

The Impact of the Ford Fellowship Program in the Creation of Latina/o Academic Generations

Carlos Vélez-Ibáñez
Arizona State University

Elsie Szecsy
Arizona State University

Courtney Pena
Arizona State University

This Scholarly Paper was commissioned for the 7th Annual Conference of the American Association of Hispanics in Higher Education, 2012.



Abstract

Following World War II, the GI Bill was an extremely important educational benefit that supported many Americans who hadn't previously been able to afford, or have access to, higher education. This program moved hundreds of men and women through universities at the graduate level, and these men and women went on to form the educational and intellectual foundation of many American universities. This paper proposes that the Ford Fellowship Program has had an analogous impact on American universities when minorities were given the opportunity to be afforded access to higher education. This paper will present preliminary data to test out the manner in which the Ford Fellows Program intellectually and academically impacted American higher education and especially those afforded to Mexican and Puerto Rican origin fellows from 1970-1990.

The Impact of the Ford Fellowship Program in the Creation of Latina/o Academic Generations

Carlos Vélez-Ibáñez, Ph.D., Regents' Professor and Director

Elsie M. Szecsy, Ed.D., Research Director

Courtney Peña, Graduate Student

Arizona State University

On October 18, 2003, I had the privilege of giving one of the keynote speeches to the Ford Foundation Fellows Conference in San Juan, Puerto Rico, that was entitled, "The making of a Ford Fellow: A trek towards excellence in applied social science," and it was basically an explanation of how I managed to develop some of the ideas that led to the formation of some innovations in my field. By the title, I wanted to show that without the fellowship program, it would have been almost impossible for me to enter and complete the doctoral program in anthropology and eventually to make some modest impacts on the field. As I looked over those new cohorts during my talk and I realized that almost thirty years later, that without the program neither would they be present to hear my chat.

Therefore I raised the issue that there was a paucity of information of the impact of the Fellowship program, especially by Mexican-origin and Puerto Rican students, on the academy that were afforded the opportunity to be supported to graduate school. From anecdotal evidence I knew that at least in my field of anthropology that in the Southwestern United States there had only been a handful of us in anthropology. In the 1970's such institutions as UCLA, Stanford, Berkeley, and UCSD and others enrolled their first Mexican-origin students as a consequence of the Ford Fellows program and I was one of them. We in fact formed the first cohort of Chicano anthropologists who questioned many of the premises of the field and introduced new ways of thinking about the field and the populations with which it interacted.

In the following eight years, I raised the need for such a study not only for Mexican-origin and Puerto Ricans but also for African Americans and Native Peoples who also had been recipients at various points in time. To various degrees, I was not successful but I developed a pre-proposal to the Ford Foundation entitled "The Ford Fellowship Program: The GI Bill for Minority Students and its Impact on American Educational Institutions" which sought to fill this vacuum. I invite you to look at the Appendix A of this work for that pre-proposal.

For various reasons the Foundation was not ready to proceed so that three years later, I decided to do it on my own. Thus I enjoined Dr. Elsie Szecsy, the research coordinator of our School of Transborder Studies and one of our former undergraduate students and now graduate student—Courtney Peña to form a team that would take up the task of searching

for available materials and lists of fellows with the idea of conducting a very exploratory study of constraints and possibilities. The constraints we knew would be in the assembly of a data base and the second was what were the central questions that might be easily handled or at least get an idea of possible impacts on the fellowships on our respondents. Since this was a shoe-string operation we were limited to the use of the internet as both contact and carrying out our preliminary exploration.

One study was important in fundamentally understanding how crucial the fellowships were to the Fellows but also understanding the complex of issues and problems the fellows faced during their graduate training and their satisfaction in both the public and private sectors. The 1984 report, "Minorities in Academic Careers: The Experience of Ford Foundation Fellows" (Arce and Manning, 1984) is a very comprehensive analysis of all minority fellows and their experiences as students and after they joined the academy and private industry. However, the report did not indicate much in the way of possible impact, contributions to the literature, positions held and so on.

Therefore, our first task was to focus on what cohorts would be most important to locate and it was our hypothesis that we needed a bit of time to pass for new cohorts to make their impacts on their respective fields as well as to the wider academy. We decided therefore that we would try to assemble awardees between 1970 and 1990. We considered this twenty year window to be broad enough to be able to gather a data base sufficiently large to be able to make some preliminary remarks as to the importance of the program on a variety of dimensions which we will discuss shortly.

Our Sample

Given the restrictions of time and resources, we relied on a convenience sample based on the lists provided to us by the Ford Fellows website and the list included in the Arce & Manning Report.

We managed to unite these lists into a total of 719 Mexican-origin or Puerto Rican Fellows as the following illustrates in Table 1. Relying on e-mail addresses reduced our sample to 51.9% of the total and because of further reductions due to deaths, mobility, and other factors the final sample to which we sent the surveys was 334 of which 153 responded, for a response rate of 45.8%. We limit our discussion of this sample's characteristics to descriptive statistical analysis, which points us in directions that are important and will be crucial in the next iteration of this research.

Table 1.

General Characteristics of Sample

	Count	Percentage
Convenience Sample		
• Fellows identified	719	
• Email addresses found	371	51.6% of 719
• Surveys successfully sent	334	90.0% of 371
• Responses received	153	45.8% response rate
Respondent Gender		
• Male	94	61.4%
• Female	58	37.9%
Respondent Fellowship Type		
• Pre-dissertation	86	56.2%
• Dissertation	74	48.4%
• Post-doc	48	31.4%

The questionnaire itself was modeled along two dimensions via a four-part survey. Parts I and II each consisted of a set of 5-point plus N.A. Likert scale questions followed by a space for open-ended comments. Part III consisted of a series of open-ended prompts for respondents to name programs, departments, centers, institutes that they built or changed operationally or programmatically over the course of their careers. Part IV consisted of questions to collect biosocial data, including email address, type(s) of Ford Fellowships received, gender, as well as a space to collect general comments. (See Technical Summary for details). Our discussion considers two categories of responses: quantitative and qualitative. Table 2 summarizes the analytic approach taken for each section of the survey.

Table 2.

Investigative Methods Used

	Analytic Approach	
	Quantitative	Qualitative
Part I		
Likert-scale	x	
Comments		x
Part II		
Likert-scale	x	
Comments		x

Analytic Approach		
	Quantitative	Qualitative
Part III		
Open-ended	x	
Part IV		
Bio-social data	x	
Comments		x

The Ford Fellowship and Preparing for and Developing a Career

As can be seen the first question's **response in regards to their ability to enter a doctoral program** was quite bifurcated with almost 33% indicating that the fellowship was of little or no importance and 41% indicating moderately important to very important with another 24% indicating that it was not applicable. We can surmise that for the 33% their award is not germane to their acceptance and another 24% indicating something similarly either due to acceptance before the fellowship award while another may have used this as an important element in that person's acceptance.

