The Role of Social Media Identity Disclosures in Facilitating and Disrupting First-Generation, Low-Income Students' Access to College-Related Social Support and Capital

Cassidy Pyle
Ph.D. Student, University of Michigan School of Information
Advisors: Dr. Nicole Ellison, Dr. Nazanin Andalibi
Committee: Dr. Vonnie McLoyd, Dr. Cliff Lampe

Abstract

First-generation, low-income students face myriad barriers to college access and retention that reproduce socioeconomic inequities and that scholars typically attribute to students' lack of social capital. According to prior research, these students turn to social media platforms for the various social capital and social support benefits they can provide. However, while students *can* reap these benefits from social media platforms, it is crucial to learn more about what social media interactions facilitate students' social capital and social support accrual and what kinds of social media interactions may disrupt students' access to these benefits. I conducted in-depth, semi-structured interviews with 20 first-generation, low-income (FGLI) students in the United States who applied for college in the 2020-2021 application cycle. Through my findings, I advance an understanding of the ways identity disclosures can facilitate access to these benefits when met with supportive or neutral responses while stigmatizing reactions to these identity disclosures on social media can disrupt students' access to these benefits. Moreover, I posit that participants perceived algorithms underpinning news feeds and recommendations about who to follow as both facilitators and disruptors of access to social support and navigational capital. I interpret these findings through the lens of the "doubly disadvantaged"/ "privileged poor" framing used to describe first-generation, low-income students in elite universities (Jack, 2019). Using this lens, I ultimately argue that positive reactions to first-generation, low-income identity disclosures on social media can facilitate students' identity transitions from doubly disadvantaged to privileged poor (i.e., a student who is academically and psychosocially prepared for elite collegiate environments). Finally, I discuss these findings in light of their implications for extant theoretical frameworks centering social media and social support.

Introduction

Historically, a complex combination of socioeconomic phenomena and higher education policies and practices have coalesced to discourage first-generation, low-income (henceforth referred to as FGLI) students from accessing and navigating postsecondary institutions. Barriers to college access and persistence represent a glaring equity issue, especially among public universities whose mission is to make knowledge available as a public good (Calhoun, 2011). Moreover, financial and informational barriers to access and retention for FGLI students can lead to the cyclical social reproduction of poverty by ensuring that only students with sufficient familial resources, including money and social capital, have the opportunity to gain an education

that can propel them into high-paying jobs. Moreover, it can lead to an under-trained U.S. workforce unable to compete in an increasingly competitive global economy, as FGLI students make up a significant population of students throughout the country (RTI International).

For FGLI students, social support (both received and provided) is integral to their successful transition to and through college (Gist-Mackey et al., 2018). However, this same student population often experiences challenges accessing relevant college-related support because they typically lack networks, especially family members, that can provide them with such support in this domain. For instance, FGLI students tend to lack the kinds of informational and tangible support that would help them complete college applications (Goldrick-Rab, 2006), while financial troubles and not knowing the "hidden curriculum" of higher education can impede persistence through college (Paulsen & John, 2002; Margolis, 2001). In addition, the institutional agents (e.g., high school teachers and counseling staff) that could provide the forms of support most relevant to these students may not know this support is needed and may assume that certain information is known unless a student specifically states otherwise. However, stigmatization surrounding students' socioeconomic status and their parents' levels of education (Warnock & Hurst, 2016) may stymie their ability to safely disclose their circumstances offline to receive support, leading students to turn to social media interactions to complement or supplement in-person resources.

Empirically, scholars demonstrated links between social media interactions and social support exchange (Andalibi et al., 2017; Andalibi et al., 2018; DeAndrea et al., 2012) and social capital accrual (Utz & Muscanell, 2015; Antheunis et al., 2015). FGLI students have used social media to reap support and capital in the form of information, mentors, and college aspirations, to name a few (Wohn et al., 2013; Jeon et al., 2016; Ware & Ramos, 2013). Notably, studying contexts outside of the educational domain, social media scholars posit that online requests for support are intrinsic to successful development and activation of support and capital. Individuals use mobilization requests to seek relevant, trusted information from online contacts (Morris et al., 2010; Ellison et al., 2013; Ellison et al., 2014). While many of these mobilization requests take the form of explicit questions, others are more implicit requests for emotional support (Ellison et al., 2013; Ellison et al., 2014). Mobilization requests are akin to acts of social-support seeking, which scholars categorize as direct (i.e., explicit requests for support around a stated problem) and indirect (i.e., hinting that a problem exists which requires support without explicitly making that problem known) (Andalibi et al., 2018). Sometimes, people disclose relevant identities and experiences when making support requests online (Andalibi et al., 2016; Andalibi & Forte, 2018). Disclosure, or the relevation of aspects of one's true self to others (Jourard, 1971), can aid support seeking or mobilization requests by providing the context needed for disclosure recipients to provide appropriate forms of support. Taken together, prior work suggests that students may invoke and disclose their FGLI identity when making explicit or tacit support requests in order to maximize the relevance and helpfulness of the support they receive.

To investigate how students disclosed their FGLI identities on social media and how this may play a role in social support exchange, I engaged in 20 in-depth, semi-structured interviews with FGLI students from across the United States who applied to college in the 2020-2021 application cycle. I centered the interview protocol around whether and how students disclosed their FGLI identity on social media platforms to elucidate how such disclosures could serve as a conduit (or possibly a barrier) to relevant forms of college-related social support exchange.

Broadly, I found that many students did disclose their FGLI identity, both to non-networked, unknown, and dissimilar (i.e., not FGLI) others on platforms like Reddit and similar others (i.e., fellow FGLI students) on platforms like Discord. Moreover, their social media audience's responses to these disclosures largely facilitated the kinds of outcomes students perceived. For example, students who received neutral or positive responses often reported exchanging meaningful social support. These exchanges encompassed a range of support types identified in extant social support typologies, including informational, emotional, and esteem support (Cutrona & Suhr, 1992). However, when students experienced negative and/or stigmatizing reactions to their disclosures on social media platforms, they reported adverse psychological effects (e.g., lowered sense of belonging in conversations about college and, by extension, elite postsecondary institutions) and a tendency to abandon these platforms as sources of future support. Furthermore, participants perceived recommendation and content curation algorithms on social media as both facilitators and disruptors of access to college-related social support and navigational capital.

I argue that micro-level social media interactions can facilitate and/or disrupt students' macro-level upwardly mobile social transitions by providing them with the kinds of social support (both informational and emotional) necessary to access and persist in higher education institutions. Anthony Abraham Jack's (2019) book *The Privileged Poor* notes that FGLI students' access to these kinds of support (sometimes framed as capital) can propel them from "doubly disadvantaged" students with little knowledge of collegiate environments to the "privileged poor" who are academically, socially, and psychologically prepared for elite colleges and universities. While Jack (2019) argues that elite preparatory schools serve as conduits for these upwardly mobile transitions, I suggest that identity disclosures on social media can serve a similar role. Thus, higher education scholars, practitioners, and activists must pay attention to the role of students' social media interactions as they continue their work to promote access and equity in postsecondary education for FGLI students.

