate risk/benefit ratio and a study design wherein the risks have been minimized. All research must be conducted in accordance with this approved submission.

This study has received Expedited Review based on the applicable federal regulation.

Based on the risks, this project requires Continuing Review by this office on an annual basis. Please use the appropriate renewal forms for this procedure. The renewal request application must be submitted, reviewed and approved, before the expiration date.

This approval does not replace any departmental or other approvals that may be required. Other institutional clearances and approvals may be required. Accordingly, the project should not begin until all required approvals have been obtained.

Please note that you must conduct your study exactly as it was approved by the IRB. Any revision to previously approved materials must be approved by this office prior to initiation, except when necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to the subject.

All serious and unexpected adverse events must be reported to this office. Please use the appropriate adverse event forms for this procedure. All FDA and sponsor reporting requirements should also be followed.

Please report all Non-Compliance issues or Complaints regarding this study to this office.

Remember that informed consent is a process beginning with a description of the study and insurance of participant understanding followed by a signed consent form. Informed consent must continue throughout the study via a dialogue between the researcher and research participant. Federal regulations require each participant receive a copy of the signed consent document.

Upon completion of the research study, a Closure Report must be submitted the IRB office.

You should retain a copy of this letter and any associated approved study documents for your records.

All research records must be retained for a minimum of three years after termination of the project. The IRB may review or audit your project at random or for cause. In accordance with federal regulation (45CFR46.113), the board may suspend or terminate your project if your project has not been conducted as approved or if other difficulties are detected.

If you have any questions, please contact the IRB Office at irb.orsp@utep.edu or Christina Ramirez at (915) 747-7693 or by email at cramirez22@utep.edu. Please include your study title and reference number in all correspondence with this office.

Sincerely,

Dr. Lorraine Torres, Ed.D, MT(ASCP)
IRB Chair

Appendix B

Informed Consent Form

University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) Institutional Review Board
Informed Consent Form for Research Involving Human Subjects

Protocol Title: TO INTERVENE OR NOT TO INTERVENE: A QUALITATIVE STUDY ON COMBATTING SEXUAL VIOLENCE THROUGH BYSTANDER INTERVENTION IN THE U.S.-MEXICO BORDER REGION

Principal Investigator: Jovita Simon

UTEP College of Education: Educational Leadership and Foundations

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Introduction

You are invited to participate in a research study by Doctoral Student, Jovita Simon, from the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP). You must be 18 years or older to participate in the study. Your participation is voluntary. You are encouraged to take your time in making your decision. It is important that you read the information that describes the study. Please ask the study researcher to explain any words or information that you do not clearly understand.

Why is this study being done?

A qualitative dissertation research study being conducted by Jovita Simon, is seeking Latinx first-generation college students at a Hispanic Serving Institution in the United States – Mexico border region to understand the role of bystander intervention and how do student feel about intervening.

Approximately 10-15 participants, will be enrolling in this study at the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP), College of Education Doctoral Dissertation Project. You are being asked to be in the study because you identified as a first-generation college student at the University of Texas at El Paso.

If you decide to enroll in this study, your involvement will last about 60-90 minutes at a location chosen by both, you and the researcher, Jovita Simon. This timeframe includes the potential follow-up interview.

What is involved in the study?

If you agree to take part in this study, we will arrange a date, time, and location that is mutually agreed upon between you and the primary investigator to conduct the interview. Questions selected for the interview will ask you about bystander intervention, barriers to intervening, your

reaction to intervening should you witness an incident, and your reflection of bystander training at the university. The individual interviews will be conducted semi-structurally, meaning the primary investigator will have a set of questions and will probe you to gain follow up data on your experiences. The interviews are not intended to obtain details of the type of incidents you may have witnessed; instead, you will be asked about your understanding of the role of bystander intervention, barriers, how you feel about intervening, and the role of bystander intervention in preventing sexual violence incidents on campus. The primary investigator will also collect data for the study by showing two "What Would You Do" videos during the individual interviews. The interviews will be audio recorded through the use of a handheld device, mini-digital recorder. Each interview will last approximately 60-90 minutes, this timeframe includes a potential follow-up interview.

The primary investigator will analyze the data and look for themes and findings within the content of the data that is relevant to the research goals. All data will be dis-identified, transcribed, and added to the final report through the use of a pseudonym you will select before the beginning of the interview. You will be given the opportunity to provide contact information for a potential follow-up interview. The timeframe for the follow-up will not exceed two (2) months.

What are the risks and discomforts of the study?