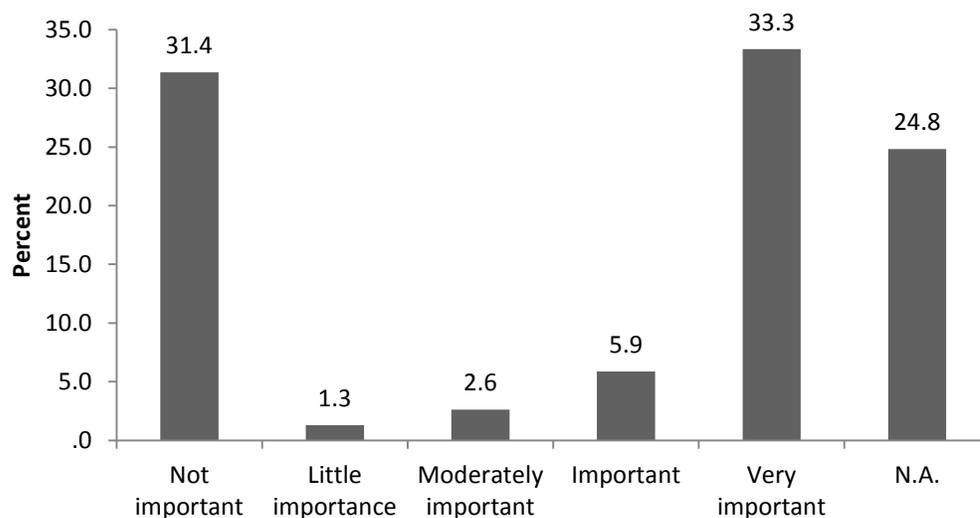


Figure 1. Ability to Enter Doctoral Program (n=152).

On the other hand, **the ability to complete the dissertation** was very much associated with the fellowship with 77% indicating that it was moderately to very important as the

following indicates. This points us in a research direction to probe even further in a future project.

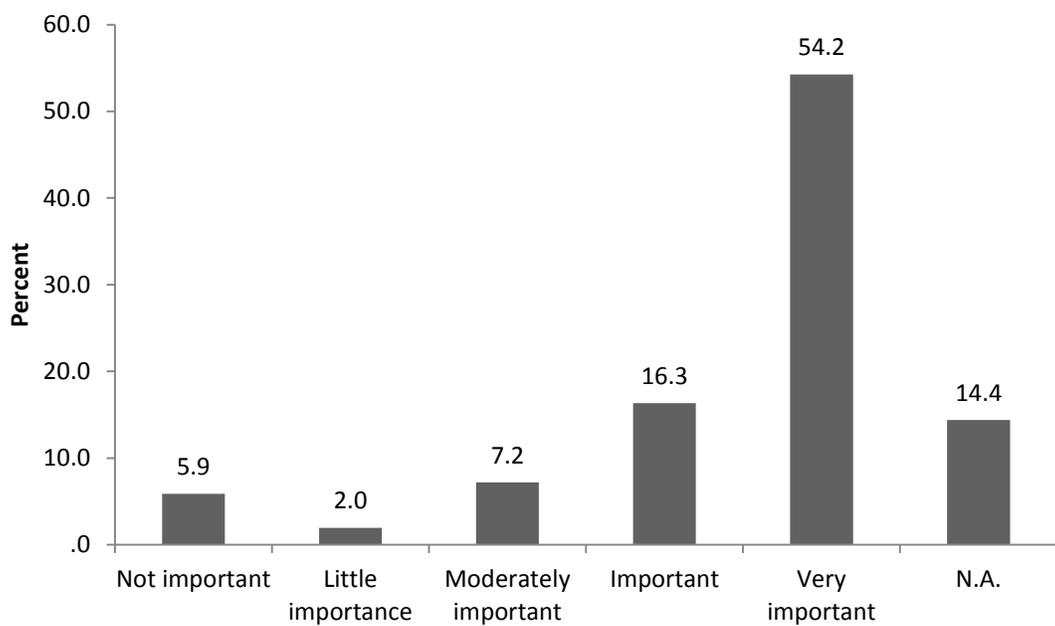


Figure 2. Ability to Complete Dissertation (n=153).

Similarly, **the importance of the fellowship in completing the doctoral program** is scored with a little over 77% indicating moderately important to very important with a small percentage indicating little or no importance as indicating in the following table.

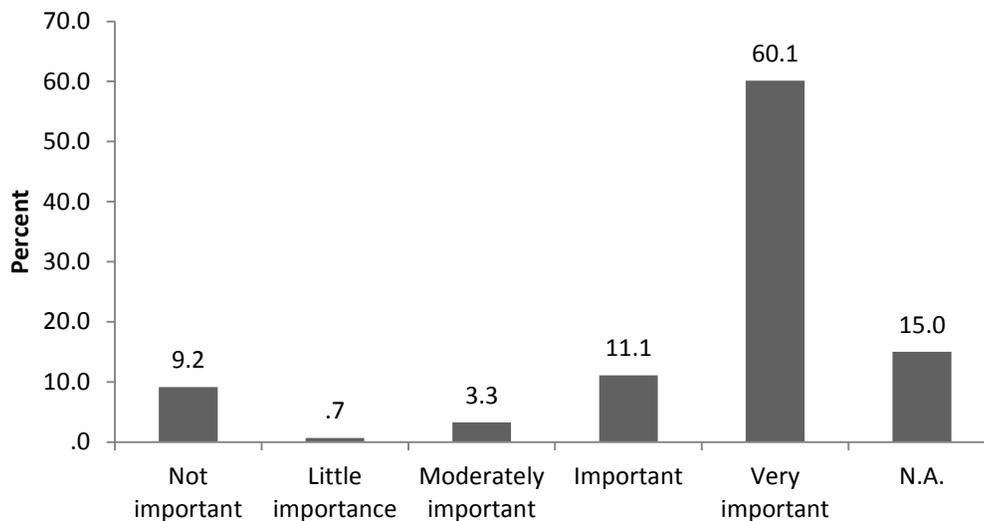


Figure 3. Ability to Complete Doctoral Program. (n=153).

Therefore we can state that for this convenience sample of respondents, the fellowships for many were crucial to completing their doctoral and dissertation programs and further research but we need more fine grained research for the future.