Moreover, I argue that the move from "doubly disadvantaged" to "privileged poor," as facilitated by micro-level social media interactions, is a critical identity transition for FGLI students that shapes their experiences in postsecondary institutions. Prior social media research has noted the ability of social media platforms to function in tandem as "social transition machinery" (Haimson, 2018), which facilitate identity transitions by affording discrete yet complementary forms of self-presentation in the forms of disclosure and identity work. This study's findings extend that framework by demonstrating that platforms can serve a similar role in facilitating *upwardly mobile* identity transitions (i.e., transitions from doubly disadvantaged to

privileged poor). Moreover, platform-mediated interactions can *stifle* or *disrupt* social identity transitions by exposing its users to negativity and stigmatization.

In sum, I outline the main empirical and theoretical contributions of this work and their importance to educational theorists, social media theorists, and social media designers:

Contributions to Theory
1. Expanding the framework of the privileged poor to include the role that social media identity disclosures play in upwardly mobile transitions
2. Extending the social transition machinery framework to the context of FGLI students and college access and including the phenomenon of social technologies as a social transition disruptor

Contributions to Social Media Platform Designers
1. Recommend designs related to audience curation, content moderation, and content amplification

Literature Review

This interdisciplinary investigation draws from various fields ranging from education to human-computer interaction (HCI) to inquire how FGLI students use social media platforms for identity disclosure and college-related social support during the college application and selection processes.

First-Generation, Low-Income (FGLI) Students

Initially developed by U.S.-based higher education administrators in the late 1970s to determine student eligibility for outreach programs geared toward disadvantaged students, the term "first-generation college student" has skyrocketed in usage in the past few decades (Auclair et al., 2008; Ward et al., 2012). The term provides students, their families, educators, and administrators with a way to represent students' struggles and resilience concerning their postsecondary education. While the precise definition of a first-generation student varies slightly across institutions, a broad conceptualization considers students first-generation if neither parent has completed their bachelor's degree in the United States (Auclair et al., 2008). As of 2016, 56% of college students were first-generation (RTI International). Moreover, about 20% of dependent undergraduate students are low-income, defined as meeting the federal poverty threshold (Fry & Cilluffo, 2019). Growing numbers of FGLI students seeking access to a university education necessitate ongoing research on both successes and barriers they may face in college access and persistence.

Research on this student population has historically focused on disparities between first-generation students and their continuing-generation counterparts in college access and retention (Cataldi et al., 2018). According to the Center for First-Generation Student Success, gaps remain

between first-generation and continuing-generation students in terms of full-time enrollment rates, dropout and persistence rates, and degree attainment rates (RTI International, 2019). Moreover, additional factors like student employment can impact students' focus on their postsecondary education goals.

In addition to difficulties in postsecondary access and retention, this student population also confronts intra- and interpersonal challenges as they face stigma associated with their first-generation and low-income identities. Warnock and Hurst's (2016) ethnographic investigation notes that these students possess an "invisible and stigmatized identity in flux" (p. 268). As their social class identity is often invisible, these students may face stigmatization in the form of alienation as their identity's relative invisibility prevents them from organizing and gaining support around it, in contrast to more visible (though not always visible) identities like race or ethnicity. In addition to these forms of stigma, they may face secondary stigma (Condry, 2007) or stigma by association (Pryor et al., 2012)[1] due to their parents' educational background. FGLI students of color who face classed and racialized microaggressions may experience compounded forms of stigmatization. For instance, Sarcedo et al. (2015) documented microaggressions, including microinvalidations against FGLI students of color that had emotional and academic impacts. They made success in the collegiate context more challenging to envision and sent a message to these students that they do not belong in postsecondary education.

In the face of obstacles to access and accompanying stigma, a growing number of FGLI students navigate and complete the college application and selection processes. FGLI students of color draw from their Community Cultural Wealth (Yosso, 2005) or various forms of capital (e.g., familial, aspirational, navigational) to surmount challenges posed by institutions. Navigational capital, which refers to "skills of maneuvering through social institutions… not created with Communities of Color in mind" is particularly relevant to students' college access and persistence. Moreover, FGLI students may turn to adults from their schools, such as teachers, counselors, and athletic coaches, to support them informationally and emotionally during this transitional period. Unfortunately, this is not a possibility for some students as they navigate underfunded schools where sending students to college is not a priority.

Social media platforms provide opportunities for students to supplement the offline resources they can access or cultivate resources they are unable to access in their offline environments. Prior work has demonstrated the immense potential of social media to help mitigate college access disparities. For instance, social media can serve as a conduit by which first-generation students develop college aspirations (Wohn et al., 2013). Upon aspiring to college, social media can serve as a source of informational support (Jeon et al., 2016) and mentoring (Ware & Ramos, 2013) as they apply to and transition to college. Moreover, social media can serve as a space for identity work fundamental to students' college transitions (Morioka et al., 2016). Even after arriving on campus, FGLI students *can* harness the resources

---

[1] Secondary stigma and stigma by association are similar terms that refer to the negative consequences faced by those associated with a stigmatized individual via meaningful relationships, voluntary associations, or close proximity (Condry, 2007; Pryor et al., 2012).

embedded in social media platforms to better adjust to college (Gray et al., 2013), particularly when they use social media platforms to connect with on-campus friends (Yang, 2020). However, it is less clear what kinds of social media interactions best facilitate or detract from students' ability to cultivate college-related social support and social capital.

The Promises and Perils of Social Media Use & Disclosure for Social Support-Seeking and Social Capital Accrual

An ever-growing constellation of social media platforms promising instant and constant connection to near and distant others has become integral to people's broader information and support ecosystems. Of course, broadcasted and interpersonal communication are by no means new phenomena. However, social media's affordances, or properties that emerge in the interaction between a technology's features and users' perceptions of that technology (Gibson, 1977; Faraj & Azad, 2012; Evans et al., 2017) render content highly visible, navigable, and, for the most part, persistent across time. Moreover, elements of social media platforms like the profile, direct messages, and the news feed lend themselves to divergent uses and ultimate outcomes, both positive and negative, like social capital accrual and (in)authentic self-presentation (Bayer et al., 2020).

On the one hand, social media platforms can create, reinforce, and/or enable harm, including but not limited to online harassment as well as algorithmic amplification and/or symbolic annihilation. A 2021 report from Pew Research shows that 41% of U.S. adults have personally experienced online harassment, and 25% have experienced severe forms of harassment online (Vogels, 2021). While harassment is evidently widespread, it disproportionately impacts individuals from historically marginalized communities, such as women, people of color, and queer individuals (Vickery & Everbach, 2018; Blackwell et al., 2017). Moreover, online harassment uniquely impacts those who embody multiple historically marginalized identities, such as Black women who experience "misogynoir" or "anti-Black racist misogyny…in US visual and digital culture" (Bailey, 2021, p. 1). Additionally, platforms as actors can perpetrate and enable harm. For example, algorithms may amplify content, rendering it hypervisible. Conversely, algorithms may filter away content, perpetuating "normative and stereotypical narratives about phenomena" by erasing nonnormative narratives (Andalibi & Garcia, 2021, p. 4). For FGLI students, it remains unclear how these more negative aspects of social media use may influence social media's ability to facilitate the kinds of capital and support that prepare students academically, socially, and psychologically for elite postsecondary institutions.