There is minimal risk posed by participating in this study. One possible or potential risk is the loss of the confidentiality of the participants' responses. Confidentiality within this study is paramount and you will have the option to stop participating in the study. Every effort to avoid the probability of this risk will be made by the primary investigator to ensure participants' confidentiality.

Once the interview commences, if you feel some discomfort at responding to questions, you have the option to skip a question, decline to answer a question, or stop participating in the interview. If interview questions provoke a psychological concern, you can contact the UTEP Counseling and Psychological Services at 915-747-5302. No funds have been set aside to pay or reimburse participants for physical or psychological harm attributed or associated with the participation in this study.

Are there benefits to taking part in this study?

You are not likely to benefit by taking part in this study. This research may help university administrators understand the participants' perspectives to ascertain the understanding of bystander intervention, understand how participants feel about intervening and barriers to intervening. As such, the university may benefit from this study and the results can provide additional information to the overall literature of bystander intervention, as it relates to first-generation Latinx students.

What are my costs?

There are no direct costs.

Will I be paid to participate in this study?

You will not be compensated for taking part in this research study.

What other options are there?

You have the option not to take part in this study. There will be no penalties involved if you choose not to take part in this study.

What if I want to withdraw, or am asked to withdraw from this study?

Taking part in this study is voluntary. You have the right to choose not to take part in this study. If you do not take part in the study, there will be no penalty or loss of benefit.

If you choose to take part, you have the right to skip any questions or stop at any time. However, we encourage you to talk to a member of the research group so that they know why you are leaving the study. If there are any new findings during the study that may affect whether you want to continue to take part, you will be told about them.

The researcher may decide to stop your participation without your permission, if he or she thinks that being in the study may cause you harm.

Who do I call if I have questions or problems?

You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you may call the Primary Investigator, Jovita Simon, at 915-747-6814 or via email, jsimon2@utep.edu.

If you have questions or concerns about your participation as a research subject, please contact the UTEP Institutional Review Board (IRB) at 915-747-7693 or irb.orsp@utep.edu.

What about confidentiality?

Your part in this study is confidential. You will be able to schedule your interview for a time that best fits your schedule. The location of the interview will be in a private setting that will be most comfortable for you to participate in the study. Before the individual interview commences, you will be asked to select a pseudonym. A pseudonym will protect your privacy, as well as the privacy of data. Additionally, the primary investigator will assign pseudonyms to all persons mentioned by you in the interview. For example, if you tell a story about intervening on behalf of a random stranger, then not only will you be referred to in the transcripts by a pseudonym, but the random stranger will also be referred to by a pseudonym. The primary investigator will store the legend of pseudonyms and completed informed consent forms separately.

You will have the option to skip a question, decline to answer a question, or stop participating in the interview. If you choose to skip a question, you will have the option to continue your participation within the study. Should you opt out of the interview, your information will be shredded, destroyed and/or deleted from any devices or files used for this study.

The results of this research study may be presented at meetings or in publications; however, your name will not be disclosed in those presentations.

Every effort will be made to keep your information confidential. Your personal information may be disclosed if required by law.

Organizations that may inspect and/or copy your research records for quality assurance and data analysis include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- Office of Human Research Protections
- UTEP Institutional Review Board

Because of the need to release information to these parties, absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.

The IRB approved primary investigator and Dissertation Chair will be the only individuals will access to analytical memos, audio recordings, and transcribed interview data. Pseudonyms will be assigned to all participants and people mentioned in the interviews. The laptop and data storing application utilized by the primary investigator will be password protected and

all digital materials will be stored and maintained in a secured location accessible only by the primary investigator, locked cabinet inside a private office. The completed informed consent forms and legend for the assigned pseudonyms will be stored separately from the information above, to ensure confidentiality. The audio recordings of the interviews will be saved within an online data storing drive, assessable only to the primary investigator. All information will only be accessible to the primary investigator and Dissertation Chair unless the information is requested through legal subpoena. In the event that law requires a disclosure of potentially identifiable data, the involved interview participant(s) will be informed through phone call and/or email. Once the interviews have been transcribed and checked for accuracy, the audio recordings will be destroyed.

Mandatory reporting

If information is revealed about child abuse or neglect, or potentially dangerous future behavior to others, the law requires that this information be reported to the proper authorities.

Authorization Statement

I have read each page of this paper about the study (or it was read to me). I will be given a copy of the form to keep. I know I can stop being in this study without penalty. I know that being in this study is voluntary and I choose to be in this study.