In the post-doctoral period, we asked **how important the fellowship via the completed doctoral program was in the respondent's ability to be appointed in the academy or other professional capacity**, and the response was largely positive with 70% responding as moderately important to very important. This area should also be explored in a further project to ferret out how the fellowship was important such as its recognition as a prestigious award in comparison to other candidates who were not so awarded.

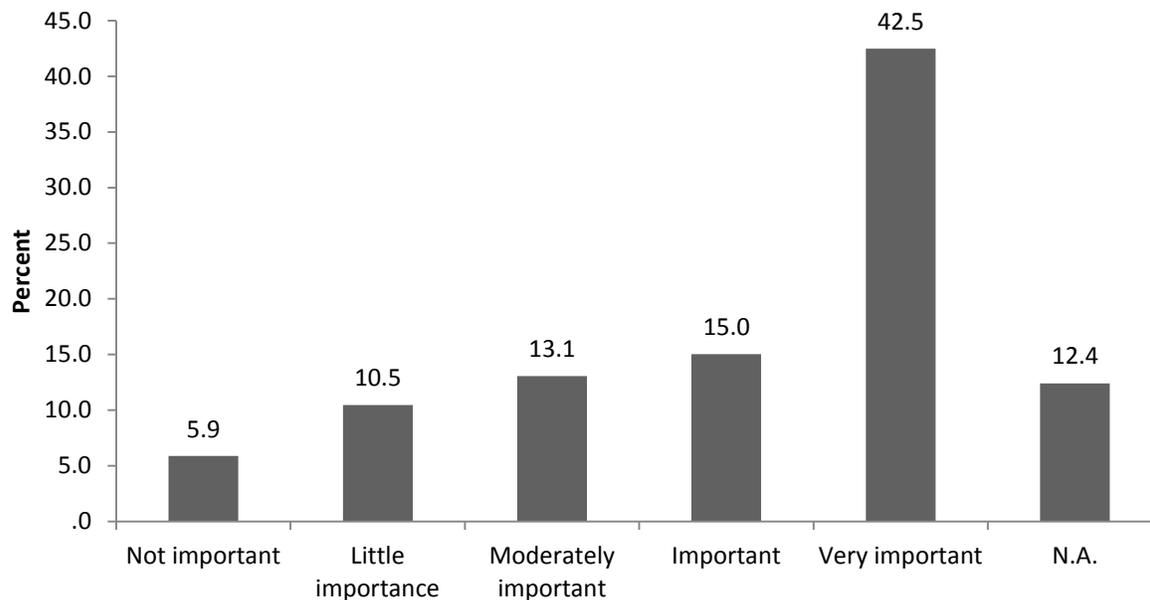


Figure 4. Ability to be appointed in the academy or other professional capacity. (n=152).

It is at the awarding of tenure where the fellowships importance begin to decay as positive responses since it is highly probable that although the fellowship gained persons entrance it does not seem to have directly impacted the ability to gain tenure as the following illustrates with a sizeable percentage (22%) saying as not applicable and almost 30% stating that it was not or of little importance. Almost 48% thought it moderately important to very important.

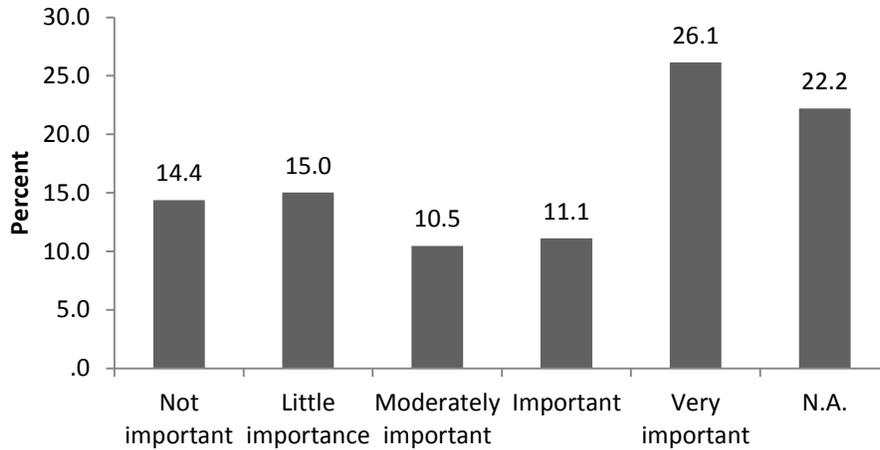


Figure 5. Ability to be awarded tenure. (n=152).

However, more directly but a bit obscure for some was the question regarding the respondent's gauge of scholarly productivity. The question might have been much clearer had it referred only to the candidate's impact without reference to the Ford Fellowship. Nevertheless, the results of these responses are illustrative that at least some of the respondents cut through the noise of the question in the following manner and when the qualitative analysis is considered there is greater breadth and depth to the responses.

In terms of their scholarly productivity, almost 70% stated that they were moderately to very importantly productive with the balance not or little important and the rest N.A.

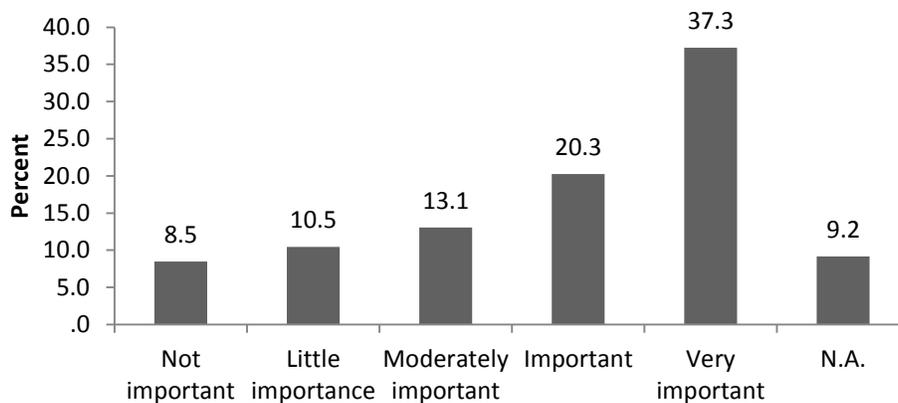


Figure 6. Scholarly Productivity (n=151).

The Ford Fellowship Program and Contributing to the Field

In terms, of **contributions to theory in their respective fields**, respondents answered that the majority of them had made strong contributions to theory with 57.1% indicating moderately important to very important making moderate contributions to theory. What must be noted here, however, is that 22% made no or little contributions and for another 19% this was not applicable. This would indicate to us that the question framed was more than likely somewhat flawed. But as will be seen this is rectified by the qualitative responses to this same question.