On the other hand, social media interactions' reported benefits include social capital accrual, identity work, self-expression, and social support exchange. Social media use, particularly active and directed use, can support the accrual and mobilization of social capital, or "the resources and benefits available to people, communities and/or broader society through people's social interactions" (Antheunis et al., 2015, p. 401). Additionally, social media affords users the ability to create and curate visible profiles wherein they can reveal (and conceal)

various aspects of themselves to others. In doing so, they can experiment and receive feedback on provisional identities (Morioka et al., 2016; Lingel et al., 2014). While much of what people choose to portray about themselves is positive (Reinecke & Trepte, 2014), users can also express more negative or sensitive aspects of themselves and their experiences via disclosure processes (e.g., Andalibi et al., 2018; Andalibi & Forte, 2018). Finally, social media renders disclosures, or revelations of aspects of one's true self to others (Jourard, 1971), visible and at least somewhat persistent over time to audiences of known and potentially unknown ties. Thus, social media platforms afford opportunities to exchange social support, or communication that reduces uncertainty and enhances feelings of personal control over a situation (Albrecht & Adelman, 1987) across space and time. While much of this support is emotional, it can also be informational, networked, esteem-boosting, and tangible (Cutrona & Suhr, 1992).

  While support can be attained more passively on social media (i.e., through lurking to activate passive appraisal support (Selkie et al., 2020), prior work supports the notion that active disclosures can help social media users attain relevant forms of social support and accrue social capital. This finding is especially pertinent when social media users embody one or more marginalized or stigmatized identities, as these individuals may feel safer or freer making disclosures online compared to disclosures to their offline networks. For instance, social media disclosures helped those with stigmatized illnesses (e.g., depression) exchange support (De Choudhury & De, 2014) and those who have undergone stigmatized experiences (e.g., sexual abuse) (Andalibi et al., 2018). Disclosures on social media can impact both users' *perceptions* of social support as well as enacted support, which has positive downstream influences on well-being (Luo & Hancock, 2020). Moreover, self-disclosure is linked to the accrual of both bonding and bridging social capital (Chen & Li, 2017), which also carries implications for well-being. Yet, while disclosures are linked to beneficial forms of social support as well as social capital, privacy concerns may inhibit users' disclosure behaviors (Ellison et al., 2011; Stutzman et al., 2012), compromising their ability to actualize these potential benefits.

  Taken together, prior work suggests that social media can be beneficial, particularly in the context of college access for FGLI students. Work outside of the FGLI and educational context argues that disclosure acts as a key mediator between social media platforms and benefits like social support and social capital accrual, while work that considers FGLI students' social media use has not explicitly considered disclosure decisions and behaviors. Given that many of the reported benefits of social media use hinge upon one's ability to share their identities and experiences, prior work calls into question the social media disclosure decisions and behaviors of FGLI students as they apply to and select a college or university to attend. Moreover, work on negative outcomes of social media use raises questions about how these phenomena -- ranging from online harassment to algorithmic symbolic annihilation -- may play a role in FGLI students' social media experience during this pivotal life stage. Thus, I ask the following research questions:

RQ1: How do FGLI students' identity disclosures on social media facilitate or disrupt their access to college-related social support as they apply to and select a college to attend?
RQ2: How do FGLI students describe ideal social media environments that would effectively support them during the college application and selection processes?

Methods

Methodological Approach

This project investigated the ways students disclosed their FGLI identities on social media during the college application and selection processes to understand how such disclosures could facilitate or disrupt the kinds of college-related social support exchanges that could help students access postsecondary education. I conducted in-depth, semi-structured interviews with twenty students (n = 20) who had completed the college application and selection process in the last academic year (2020-2021 at the time of data collection). I used a qualitative approach to elicit a rich understanding not only of the disclosures themselves, but the contextual factors (e.g., attitudes toward social media, general usage of social media, and motivations behind their usage) in which these disclosures are rooted, which may have implications for the outcomes students perceive as a result of these social media experiences.

Positionality

This research is both theoretically and personally significant. As a FGLI student, I recognize the potential of social media to ameliorate college access gaps and am motivated to pursue this line of research as a result. During my transition to college, I relied heavily on YouTube to understand what it meant to be a college student. However, as a junior scholar of social media, I also understand the potential pitfalls of social media for FGLI students, including but not limited to misinformation, trolling, and algorithmically curated news feeds that may disrupt students' access to social support. These pitfalls can impact broad platform use for this population and their safety and comfort in identity disclosure. Moreover, identity disclosures can be powerful ways to cultivate connections with others and exchange transformational support when done safely. Thus, my intention to investigate the aforementioned research questions stems from my own identity and my goal to contribute to a community that has provided me with strength and support throughout my academic career.

Data Collection

I conducted in-depth, semi-structured interviews with 20 first-generation students, 19 of whom were low-income, who completed the college application and selection processes in the last academic year. I recruited participants via the social media platforms Instagram and Discord to ensure that participants were distributed across the United States. Because of this distribution, findings reflected experiences of first-generation students across the country rather than clustered

into one geographical location. Table 1 includes additional information about participants' socio-demographic information, judgment perceptions, and identity salience, derived from screening survey data. To summarize, participants reflected a variety of racial and ethnic backgrounds, with nearly 50% of participants identifying as Latino/a/x and over 25% identifying as Asian. Approximately half of the participants identified as men, with about half identifying as women. While most participants lived in an urban area, four participants recounted experiences living in rural areas. Generally, most participants felt that their first-generation identities were at least moderately important (95%), disclosed on at least one platform (80%), and perceived judgment of their first-generation identities at least once (80%).

P#	Race/Ethnicity	Gender	Rural/Urban	Low-Income?	Disclosed on at Least One Platform	First-Generation Identity Importance	First-Gen Judgment Perceptions (Y or N)
1	Asian	Man	Urban	Yes	Yes	Very Important	Yes
2	Latino/a/x & Indigenous	Man	Urban	Yes	Yes	Extremely Important	Yes
3	Latino/a/x	Woman	Urban	Yes	Only on certain platforms to certain people	Very Important	Yes
4	White	Trans-Male	Rural	Yes	Yes	Very Important	Yes
5	Latino/a/x & White	Woman	Urban	Yes	Yes	Moderately Important	Yes
6	Latino/a/x	Man	Rural	Yes	Not directly/ for public information	Very Important	Yes
7	Black	Woman	Urban	Yes	No	Extremely Important	No
8	Asian	Man	Urban	Yes	Yes	Very Important	No
9	Latino/a/x	Woman	Urban	Yes	Yes	Extremely Important	No
10	Middle Eastern & White	Man	Urban	Yes	No	Slightly Important	No

11	Latino/a/x	Man	Urban	No	No	Very Important	Yes
12	Asian	Woman	Rural	Yes	Yes	Very Important	Yes
13	Asian	Man	Urban	Yes	Yes	Very Important	Yes
14	Latino/a/x	Woman	Urban	Yes	Yes	Extremely Important	Yes
15	Latino/a/x	Woman	Rural	Yes	Yes	Moderately Important	Yes
16	Asian	Man	Urban	Yes	Situational, depending on the context	Extremely Important	Yes
17	North African	Woman	Urban	Yes	Yes	Very Important	Yes
18	Latino/a/x & White	Woman	Urban	Yes	Yes	Extremely Important	Yes
19	Asian	Woman	Urban	Yes	Yes	Extremely Important	Yes
20	Asian	Man	Urban	Yes	Yes	Extremely Important	Yes

Table 1: Participants' Socio-Demographic Information, Disclosure Behaviors, Identity Salience, and Judgment Perceptions