_____
Participant's Name (printed)

_____ _____
Participant's Signature Date

_____ _____
Signature of Person Obtaining Consent Date

Appendix C

Individual Interview Sample Protocol

Overarching Study Questions:
Do first generation Latinx students at a Hispanic Serving Institution in the United States – Mexico border region understand the role of bystander intervention? How do first-generation Latinx students feel about intervening?

Primary Questions

1. What pseudonym would you like to use during this study?
    a. What is your first name? What's another name you like that starts with the letter of your first name? For example, my name is Jovita – Jasmine would be my pseudonym.

2. (Optional) Contact information, in case a follow-up interview is needed
    Email: _____

Questions for Interviews

Part A

1. What is your understanding of bystander intervention?
2. In your own words, what is the role of a bystander?
3. Since you started attending classes at Bordertown University, have you ever witnessed a violent incident or situation occurring on campus?
4. What type of incident or situation would cause you to take action on a witnessed incident?
5. What would cause you not to act or intervene during witnessed incidents?
6. What conditions need to be present for you to intervene?
7. If it was a public setting, with other people present, would you intervene? If it was in a private setting, with no one else around, would you intervene? In which setting would you be more likely to intervene?
8. What would motivate you to intervene, or not?
9. In your opinion, can bystanders' lower incidents from occurring on campus?
10. Here is a scenario: After your class, you were walking to the Union Building and heard a couple arguing and it became physical, near the main plaza. Tell me, what would you do?
    a. If participants say, "I will intervene"
        i. How would you intervene?
    b. If participants say, "I would not intervene"
        i. Ask them why they would choose not to intervene?
11. Have you heard of the bystander intervention program at this university?
12. Why do you think institutions are investing in bystander programs?

13. How likely would you be at attend a bystander training? Why or why not?

Part B: After showing the What Would You Do? videos

1. Tell me, what would you do after witnessing this incident on campus?
    a. If they say, they would intervene. Give me an example of how you would intervene?
        i. Would the ages of the involved parties change your decision to intervene?
    b. If they choose not to intervene, what is preventing you from intervening? Or what would prevent you from intervening?
2. If an argument turned physical (grabbing of arms or hands; preventing someone from leaving the area; slapping or hitting) what would you do?
3. Would you react differently if the victim within this incident is a friend? What if this person within the incident was a friend or a loved one? Why or why not?
4. Would you approach the situation differently if the students were:
    a. Within a same gender relationship?
    b. A person from another race?
    c. If the couple was older or younger?

Appendix D

Participant Recruitment Email Script

Greetings!

I am a doctoral candidate in the Educational Leadership and Administration Ed. D. Program at The University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) and I am conducting a qualitative research study. I am writing to ask for your participation in a research study that will focus on understanding students' perspectives and in-depth experiences on bystander intervention. To be eligible for this study, you must be a first-generation and Latinx student.

All participants will be asked to read and sign an informed consent form prior to participating in this research study. The individual interviews will take approximately one hour. Your participation in this study is voluntary and confidential. The name of participants will not be used in the study; participants will have an opportunity to select a pseudonym to protect their identity. All information shared will be kept confidential and secure. You will have the opportunity to schedule the interview to accommodate your schedule.

I appreciate your time and consideration in participating in this study. It is through your participation that we will be able to better understand the perspectives and experiences on intervention. If you are interested in participating or have any questions about the study, please contact me at jsimon2@utep.edu or 915-747-6814.

Thank you for your participation!

Respectfully,

Jovita Simón

Curriculum Vita

Jovita Simón earned a Bachelor of Science in Management Information Systems from Arkansas State University in 2004. The same year, she accepted her first professional position as a System Analyst at a local medical clinic. Having a desire to continue her education, Jovita accepted a Graduate Assistanship with the Office of Residence Life and enrolled in graduate school. She earned a Master of Science degree in College Student Personnel Services at Arkansas State University in 2008.

In 2009, Jovita accepted a position as Residence Director at the University of Texas at Arlington (UTA) where she worked for the Apartment and Residence Life Department. Jovita served on various Student Affairs and University committees and completed an internship with the Multicultural Affairs department. Jovita was an active member of the Southwest Association of College and University Housing Officers (SWACUHO) and the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA).

In 2012, Jovita accepted the position of Assistant Director for the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution (OSCCR) at the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP). In 2016, Jovita was promoted to Director of the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution and enrolled in the doctoral program in Educational Leadership and Foundations at UTEP. At UTEP, Jovita has served on various student affairs committees and task forces. Jovita has been an active member in several national organizations, including the Association for Student Conduct Administration (ASCA), the Texas Association of College and University Student Personnel Administrators (TACUSPA) and NASPA.

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