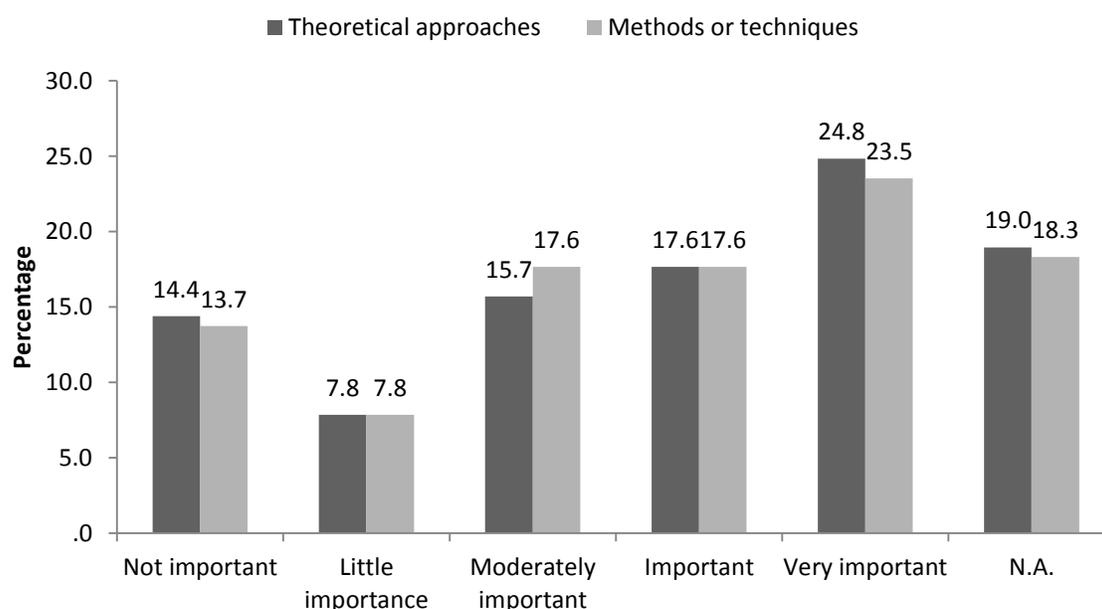


Figure 7. Theoretical approaches developed. (n=151). Methods or techniques developed (n=152).

Similarly, as can be seen in the figure **regarding contributions to methods or techniques** seems to verify the previous contention regarding question fragility since it is almost a perfect reflection of the previous responses with 61% responding moderate to very important contributions to methods or techniques. The little or no importance of 22% and another 18.3% not applicable may reflect noisy questions.

The Ford Fellowship and Innovation

On the other hand respondents did indicate with almost 66% indicating **moderate to very important contributions to innovation in the academy** as the following figure shows. The qualitative responses will flesh this out. The Not important or Little importance and Not applicable accounted to 34%.

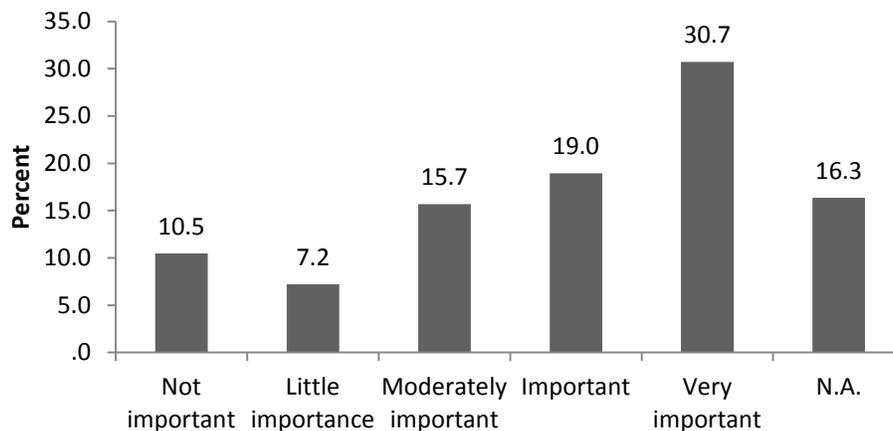


Figure 8. Innovative knowledge or findings (n=152).

Likewise respondents indicated **that they had advanced knowledge from modestly important to very important ways in their fields or specialty by 75%** with 25% distributed among no, little, and not applicable.

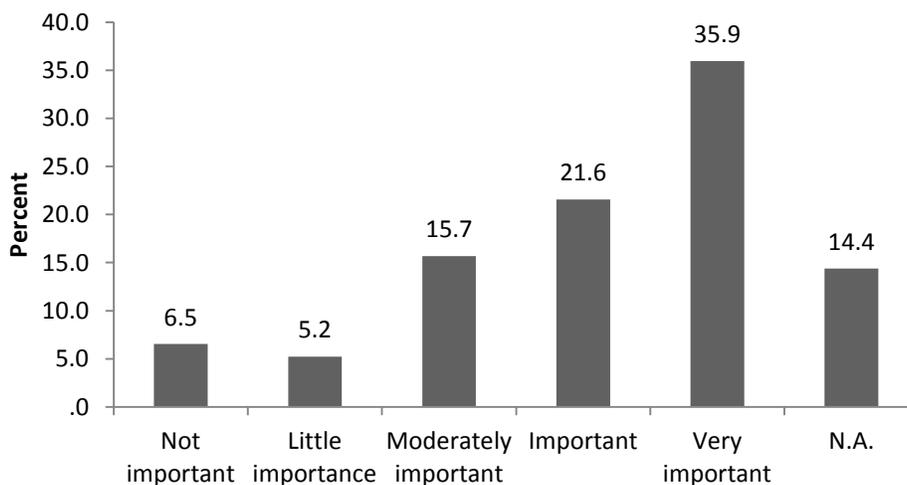


Figure 9. Advancing field or specialty (n=152).

There are however other indicators of the importance of the Fellowships and institutional impact by the roles in which Fellows took once either completing, terminating, or joining academic and public institutions by the leadership positions that they undertook.

Leadership Positions of Respondents

From the convenient sample the following distribution of roles were identified. These are important characteristics to note because they indicate that their presence certainly impacted on the institutions that they represented and speaks to the success of the fellowship program. Thus in considering the highest executive offices and the size of the convenient sample, the representation of executives in academic and non-academic venues, of 153 respondents almost 12% assumed these roles.