I chose Instagram as a recruitment site because of its popularity with adolescents (Anderson & Jiang, 2018). While I initially pursued Reddit as an avenue for targeted recruitment of students applying for college, tight moderation efforts prevented recruitment from the r/ApplyingtoCollege community. Instead, I recruited in public Discord servers that were promoted within the relevant subreddit r/ApplyingtoCollege. I invited interested participants to fill out a screening survey which asked about their demographics, their general social media use, whether they disclosed their first-generation identity on social media during the college application and/or selection process, and on what platforms they did or did not disclose this information. In total, I received 104 complete responses to the screening survey. I excluded 42 survey respondents because they were a) under 18, b) not first-generation students, or c) applied to an undergraduate program before 2020, and thus were ineligible to participate in interviews. From there, I engaged in purposive sampling, inviting 32 of the 62 eligible participants to schedule an interview. Purposive sampling, or judgment sampling, "involves selecting a sample of particiapnts who are most likely to address the research question efficiently" (Blandford et al., 2016). Because there are documented differences among first-generation students' experiences

based on factors like race/ethnicity (Sarcedo et al., 2015; Cho et al., 2008), gender (Cho et al., 2008), and whether one is from a rural or urban area (Ardoin, 2017; Duncheon, 2021), I purposively selected 32 participants to invite who varied along these dimensions to ascertain how a variety of FGLI students experienced identity disclosures on social media. I continued to schedule and conduct interviews until I no longer discovered new themes, signaling saturation. In total, 20 invited participants scheduled and completed an interview. Interviews ranged from 45 to 65 minutes (average = 55 minutes) and took place via the online video conferencing platform Zoom between May and June of 2021. All participants were offered $25 USD gift cards as compensation. The Univeristy of Michigan's IRB determined the study exempt.

Data Analysis

Otter.ai automatically transcribed all twenty transcripts, which I later checked manually by listening to the audio recordings of each interview and writing descriptive memos. Next, I coded all twenty transcripts using Atlas.ti, a qualitative data analysis software. First, I engaged in a combination of provisional coding and open coding wherein I analyzed data in a line-by-line fashion, assigning codes based on my knowledge of literature on social media disclosures and social support while remaining open to new themes that may surface inductively (Saldaña 2015). For example, "network-level reciprocal disclosures" and "informational support" were two initial coding categories derived from prior work by Andalibi & Forte (2018) and Cutrona & Suhr (1992), respectively. This process resulted in an initial codebook, which was revised in an iterative process as codes were collapsed, condensed, and specified throughout the first cycle coding process. For example, while I started with broad categories such as "stigma", the process of first cycle coding revealed the need for more granular coding categories, including "stigma: affirmative action" and "stigma: FGLI identity reduced to a 'hook'". Once I finalized the revised codebook, I engaged in second-round coding to apply the revised codebook to the entire corpus of data.

Limitations and Opportunities

This study focuses on U.S.-based students and their experiences with social media disclosures of their FGLI identities as they applied to and selected a college to attend. Moreover, this study was conducted in the midst of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, which has dramatically shifted how education is delivered to students and how students are able to find information about colleges. Thus, the results of this study may not be generalizable across space and time. Future work could explore national and cultural differences in disclosure practices. Additionally, research could explore how these findings and their implications may shift over time and how they may (or may not) be applicable to a post-pandemic world. Finally, most participants in this study reported in the screening survey that their FGLI identities were salient and important, that they had felt judged on the basis of these identities, and that they disclosed these identities on at least one social media platform. Thus, future work may explore how disclosure dynamics and perceived

outcomes may be replicated or challenged in populations for whom the FGLI identities were not as salient and/or perceived as stigmatized.

Findings

Participants varied in their experiences with disclosing the FGLI identity on social media. While many did disclose their identities explicitly, these participants acknowledged anticipated and enacted experiences of stigmatization on social media based on their FGLI identities. Anticipating these reactions, some participants opted for indirect disclosures (Andalibi et al., 2018) made to audiences of similar others. Although participants reported widespread anticipated (Quinn & Chaudoir, 2009) and enacted (Scambler, 2004) stigma in response to their identity disclosures, many participants also described experiences with identity disclosures that facilitated long-term support exchanges, albeit in insular first-generation student online communities. However, stigma sometimes compromised or disrupted this transition by influencing students to abandon platforms as potential sources of support. Meanwhile, recommendation algorithms played dual roles as facilitators of and disruptors to college-related social support exchange. In the following sections, I explain how identity disclosures influenced each element of the social media environment (social support, stigmatization, and algorithms) that served as a facilitator or disruptor of social support exchanges. I conclude with participants' ideal social media spaces for support-seeking as they prepare to navigate elite postsecondary institutions.

Identity Disclosures Facilitated Social Support Exchange & Navigational Capital Accrual

Students' often described disclosures of their FGLI identities on social media platforms in favorable terms. Students perceived that these disclosures helped them receive necessary social support and develop their navigational capital, or ability to manuever through social institutions (Yosso, 2005). Students primarily reported receiving this support and accruing capital in two ways: through interactions with non-similar others (e.g., on Reddit) and interactions in more insular online communities containing others who were similar on the first-generation, low-income identity dimension (e.g., in FGLI Discord servers).

Interactions with non-similar others typically took place on Reddit, usually within one of the myriad subreddits devoted to discussing college applications and results. Several participants described the general demographic composition of these subreddits, noting that FGLI students were not particularly well-represented. For instance, P17 notes:

> So the applying to college Reddit does a census every year where they basically poll all of the members about their experiences, and they get a lot of data from there... race, income. The majority of people on there are extremely rich. And it shows in all of the posts, you know, a lot of people talk about tutoring for the standardized testing or something. I didn't get any tutoring, I had to pirate textbooks to be able to study for the ACT. A lot of people talk about struggling, you know, with having parents who are

overbearing and are really insistent about them getting into top schools to maintain a
social circle, like my parents don't even know the names of the majority of the schools I
applied to. So those experiences are very different from mine. Definitely very rich,
concentrated, generally, and that's proven in the census.

Participants like P17 knew that the network of latent ties (Haythornthwaite, 2005) they could
access on Reddit was unlike themselves socioeconomically, and thus these latent ties could not
necessarily relate to their experiences as FGLI students. This lends support to the notion that
supportive spaces online are not necessarily supportive to everyone or in an equitable way.
While this space was technically supportive for those with college-going aspirations, the
demographics of the community and the kinds of topics they discuss are steeped in experiences
of privilege, rendering this space less supportive for FGLI students. Additionally, the Reddit
r/ApplyingtoCollege community was unlike many FGLI students regarding their racial and
ethnic identities. For instance, P8 noted:

So I've seen a demographic survey of the subreddit I talked about and it tends to skew
towards white, Asian, white and Asian males. And I think their average income, like, the
median income was like $230,000, which is more than 10 times my family income. So,
um, I kind of knew that like, the environment was not going to be like the most inclusive.

While P8 himself identified as Asian, most participants were both Latinx and low-income
students who could not necessarily relate to the lived experiences of their more affluent white
and (east) Asian peers on the popular college subreddit. Moreover, although P8 was an Asian
young man, he could not relate to Asian peers within the subreddit because of their stark
socioeconomic differences. The visibility and relative persistence of demographic surveys
afforded by Reddit as a platform aids FGLI students in understanding the Reddit
r/ApplyingtoCollege community and discerning for themselves whether the space is truly safe
and supportive of FGLI students' experiences.

Several participants described receiving informational and emotional support within these
college-related subreddits despite these demographic differences. P1 described disclosing his
identity on Reddit, saying, "*I was debating whether I should apply to the Questbridge process or*
if I should apply to the regular process. So I posted a Reddit post saying, 'Hey, like, here are my
demographics. I'm first gen, I'm low income. Do you think I should apply to Questbridge?'" In
response to his disclosures, P1 discovered a college preparation program on the platform, noting,
"*Like the MIT MOSTEC program through the MIT Office of Engineering Outreach, I saw on*
Reddit and I applied, I got in, I did that, it was awesome." This program helps underserved
students engage in online courses and research projects and brings students to MIT to ask
questions of admissions counselors and financial aid officers. P1's Reddit interactions,
specifically his identity disclosures, served as a critical bridge between himself and this
opportunity, which could provide him with a sense of what academic life was like at an elite
postsecondary institution and help him accrue relevant navigational capital. Additionally,
participants like P10 and P16 described reaping emotional benefits from Reddit despite not
relating demographically to the community. For instance, P16 remarked:

Reddit's more on finding emotional [support], like a safe space to vent or express myself just in general, even if it's like sharing a funny joke. It's like an inside joke for high school seniors. So just emotional connection I guess.

P16, who disclosed on Reddit to ask fellow Redditors how FGLI student-friendly various colleges were, was able to develop a community that provided him with emotional support and catharsis as he vented about the difficulties of applying to highly selective universities. Thus, the ability to reap informational and emotional support benefits was particularly salient for those able to disclose safely (i.e., disclose without anticipated or enacted stigmatization) their identities on platforms such as Reddit with broader audiences of non-similar others. Unfortunately, as I will note in the next section, this was not always the case.

Most students described sharing their identities within Discord servers built for FGLI students, and typically noted that these were highly supportive spaces. Students described feeling more comfortable sharing about their experiences as FGLI students with similar others because, according to P3:

I think having that baseline, same background, makes it so much easier to talk about it. If I'm so confused about something or I'm not really sure what a certain term means or how to research certain things or how to respond to certain emails for interviews for colleges, things like that. I can definitely ask them and I feel so confident.

While Reddit and Discord both provided some participants with the informational support that they needed to effectively navigate the application processes for elite universities and mentally prepare for what life would be like at institutions with more affluent students and rigorous curriculum, Discord more often provided students with the emotional and even esteem support (or as P3 notes, confidence) that was intrinsic to their persistence and psychological well-being. As P2 notes, participants felt it was *"a little bit easier to be more vulnerable"* among peers whose socio-economic backgrounds were similar to his.

Participants tended to extract informational support from platforms whose audiences consisted of non-similar others and recirculated it within FGLI online communities that were already rich with emotional support. For example, P5 described the Questbridge Discord server, a server for FGLI students, as a space where *"a lot of people use the pins to share information or share scholarships, or other opportunities, like fly-in programs. And that was really helpful. Because my school doesn't provide a lot of those resources"*. Features like pins and bots thus facilitated the recirculation of informational support content from Reddit to Discord, making it easier for the FGLI community to organize and keep track of resources that were most relevant to their community. By recirculating information they learned with fellow FGLI students, participants like P5 could access fly-in programs (i.e., programs hosted by a university that allows students to "fly in" and visit the campus) that give students a sense of what life is like at elite universities and what resources are available to them as FGLI students. Broadly speaking, students reported that these social media interactions, within which identity disclosure played an intrinsic role, helped them accrue the navigational capital necessary to familiarize themselves with elite institutions.

Stigmatizing Responses to Identity Disclosures Disrupted Access to College-Related Social Support

When identity disclosures on social media platforms were received positively (or even neutrally), participants reported being able to cultivate the kinds of support and capital necessary to become familiar with and prepared for elite collegiate environments. However, most participants did describe situations in which their online identity disclosures resulted in what they perceived as stigma. The stigmatization of FGLI identities and experiences can possibly disrupt students' ability to accrue social support and navigational capital, as students may decide to forgo these platforms as sources of support in order to protect themselves psychologically.

Participants described experiences of stigmatization most commonly on the platform Reddit, within college-going subreddits like r/ApplyingtoCollege, r/chanceme, and r/collegeresults. In many cases, FGLI participants' identity disclosures led to conflict and stigmatization, mainly around the time of year in which universities release admissions decisions. Often, participants' reports of stigmatizing responses to identity disclosures harbored anti-affirmative action sentiment. For example, P1 noted that *"sometimes you would just post a college result and they would say, 'You only got in because you're poor. You only got in because you're Hispanic', that kind of thing."* P1 describes his experience disclosing in r/collegeresults, a subreddit that asks students to post their college acceptances and rejections along with relevant statistics and demographic characteristics to give readers a sense of how their applications compare and what kinds of decisions they can expect. The heightened emotional environment after rejections are released makes this subreddit prime territory for the stigmatization of FGLI students like P1, who reported feeling scapegoated for the rejections of more affluent students. P5 described a challenging experience on r/collegeresults where, according to her, *"once I posted on Reddit, I was like, 'Oh hey, I got into this school,' and there is a person that responded to me and they said, 'Congrats on being an underrepresented minority and first gen, because I doubt you would have gotten in otherwise.' And that was very discouraging."* Describing the impact of stigmatizing responses to her identity disclosure in the context of her college acceptances, P5 noted, *"it made me feel like I didn't really deserve my acceptance to that school."* Thus, this participant recalled responses to her identity disclosure on Reddit sowed pernicious seeds of self-doubt that could become dangerous once she sets foot on an unfamiliar, elite university campus.

Experiences of stigmatization on Reddit were not just emotionally frustrating, according to participant reports, but also ostracizing. Participants described writing off Reddit as a source of support entirely in response to experiences with Reddit's "toxicity," a term used by nearly all participants to describe the platform. For example, P5, who had a particularly negative experience with anti-affirmative action rhetoric and stigmatization, noted, *"And when I started to see those posts more and more, I'd stop going on that subreddit, because it just made me very uncomfortable…it just made me want to delete the app and never open it again."* P5, who noted that she received informational support from browsing college-related subreddits earlier in the

interview, reported abandoning the platform as a possible source of support for her transition to an elite institution because of the increasing pervasiveness of FGLI, students of color-directed stigma. P8 described a similar experience, saying, *"The way they treat females and underrepresented minorities was also kind of weird as well. But mostly just microaggressive. So that's why I didn't want to use Reddit like, it's just not the most comfortable space, I'd say."* While not directly reporting on stigma aimed at FGLI students, P8's experience reflects the stigmatization of "others" (non-white or non-East Asian women, people of color, and low-income folks) on the platform and its influence on subsequent college-related support-seeking experiences.

Broadly, experiences of stigmatization on social media platforms in response to identity disclosures compromised students' ability to reap college-related social support on these platforms. Directly, it disrupted their feelings of belongingness within conversations around college that took place online. Indirectly, it influenced participants to abandon platforms like Reddit, where they experienced the most stigma, effectively barring these platforms from serving as sources of support and capital in their subsequent transitions to higher education.

The Dual Role of Algorithmic Perceptions as Facilitators and Disruptors of College-Related Support

While supportive responses to identity disclosures facilitated students' access to social support and navigational capital and stigmatizing responses disrupted access to these resources, perceptions of algorithms could amplify either social support/navigational capital accrual or ostracization.