Table 3

Executive Leadership Roles of Respondents

	Count	Percentage
Provost	2	1.3%
President	3	2.0%
Vice President or Vice Provost	6	3.9%
CAO or CEO	4	2.6%

However it is at the director, dean, and Chair's levels where a significant number of the respondents assumed these roles. Thus of the 153 respondents, 91 had served as directors, 61 as chairs, and 23 as deans with 9 serving as associate deans or directors. Whether these were the same persons in more than one category is unimportant but rather that these roles were filled provides us an indication of the importance of their standing in their respective institutions and their probable impact.

Table 4

Academic Leadership Roles of Respondents

	Count	Percentage
Director	91	59.5%
Chair	61	39.9%
Dean	23	15.0%
Associate or Assistant Dean or Director	9	5.9%

The respondents also indicated a number of leadership roles outside of the typical executive or academic leadership categories. Of the 153 respondents, 4 reported holding leadership positions in professional organizations, 4 were principal investigators on research projects, 2 were editors, 3 served as advisors or consultants, and one each reported service as law firm partner, member of the Puerto Rican Academy of Arts and Sciences, annual undergraduate research symposium host, and project director. Though some of these roles can be located in the academy, not all of them were. Thus, the Ford Fellowship Program's effect was felt beyond the walls of the academy into the professions and research enterprises.

Table 5

Professional and Research Leadership Roles of Respondents

	Count	Percentage
Professional Organization Leader	4	2.6%
Principal Investigator	4	2.6%
Editor	2	1.3%
Advisor or Consultant	3	2.0%
Law Firm Partner	4	2.6%
Member, Puerto Rican Academy of Arts and Sciences		
Annual Undergraduate Research Symposium Host		
Project Director		

Qualitative Responses

New themes were opened by the qualitative responses that we certainly did not expect, including the overwhelming number of references to the fact that the Ford Fellowships and following conferences were well-springs for the development of intense cohorts of scholars that evolved over time. Especially first generation scholars noted that the networks that developed were instrumental in their academic and professional development and were crucial to their identity as scholars and as academics especially in many cases in which their respective universities had few or no Chicano or Puerto Rican scholars. In other words, they found support, solace, and reflective identity outside of the institution when the institution itself was bereft of Latinos/as. There were numerous references to these networks as being crucial to appointment, evaluation, and tenure. Thus the original Ford design to develop generational cohorts with few exceptions did serve to develop dense relationships that were carried forward to appointment, review, and tenure for many by social, emotional, and cultural support. Many indicated that fellow Fordites served numerous other functions.

General Impressions

Thus the Ford Fellows conferences served multiple functions not the least of which was the ability to work with same generational cohorts, the presence of mentors to guide the younger academics, and the opportunity to be amazed at the sheer diversity of scientific, literary, artistic, and social scientific works presented. This provided Fellows with a sense of pride and created a place that had been absent either in their universities as students or in the present universities where they were employed.

A persistent theme was the role of the Fellowships and conferences in that they provided the models for mentoring and for the development of following generations of Chicano and Puerto Rican scholars in multiple fields.

For many, a cyclical chain of academic and scholarly contributions and impact were linked directly in the following manner and we will provide a specific example and then a model extrapolated from the qualitative responses.

One prominent scientist articulates the chain as follows:

“This (Ford Fellowships) then, like a cascade set of reactions, opened other opportunities to continue to excel in research toward tenure, which again permitted me to train other students, get grants, and continue to publish peer-review articles. Just an example: this type of momentum in a career ignited by the Ford Fellowship that led to an academic position, then led to a Research Career Development Award from the National Institutes of Health, which, again, led to other freedoms to continue an upward mobility as a competitive scientist in the academy. All of this permitted me, during my tenure at the UTHSCSA (1981-2007) to be involved in the training of non-minority and minority students...”

This respondent continued to list the 17 Ph.D. students and 70 undergraduates who he trained and developed along with an expansive list of patents and license agreements to which he was a principal party.

This scientist’s experience not only represents what the respondents pointed out collectively; it also exemplifies what is generally known about relationships between professional development and successful, productive careers for one generation and how the planting of seeds with one generation recycles with the next generation of leaders and innovators. Figure 11 illustrates these relationships.