Several participants noted how their perceptions of recommendation algorithms (i.e., algorithms that suggest who to follow or what content to consume) shaped their experiences receiving support on social media. For example, P5 noted:

> *It's just pretty immediate information spread, I guess, because you'll post about it. And then someone that might be following you for like, something else will be like, "Oh, my gosh, I got into this too". And it'll just like, continue spreading, and then people will see that you're following these people that they know. So they'll try to follow you. And then you'll see information about them that they post. And it just snowballs.*

While some of her ability to reap support resulted from her deliberate disclosures of academic programs and fly-ins she earned acceptance to, this quote speaks to how participants believed that recommendations of whom to follow can have powerful downstream effects by amplifying those the platform deems similar to a given user. In addition to those who follow her seeing her disclosures, P5 noted that the "who to follow" recommendations can play a role in connecting mutual friends and those with similar backgrounds, encouraging exponential growth in exposure to FGLI identity disclosures and relevant college-related information on Instagram. Moreover, P1 noted that "*the more programs [I] participate in like, the [bigger] network I get, the more resources I see on Instagram, and then more Discord servers that I am in where people share*

resources." Algorithms that recommend content and latent ties to users based on what they previously interacted with at least partially drives the "snowball effect" that P1 mentions. While this chain reaction began with P1 adding people from college preparation programs on social media, recommendation algorithms introduced him to more similar others that could augment his first-generation network and lead him to supportive Discord servers.

However, while these stories speak to positive perceptions of recommendation algorithms in shaping support experiences, not all participants experienced benefits when interacting with algorithmically-driven social media. For example, P19 noted how she perceived that content filtering and curation algorithms furthered her ostracization, even within a first-generation social media community. She noted:

> *[The algorithm will] decide which posts are hot, which ones are not. And show the ones that are hot to people. So it's also really discouraging as soon as you make this really thoughtful introduction post, and then Facebook doesn't want to show it to anyone and the two to three posts that Facebook marks hot get all the reaction, they get all the comments. They get to meet the most people. And the rest of us are sitting there like, 'Can someone say hi?'*

While P19's negative perceptions of the content filtering algorithm in Facebook Groups led to seemingly innocuous ostracization, this can negatively affect her ability to cultivate the support and capital necessary to familiarize herself with college life. Without a supportive social media community, P19 can miss out on the forms of support described by more fortunate participants, which they described as integral to their preparation for college.

P4 also described his perceptions of the algorithmically-driven "For You" page of TikTok as it relates to his ability to discover supportive college-related content and accounts, noting:

> *TikTok's also a place where you don't really control it, what you're consuming. I guess you could try to trick the algorithm or whatever. And spend a lot of time on that person's page so you get more similar content on your For You page, but I'm not gonna do that.*

His perceived lack of control over consumption meant that P4 relied on content filtering algorithms to dictate the college-related information he could consume on TikTok, where the "For You" page makes up the majority of users' interactions with the platform. While P4 believed he possessed the agency to "trick" the algorithm to receive more informational support, he was unwilling to engage in the labor necessary to make this happen.

Taken together, participants' perceptions of algorithmically-driven platforms indicate that algorithms on prominent social media platforms serve an important amplifying function. In recommending and filtering content and users, these algorithms, according to participant reports, heighten social media interactions' impacts on FGLI students, for better (i.e., social support and navigational capital accrual) or worse (i.e., isolation).

Participants' Ideal Social Media Environments

RQ2 asked about FGLI participants' ideal social media environments, or environments that would effectively provide them with the social support and navigational capital needed to successfully complete the college application and selection processes. Broadly, participants emphasized a desire for *identity verification mechanisms*, *invite-only spaces*, and *improved content moderation*, highlighting the influence that platforms can have in rendering this vision a reality.

The Desire for Identity Verification

Participants argued that platforms could play a more prominent role in developing identity verification mechanisms to render platforms safe spaces for FGLI identity disclosure. A couple of platforms, like Discord and Facebook Groups, enable identity verification through the admin role, as illustrated by P5 and P7, respectively. For instance, P5 notes that on Discord, *"there's an immediate checking if someone should be there. You know, like, if someone says something racist people instantly ban them from the Discord...So I feel like being on Discord kind of filters out those people, at least a little bit."* Regarding their experience in a college access program Facebook Group, P7 says, *"you have to get invited and then there is a staff member who's the leader of the program, they have to accept you based on the name you put on your application."* Some college-related online communities go a step further, requiring students to *"show some sign of acceptance into the college to actually join whatever it is the platform is"* according to P10. While identity verification can serve as one means to facilitate beneficial disclosures of the FGLI identity on social media platforms (i.e., disclosures that can help students accrue social support and/or navigational capital), it does not come without additional considerations around *who/what* does the verification work (e.g., humans, automated systems) and *how* (e.g., through governmental identification documents, etc.). These considerations shape to what extent identity verifications can be bridges or barriers to effective identity disclosure and social support in this context, a point I will expand on in the discussion section.

The Promises and Pitfalls of Invite-Only Spaces

Similarly, invite-only spaces on social media can abet safe disclosures of the FGLI student identity, enabling supportive network-building and information-seeking during the college application and transition processes. Students described Discord as an example of a platform whose architecture enables this, as the servers they joined included *"only students in our cohort for the summer program that we are part of. So because it was an invite only server it just felt like a really, really, really safe environment"* according to P2. This account sharply contrasted with students' experience with Reddit, where, according to P14, *"you could just Google or like, look for whatever forum you want to go on."* While invite-only spaces can provide a sense of safety and community to enable supportive exchanges, it is essential to note that these students, who by and large were able to cultivate resources on social media to help them get to elite universities, may have a partial view. Students who are not "in the know," not part of college access programs, or who have not been able to cultivate a FGLI network on social

media may not receive invites to these exclusive online spaces. This phenomenon contributes to what P12 calls *"elitism even within the community [which] is a really big problem"* as *"there's a sort of exclusivity, even with first gen low income students, with people who got into [college access program] they kind of became involved in the community. A lot of times students who didn't ended up leaving the community or never joining it."* This elitism and exclusivity can even foster intra-community stigma (Hammack et al., 2021) and conflict (Walker & DeVito, 2020), resulting in psychological harm. Thus, like identity verification mechanisms, invite-only spaces invoke additional considerations around how to balance the need for uninterrupted connection with similar others with the need to make the space accessible for all FGLI students. The discussion section will analyze these considerations in more depth.

> *The Desire for Improved Platform Governance*

Students pointed to various avenues by which companies and communities themselves could improve platform governance. Content moderation proved to be a popular avenue students suggested to curb stigmatization of the FGLI identity and thus render social media platforms more efficacious spaces for support-seeking. P5, for example, explicitly stated: *"I feel like moderation should be improved. And people that have these racist or elitist thoughts should be shamed for thinking that way."* While improved content moderation was a shared goal across participants, how exactly to do so proved more complex. Some students suggested auto-moderation tools, such as P5, who wanted auto-moderation *"because I know one of my friends got called the N word on one of these subreddits. And he was very hurt by it."* At the same time as they advocated for automated moderation, P5 recognized its limitations, noting, "*you also can't ban words like underrepresented minority or low income, first gen, because these are words that people use to have conversations about their challenges."* While moderation "bots" could possibly detect and eliminate blatant discrimination (i.e., slurs) and explicit references to affirmative action, users may invoke proxy terms to discuss affirmative action without detection by automated moderation, necessitating a multi-pronged approach involving human moderation.