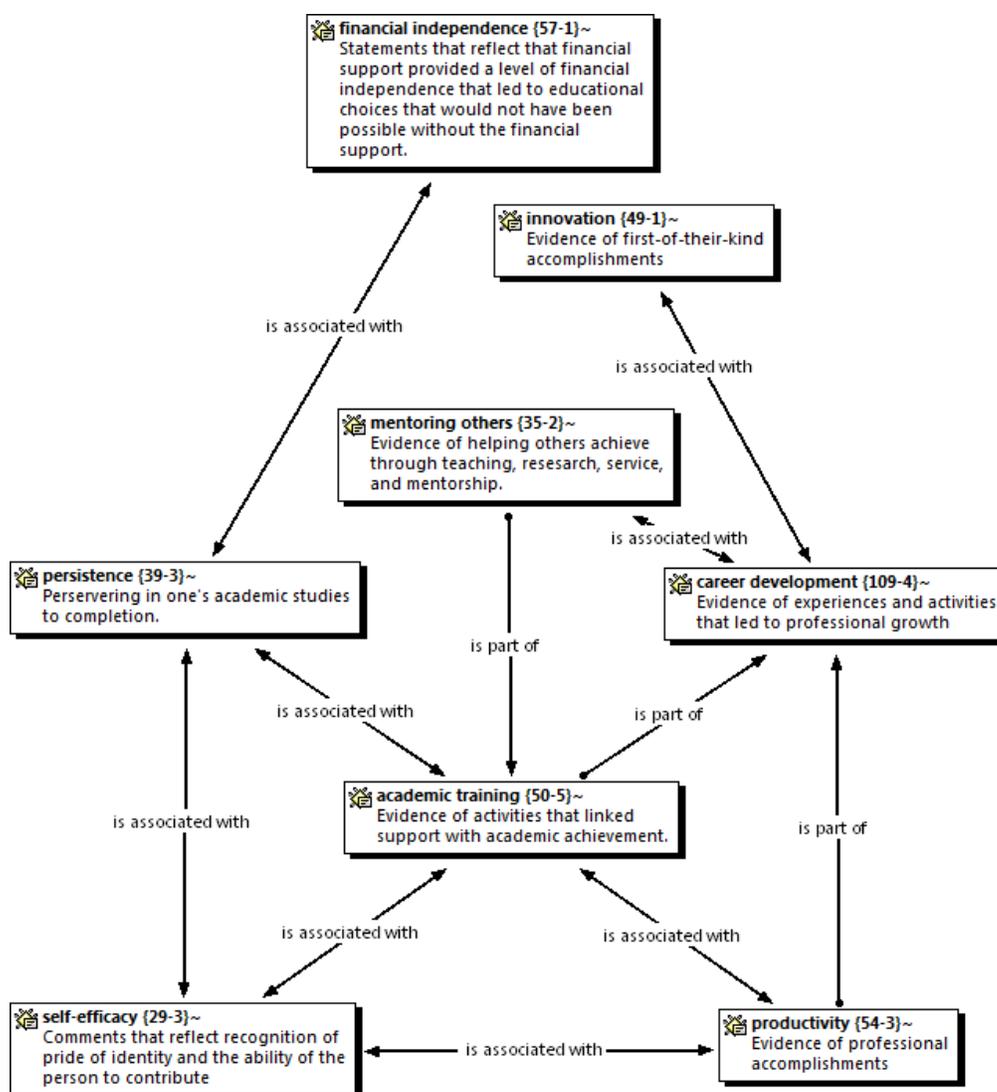


Figure 11. Illustration of Cyclical Chain, as Articulated by Respondents.

Critiques

However, not all responses were as favorable. Not every Ford Fellowship holder followed a path that resulted in the career that they envisioned when he or she started. Some encountered bumps along the road during their careers. Some lamented that in hindsight, they wished they had received better mentoring to prepare them for the challenges ahead in their careers. Some saw little or no relationship at all between their fellowship experience and their professional development. Some saw inadequacies in the Ford Fellowship program itself. They felt somewhat chagrined for only receiving one year awards and to a point blamed the foundation for not continuing their support. They also pointed out aspects of the program that were weak in minimizing social or professional

isolation by solidifying professional community within and between Ford Fellow cohorts. On the other hand, even those that did not complete their doctorate and went into other fields such as finance, banking, the arts, and law all referred to their fellowship as crucial to their careers.

Despite these concerns, there was also recognition of the need for follow-up on and evaluation of the past and assessment for future direction to support the next generations of similarly situated minority scholars and professionals:

The Ford Fellowship's successes must be transmitted nationally.

I am grateful for the Ford Fellowship and saddened that young people of color today do not have the same opportunities we were privileged to have back then. Thanks

It is needed now in the 21st Century as much as it was needed last century.

The Ford Fellowship for Mexican Americans was a blessing to my generation. Its impact is felt the most by its absence in the following generations. There is a big gap between the scholars pre- and post-Ford Fellows. My main contact with the Ford Foundation was Dr. Arturo Madrid, our "padrino," and he was and continues to be a source of inspiration.

Would like to reconnect to Ford and Ford Fellows. Would like to receive info about Ford Fellows conference.

The Ford Foundation Fellowships are imperative to continue each generational growth of ethnic scholars. The lapse in these fellowships has meant many years where exceptional students probably could not pursue a Ph.D.

Innovations and Contributions

Finally, the respondents made a number of general comments that reflected their appreciation for Ford Fellowship support as an important mechanism to make a real difference in their respective fields that lead to the generation of innovations by themselves and others. For example:

During my post-doctoral fellowship, I wrote the single most influential paper of my career. This is my most cited publication with over 1,000 citations. It is a conceptual paper that influenced my work and the work of others.

My analytical approach and research findings have shaped my discipline.

I am slowly changing the thinking in the field

The respondents reported contributions that were also expansive and spanned multiple disciplinary boundaries in the arts and humanities, the social sciences, and the natural sciences:

In the arts and the humanities

My line of research...was pioneering in the field of Latinos and media

My success as a performing musician (with an internationally recognized classical ensemble) and as a scholar is valued by my students and colleagues.

I am considered the "dean" of academic Chicana/o theatre, having been the first Chicano with a doctorate in Dramatic Arts researching, writing and directing Chicana/o, US Latina/o and Latin American plays to the university, community and professional level

The Ford Dissertation Fellowship allowed me to produce a doctoral thesis in the area of Mexican American religious history, an area that until then had been essentially unexplored by U.S. historians.

[One or two other Ford Fellows and I have done much to] develop, raise the profile of, & develop the relatively recent fields of philosophical race studies, African-American philosophy, & research on philosophical issues in ethnicity.

[I] improved Latino representation in the field of Latin American history in the United States

In the social sciences

I have also designed some of the leading Latino survey research studies of the 1970s and 1980s.

I have contributed to my fields of study in the areas of informal economy, immigration and in general, women on the socioeconomic margins of society

My work is central to the field of Chicana history, Tejan@ history, political history, and civil rights.

My work has been cited as making a contribution to race construction theory and social movement theory.

In the natural sciences

I was appointed by President Obama to the Presidential Medal of Sciences Committee in 2011; I have been recognized three times by the White House (1992, 1997 and 2011)

I have worked on National Science Foundation funded projects to adapt and adopt the Systemic Chemistry Initiatives (Molecular Science, ChemConnections, etc.) that have impacted thousands of students in General Chemistry throughout the West since 1998

I developed techniques for the search of the Higgs particle some of which are currently being used at CERN in the search for this elusive particle.

I was one of the first to study the cell biology of major histocompatibility class I molecules

I developed techniques to simulate surface tension and honed my skills in developing a parallel unstructured version of KIVA-3V which is a code used to simulate internal combustion engines.

[My] drug development efforts are yielding a new, important line of immunotherapeutics against cancer, hepatitis B, tuberculosis, diabetes, and arthritis.

Also, for at least one respondent, the depth of appreciation penetrated to the family:

My parents were so grateful, they bought a Ford automobile the next time that they needed a car... something I later told them was not necessary.

Aside from this light note, the Ford Fellowship Program made real, measurable, and important differences to those who benefitted directly. These data also show that the benefits of the program went far beyond these individuals' careers to that of their colleagues and the next generations of scholars and practitioners that follow. Our concern, however, is that knowledge of these benefits will fade away as these beneficiaries retire and otherwise are absent from the academy and the professions in the future.

Conclusions

Within the constraints of the limited scope of this study, we can make the following tentative conclusions.

- a. The Ford Fellowship program in all of its iterations was and remains crucial to the development of entire cohorts of scholars, academics, and professionals.
- b. The Ford Fellowship Program is and was important to the development of theory and method, and created innovative approaches in multiple fields including science, humanities, and the social sciences as well as there are indications of its importance to those in the professional fields of law, finance, law, and diplomacy.
- c. The Ford Fellowship program created the opportunity for some to take assume major executive positions in the academy and in private enterprises. The roles of director, deans, and chairs in the academy were filled by many fellows and it is probably the case that these had important impacts on their respective units.
- d. Operationally, it would seem that those that were granted multiple years of the fellowship from the pre-dissertation, dissertation, and post doctoral benefited immensely.

Things to be Done

- a. There is no doubt that this initial study must be followed up with a project that has been outlined in Appendix A of this work.
- b. The acquisition of a larger sample has to search for respondents much beyond the electronic sources to more closely approximate the methodology of the Arce Report of 1984 which included a much elaborate contact process.
- c. A more elaborate demographic framework will be developed to respond to many of the more relational questions posed by this early research.
- d. Questions must be shaped that are highly focused but give room for additional qualitative remarks which have proven to be invaluable. These questions must unambiguously concentrate on specific theoretical, methodological, and innovative developments in their respective literatures.
- e. Curriculum Vitas will be requested and analyzed within the next few months to buttress the academic impact of the qualitative findings.

Large Policy Objectives

- a. Through AAHHE and with the support of key foundations, plan a summit dedicated to the design and exploration of a multi-generational program to replicate and enhance the Ford Fellows Program for Hispanic PhD completions.

- b. Invite Foundations and key federal agencies to discuss a plan for generating new venues for funding a Hispanic Future Scholars Program, with a focus on workforce development and academic careers.
- c. Assess the current senior administrative levels within the academy to determine lifelines and work force succession planning, spanning a twenty-five period of time.

References

- Arce, C. H. and Manning, W. H. (1984). *Minorities in Academic Careers: The Experience of Ford Foundation Fellows: A Report to the Ford Foundation*. Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Service.
- Chu Clewell, B. (1987). *Retention of Black and Hispanic doctoral students*. GRE Board Research Report No. 83-4R. Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Service.
- Ford Foundation Fellowship Program website. Retrieved February 14, 2012, from <http://nrc58.nas.edu/FordFellowDirect/Main/Main.aspx>
- Fowler, F. J. (2008). *Survey research methods*, 4th ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Lewins, A. and Silver, C. (2007). *Using software in qualitative research: A step-by-step guide*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Many Eyes: An experiment brought to you by IBM Research and the IBM Cognos software group. (2007, 2010). Retrieved February 14, 2012, from <http://www-958.ibm.com/software/data/cognos/manyeyes/>
- Petrochenkov, M. W. (1996). *Excellence through diversity: Profiles of forty-two Ford Foundation Fellows*. Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press.
- Solorzano, D. G. (1993). *The road to the doctorate for California's Chicanas and Chicanos: A study of Ford Foundation minority fellows*. Berkeley, CA: California Policy Seminar.
- Strauss, A. and Corbin, J. (2007). *Basics of qualitative research: Grounded theory procedures and techniques*, 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Sue, V. M. and Ritter, L. A. (2012). *Conducting online surveys*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Wheeldon, J. and Åhlberg, M. K. (2012). *Visualizing social science research: Maps, methods & meaning*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Appendix A

The Ford Fellowship Program: The GI Bill for Minority Students and its Impact on American Educational Institutions

Preface

Following World War II, the GI Bill was an extremely important educational benefit which supported many Americans who had previously been able to afford, or to have access to, higher education. This program moved hundreds of men and women through universities at the graduate level, and these men and women went on to form the the educational and intellectual foundation of many American universities.

The Proposition

We propose that the Ford Fellowship Program has had an analogous impact on American universities when minorities were given the opportunity to be afforded access to higher education. We hypothesize that the Ford Fellowship Program helped support and develop the first large scale intellectual cadre of minority students, beginning in the late nineteen sixties and very early seventies, and in different iterations over the next thirty-nine years, continued to expand the pool of minority graduate students and doctoral recipients to the benefit of American educational institutions.

Even from anecdotal information we are certain that most Ford Fellows who completed a doctoral degree and joined higher educational institutions acted much like intellectual magnets drawing new generations of minority students. They trained additional cohorts of minority students who themselves took advantage of opportunities provided by the Ford Fellowship and allied training programs. The Ford Fellowship Program created networks of scholars distributed throughout the United States and internationally.

From subjective information we surmise that new academic programs, intellectual paradigms, and far reaching scholarly ideas and premises were introduced and successfully institutionalized as a direct result of the Ford Fellowship Program. New university research institutes, regional academic institutions, and interdisciplinary academic departments were organized and developed by Ford Fellows and their ideas and innovations have pushed into traditional scientific, literary, and social science fields like anthropology, sociology, the biological sciences, psychology, history, and mathematics. Diane Crane (1972) argued that great advances in the sciences are helped along by social and intellectual networks of senior and junior scientists that share ideas, provide criticism, and focused interest in a particular issue. She referred to these networks as “invisible colleges.” The Ford family of Fellows is one such “invisible college.” It is a network of scholars across generations, racial/ethnic groups, and disciplines, brought together by the Ford Foundation Fellows Program, to advance our knowledge base and to increase the numbers of underrepresented scholars in the natural, physical, and social sciences and humanities.

The Ford Fellowship Program created the impetus for the creation of unique “funds of knowledge” that have not been recognized nor has sufficient credit been given to their originality and importance. Just as an example, almost an entire historical corpus about African Americans, Latinas/os, and Native Americans between 1970 and 2008 was created by Minority Ford Fellows; that creation includes alternative critical discourses on race, ethnicity, and the nature of historicity. Yet the contribution of the Ford Fellowship Program to this transformation has not been documented.

We also suspect that most university educational institutions owe much of their diversity to the Ford Fellowship Program. In fact the Ford Fellowship Program was the model followed by these institutions in the creation of programs such as the University of California Post Doctoral Program which has been singularly responsible for the development and placement of many minority scholars in the UC System.. This diversification directly impacted the administrative cadre in major institutions and there are probably few if any, minority university chairs, deans, provosts, and presidents who were not Ford Fellows. These administrators in turn impacted their own institutions by developing broad diversification programs that served as models for others.

Simply stated, the success and impact of the Ford Fellowship Program has yet to be researched, analyzed, or have results of such a study disseminated broadly in the United States. We will iterate the policy dimension further.