Human moderators who are also community members could perform a broader range of actions to render online communities safer spaces for support and information-seeking amongst FGLI students. For instance, they could institute community guidelines, as described by P5, who says, *"I feel like maybe having something in the rules about just being friendly to people if they are from an underprivileged background."* Noting a possible limitation to this platform governance strategy, P7 elaborates:

> *"But other than the guidelines...I don't think people read that. Maybe it's like they could insert a banner when they know that this might be like a hateful community or something like, before you go on the Chance Me reddit, maybe a banner could come up that says, 'Please be aware that some of these things might be hateful' or something. 'So please take caution and be cautious of your mental health and don't take what they say as truth.'"*

Rather than focusing on punitive, top-down, community-specific guidelines, P7 noted that one potential intervention could involve proactively taking advantage of site features like banners to set expectations among members of a given subreddit community. This may be a more realistic intervention as calibrating community members' expectations may be easier than trying to enforce pro-social behavior.

Beyond community-specific human moderation, some participants emphasized the importance of human-driven platform-wide moderation tactics. P12, for example, explained:

> *"I assume it would just take a lot more moderation from Reddit themselves. But I know there's a lot of problems with that. Because you know, you don't want to get into, like, censoring people, so I think it's very tricky, but probably more careful moderation from Reddit, especially in communities where there's a lot of teenagers and people applying to college and children."*

While P12 explicitly notes additional considerations around censorship, she recognized the importance of content moderation, especially when marginalized adolescent populations are involved.

Discussion

In this study, I found that FGLI students' identity disclosures on social media could serve as facilitators and disruptors of college-related social support and navigational capital exchanges. Supportive online conversations around these disclosures and algorithmic amplification of relevant content resulted in students' ability to accrue valuable social support and navigational capital. However, enacted stigmatization (Scambler, 2004) in response to disclosures disrupted access to support on these platforms by making them unsafe and psychologically harmful for FGLI users. Moreover, algorithms amplified the kinds of ostracization that prevented students from accruing capital in college-related social media exchanges.

On a broader level, this work begins to elucidate how micro-level social media interactions, specifically identity disclosures, can facilitate students' upwardly mobile social identity *transitions*. FGLI identities and experiences are complex and heterogeneous, and students can move from one subcategory of FGLI student to the other as they attain support and capital. I argue that social media can animate social identity transitions, specifically the transition from a "doubly disadvantaged" FGLI student unfamiliar with postsecondary institutions to one who is part of the "privileged poor" and is thus more familiar with these collegiate environments.

In this section, I will first argue that findings from this study highlight how social media identity disclosures can facilitate students' movement from being doubly disadvantaged to a member of the privileged poor and discuss implications for educational researchers, practitioners, and activists. Next, I will describe the empirical and theoretical contributions this work makes to the social transition machinery framework posited by Haimson (2018). This framework argues that multiple social media platforms, in tandem, enable disparate forms of social media use that facilitate the kinds of disclosure and support exchange experiences that can

aid successful identity transitions. Finally, I will draw from findings on stigma and participants' ideal supportive social media environments to argue for ways that design and platform governance can better serve the needs of FGLI students.

Social Media, the Doubly Disadvantaged, and the Privileged Poor

Anthony Abraham Jack's (2019) groundbreaking book *The Privileged Poor* received critical acclaim for how it troubled static, homogenous notions of a unified FGLI identity. Extending his work, I argue that scholars, practitioners, and activists working with FGLI populations should also consider how social media interactions, namely identity disclosures, facilitate movement between the FGLI identity subcategories of doubly disadvantaged and privileged poor.

My findings indicate that students utilize social media platforms for college-related social support and that identity disclosures played prominent roles in facilitating access to these forms of support, at least when received positively or neutrally. Identity disclosures could help others provide more tailored informational support, as evidenced by participants who received recommendations for fly-in programs and college access programs as a result of sharing about being FGLI on platforms like Reddit. Moreover, identity disclosures can help form affiliations with individuals who hold the same or a similar identity to the one disclosed, making space for longer-term support exchanges, as evidenced by participants who engaged in-depth with fellow FGLI students in college access-related Discord servers. Taken together, the stories shared by participants indicate that these forms of support, which identity disclosures made on social media rendered possible, helped them feel not only informed about what college life would look like but also psychologically prepared.

In light of these findings, I argue that micro-level social media identity disclosures facilitate more macro-level social identity transitions as students attain forms of esteem and emotional support as well as navigational capital that position them to access and persist in elite higher education environments. This argument has several implications for scholars, practitioners, and activists alike who work with FGLI populations. Notably, this work suggests that scholars should study students' social media interactions and ecosystems to ascertain how these platforms can provide myriad forms of support both from similar and non-similar others who students may not access in their offline networks. Further, scholars can elucidate the strengths these students possess and actively accrue in online environments and understand how social media platforms may replicate or exacerbate some of the struggles FGLI students face offline as they seek support and opportunities for capital-building.

Social Media, Social Transition Machinery, and Upwardly Mobile Social Transitions

Prior work has argued that social media serve as social transition machinery (Haimson, 2018). Social transition machinery "describes the ways that, for people facing life transitions, multiple social media sites remain separate and serve different purposes, yet work together to facilitate life transitions" (Haimson, 2018, p. 3). For FGLI students, the transition from home

communities to elite postsecondary institutions can be difficult. Students' ability to navigate this transition successfully (as a member of the "privileged poor") is key to their persistence in the institution. Findings from this study indicate that social media interactions, specifically identity disclosures, can facilitate this successful transition. Thus, this study extends the social transition machinery framework to a new context of upwardly mobile transitions for FGLI students. Unlike Tumblr and Facebook, which in tandem formed the social transition machinery for the transgender participants in Haimson's work, participants in the present study paired interactions on Reddit and Discord to facilitate upwardly mobile transitions.

Participants' experiences reflected Haimson's theorization of social transition machinery in many ways. For instance, both Reddit and Discord provided participants with unique forms of social support, typically informational support from Reddit and emotional and esteem support from Discord. Additionally, participants were able to present themselves differently between Reddit and Discord. While the trans participants in Haimson's (2018) work turned to Tumblr for identity work and Facebook for broadcasting identity change as an event, participants in this study turned to Discord for more profound and safer identity disclosures and discussions while maintaining Reddit as a source of valuable information around college-going. Yet, for both of these populations, one platform (Tumblr for trans folks and Discord for FGLI students) served as a home base of sorts where participants could present their whole selves to audiences of similar others. The second platform (Facebook for trans folks and Reddit for FGLI students) served as an opportunity to broadcast disclosures to and receive support from a wider audience of non-similar others.

However, in other ways, the social transition machinery framework did not map neatly onto the experiences of FGLI students making upwardly mobile transitions from doubly disadvantaged to privileged poor. For example, rather than relying on one platform for more intense and ongoing mid-transition identity work and the other for broadcasted disclosures of one's identity to broader audiences, FGLI students turned to the same platform (Discord) for both identity work and broadcasted disclosures, while Reddit served as a space where disclosures were leveraged strategically for information-seeking purposes. Yet, despite these differences, social media served as machinery through which participants could enact upwardly mobile social transitions since students developed necessary forms of navigational capital through interactions on these platforms.

Importantly, social media did not only serve as social transition machinery but also as social transition *disruptors*. The stigmatization that many participants reported experiencing in response to their identity disclosures, particularly on the r/ApplyingtoCollege subreddit, stifled their ability to effectively self-present as their whole selves in this space. While they still sometimes disclosed strategically to obtain necessary information, disclosures on Reddit were less comprehensive and students disclosed only the information needed to obtain information. Conversely, when they felt safe to present their whole selves in insular Discord communities their disclosures were more robust and frequent and they were able to receive social support. In light of these findings, stigmatization is emotionally harmful *and* has direct and indirect effects

on students' ability to accrue the kinds of support and capital necessary to become part of the privileged poor. Stigma sowed seeds of self-doubt for participants who questioned their sense of belonging in elite post-secondary institutions, which could impact their familiarity with this "new world" and their ability to persist in it. Moreover, stigmatization indirectly influenced the accrual of navigational capital necessary for students to familiarize themselves with elite institutions because stigmatizing reactions to identity disclosures pushed students away from using specific platforms like Reddit as sites of support and capital.