The Project

We propose a 3 to 5 year project which seeks to analyze the impact of the Ford Fellowship Program across five wide dimensions by responding to the following hypothetical question:

How has the Ford Fellowship Program influenced higher education in terms of:

1. **Intellectual Content** — funds of knowledge that include the origination, development, dissemination, and institutionalization of theories, methods, techniques, findings, and approaches in the academy. These “funds of knowledge” span literature, social science, and the sciences.
2. **Institutional Structure** — the formation of institutes, centers, networks, and groups of scholarly networks that have developed highly concentrated study centers such as the Ernesto Galarza Applied Research Center (UCR), the Center for Urban Policy (UCLA), the Bureau of Applied Research in Anthropology (UofAriz), and the Mathematical and Theoretical Biology Institute of Mathematics and Biology (Arizona State University), UC/ACCCORD and many others that influence and have influenced the academic enterprise.
3. **Leadership** — positions such as the integration of Ford Fellows in academic administration involving major policy positions, such as deanships, heads and presidents of schools, divisions, and units, and Chairs of academic departments and their influence on higher education including curricula, recruitment, retention, and post graduate student development.
4. **Legacy** - development by each Ford Fellow of cohorts of graduate students who then impacted the educational process (curriculum, recruitment, graduate cohorts).

5. Professional Academic Associations - the creation by Ford Fellows of associations, networks, and interest groups that have influenced the development of a broader diversification of American higher education. Such academic professional organizations as the Native American and Indigenous Studies Association, the National Association of Chicana/o Studies, the Association of Black Anthropologists, and myriad others have been at the forefront of institutional change.

We propose that the project will entail multiple phases which map onto the dimensions above and address, in turn, the following:

1. The development of a comprehensive database of Fellows including cohorts from the 1960's and 1970's

- names, appointments, careers, websites
- tenure, scholarly productivity, and students trained
- focus of centers, institutes, universities and colleges
- leadership roles, status and duration

2. Interviews and Surveys of Academic Experience

- Tenure process (challenges and advantages)
- Intensive survey of Funds of Knowledge
- Impact on Institutions
- Organizational Development
- Recruitment and Retention to Graduation Process
- Honors, Awards, Prizes, Recognition
- Mobility Achievement and Titles
- Impact on Non-Academic Communities

3. Documentary Development

- Film and Ethnographic Detail of Leadership
- Historical Collections of Documents and Letters
- Cultural Representations (texts, papers, films, performance)
- Geographic Regions
- Disciplinary and Interdisciplinary Fields
- Institutional Development

Based on this ambitious effort to document impact, the research team will require inclusion of historians, qualitative and quantitative researchers, literary experts, and a film maker. Given the scope of the effort it will more than likely be necessary to regionalize the study in order to take advantage of the presence of already available researchers. However, such a design although complex may be accomplished with proper planning and design.

Policy Implications of Findings

We suggest that the findings from this research will serve as a counterpoint to the racialized discourse currently in vogue in which affirmative action is perceived as a privileged enterprise.

Rather our anecdotal evidence suggests the contrary and calls for heightened attention to the further development of the Ford Fellowship Program and an expanded and public recognition of its paramount importance to the academy, universities, and the nation.

Finally, the research will provide the needed recognition of the Ford Foundation's investment and long term commitment to excellence, reaffirming its charter as an agent of change.

Products

1. Two Major Conferences of Findings: a mid project seminar and workshop, and a completed project report during one of the scheduled Ford Fellow Conferences.
2. Three Volume Publication reflecting the composition and experiences of the Fellows.
3. Film Production of Leadership Histories.
4. Policy Recommendations to the Board of the Ford Foundation as a separate volume.

Appendix B

Technical Summary of Data Collection Methods

The online exploratory survey was conducted in two phases between December 1, 2011, and January 31, 2012. An email was sent to each of the persons for whom we had an email address to introduce them to the project and to alert them that they would be invited to participate in a survey. Since the sample was generated from two lists, and the search process for email addresses for the first list was complete, we opted to invite these participants instead of waiting for completion of the email address search for the second group. Members of the first group received an invitation on December 30, 2011; members of the second group received their invitation on January 5, 2012. To increase the response rate, members of groups 1 and 2 received reminder messages on January 12 and 19, respectively. The reminder was sent to all in the group with thanks to those who had already completed the survey. We maintained a separate database to track those who had not completed the survey. On January 26 we sent a reminder message only to those who had not yet completed the survey, urging them to complete the survey no later than January 31, 2012.

We used *Lime Survey*, an open-source online survey platform that was available through our university. We configured and tested the survey instrument during the month of December 2011. As we did not have personnel to provide technical support in completing an online survey, we configured it as flexibly as possible: no tracking cookies were employed. Respondents could start the survey more than once, and they could save the survey before submitting, in case some wanted to think about their responses before submitting them. We included a question to capture the respondent's name, but they were not required to fill it in. The majority of respondents did provide their names, which assisted us in estimating participation to better target who should receive a final reminder about the survey. The survey closed on January 31, 2012.

Upon closure of the survey, data were exported to *SPSS* and *Excel* for cleaning. Closed-end or Likert questions in Parts I, II, and IV were analyzed statistically using *SPSS*. A content analysis of the comments in Parts I, II, and IV, guided by grounded theoretical principles (Strauss & Corbin, 2007), was conducted with the assistance of *atlas.ti* software. The *Many Eyes Word Cloud Generator* was used to visualize these textual data. Part III data were analyzed manually with the assistance of *Microsoft Excel*.

Authors' Notes

Carlos Vélez-Ibáñez, Ph.D., is Regents' Professor and Director School of Transborder Studies, Arizona State University. He is also Motorola Presidential Professor of Neighborhood Revitalization and Professor in ASU's School of Human Evolution and Social Change. Dr. Velez-Ibanez' intellectual interests are broadly comparative and interdisciplinary and span specific interests in migration, economic stratification, political ecology, transnational community and household formation, and applied social science. His academic fields include applied anthropology, complex social organizations, culture and education, ethno-class relations in complex social systems, migration and adaptation of human populations, political ecology, qualitative methodology and urban anthropology.

Elsie Szecsy, Ed.D., is Associate Research Professional in the School of Transborder Studies, Arizona State University. Her professional interests involve curriculum research, development, and administration; transdisciplinary research methods and collaboration; mentorship; and the use of information and communication technologies to shape just research and professional development practices. She is a practitioner-scholar who has served as a public school teacher, educational administrator, professor, curriculum developer, professional development coordinator, educational researcher, or research professional over the course of her career in K-12 and higher education. She has published in the areas of information and communications technology, mentorship, and professional development in transborder educational settings.

Courtney Peña B.A. received her undergraduate training in Transborder Latina/o and Chicana/o Studies in the School of Transborder Studies. Ms. Peña is now a graduate student in the Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College, ASU, where she is pursuing a Master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction with a focus on English as a Second Language.