Taken together, the dual role of social media platforms as both social transition machinery and social transition disruptors aligns with arguments of technology broadly, and social media specifically, as "double-edged swords" (Smith, 2016; Edwards et al., 2020; Saunders, 2016). This work has identified that the context of FGLI students preparing for the transition to college exemplifies the dual benefits and harms that social media use can bring. Importantly, though, it also suggests (in accordance with Haimson (2018)) that positive interactions around identity disclosures on social media tend to serve a social transition machinery function, whereas negative interactions around these disclosures tend to serve a social transition disruptor function. Moreover, algorithms – or perceptions thereof -- are able to amplify the kinds of social media interactions that largely influence whether upwardly mobile student social transitions are facilitated or disrupted. The introduction of the concept of social media as a social transition disruptor calls into question the way platform design and affordances can influence which role a platform plays in an individual's upwardly mobile social transition. Future work should uncover in greater depth how algorithms – both perceptions of them (i.e., anticipated benefits or harms) and experiences with them (i.e., enacted benefits or harm) -- shape the accrual of social support and navigational capital at various points in the college pre-transition and transition phases for FGLI students.

Affirmative Action Stigma & Implications for Platform Governance

For many participants, the difference between social media serving as a facilitator or disruptor of their upwardly mobile transition to the privileged poor lay in the reactions they received to their identity disclosures. Social media tended to facilitate that transition for those who experienced supportive or even neutral but informative reactions. Alternatively, those who experienced stigmatization in response to their identity disclosures had a disruptive experience trying to become part of the privileged poor insofar as they no longer felt comfortable using platforms that could provide them with necessary information. Abandoning platforms like Reddit, where FGLI students described experiencing the most stigmatization, could effectively curb some of the emotional hardships associated with these experiences. However, platform abandonment could also prevent these students from accessing the kinds of support and capital that many participants in previous sections described as valuable outcomes of their experiences on Reddit.

Nearly all experiences of stigmatization that participants reported centered around anti-affirmative action rhetoric. This rhetoric, which has been espoused since the 1960s by organized

labor advocates and those interested in higher education administration and policy, frequently invokes assumptions of "reverse discrimination" and colorblind ideologies (Deslippe, 2012). Politicians, some higher education staff, and community members alike balked at the idea of racial "quotas" for higher education admissions, although these mechanistic quotas were nowhere near widespread and Supreme Court cases like Gratz v. Bollinger (Robinson et al., 2007) jettisoned them entirely. Nevertheless, language that associates marginalized social identities with "quotas" runs amuck on social media, particularly pseudonymous platforms like Reddit, as this study demonstrates. This is problematic because it suggests that students who embody marginalized identities are admitted to universities on the basis of these identities instead of their achievement. By crediting their successes to their identities rather than their determination, these students struggle to feel like they deserve to be on a university campus and that they belong there, as reflected in quotes from P5 about a hostile experience on a college subreddit.

While based on education and labor policy, the circulation of anti-affirmative action rhetoric on social media is important for HCI scholars to consider because it raises important questions about content moderation and online community safety. While other forms of identity-based harassment can be more readily apparent (i.e., when the harasser uses commonly recognized slurs), the circulation of anti-affirmative action rhetoric is more difficult to circumvent. Without key words and phrases to identify, auto-moderation tools may not be well poised to engage in the kinds of content moderation that can create safer communities for FGLI students. However, for human moderation to be effective, moderators must understand the FGLI student experience to know how and why certain discourses are incorrect and offensive. These nuances are typically not understood by commercial content moderators, who often moderate content for "a place and an audience different from the worker himself or herself. For many workers, this typically requires a reliance on presuppositions about an imagined audience, taking on or embodying a set of values, and making judgments that may vary from their own moral codes and personal and cultural values" (Roberts, 2016). If the terrain around affirmative action discourse within the United States is murky, and I argue it is, how can platforms and audiences alike reasonably expect outsourced laborers to parse through comments like "You only got in because you're low-income" and phrases like "quota admit"?

The overwhelming presence of anti-affirmative action rhetoric and stigmatization of FGLI students suggests multiple ways forward for content moderation specifically and platform governance broadly. Generally speaking, content moderation is a double-edged sword. On the one hand, content moderation may ideally help to curb online harassment (Schoenebeck et al., 2021). However, marginalized groups often bear the brunt of content moderation decisions (Haimson et al., 2021). How to balance the need to moderate offensive content with ensuring moderation does not disproportionately silence FGLI students or force them to conform their disclosures and narratives to an arbitrary norm (Feuston et al., 2020) is thus an open area of inquiry.

Some scholars have recommended designing for "multiplicity" or "community-led practices of moderation" that support multiple experiences by accepting heterogeneity within a population and accepting the ways that individuals coexist (or conflict) with one another in online spaces (Feuston et al., 2020). Part of designing for multiplicity in content moderation involves an emphasis away from content *removal* and toward content *warnings*. An emphasis on content warnings as opposed to content removal can also help solve some of the sticky challenges of content removal, including how content should be removed (automatically or through human involvement) and how content removal may encourage localized means by which specific online communities develop the sociotechnical know-how to bypass automated content removals (Gerrard, 2018).

If content removal is necessary, the process should be more visible and transparent for those who face content removals. While some may argue that greater transparency can help those who stigmatize FGLI students online work around the moderation system to enact harm, I argue that it can provide an opportunity for offenders to recognize the harm they have caused and educate themselves accordingly. While not necessarily "designing for contestability" (Mulligan et al., 2019; Vaccaro et al., 2020), this would represent a means by which platforms can design for visibility and transparency in an effort toward restorative justice, or a means by which an aggreived party is directly involved in decisions about what can be done to restore a sense of justice (Okimoto et al., 2009) . That said, what constitutes restorative justice in the domain of content moderation is context- and person-specific (Schoenebeck et al., 2021). Therefore, conversations around moderation within college-related subreddits need to directly involve students who experience harm and can more fully speak to what they think would be restorative. Future work can and should elicit these opinions from FGLI students directly.

The Murky Terrain of Insular Online Spaces

Many participants referenced the comparative safety of insular FGLI Discord servers and expressed preferences for these kinds of insular communities or "invite-only spaces" that require some verification of the FGLI identity. While participants indeed reaped benefits from these insular spaces, relying *only* on such spaces could pose several problems. First, as described in the social transition machinery framework, the pairing of platforms that afford various uses and diverse audience compositions can support, rather than detract from, social transitions (Haimson, 2018). Non-similar others, in my findings, *can* be valuable sources of support and navigational capital (that is when they respond positively or neutrally to FGLI students' identity disclosures). Thus, while I maintain that insular spaces did serve as crucial support spaces for this population, this is *not* to say that designers should *only* focus their efforts on improving insular spaces. As discussed in the previous section, emphasis should also be placed on making spaces with non-similar others safer for all student populations. By doing so, students in need of college-related support can better leverage both connectivity with known ties and connectivity with similar others in spaces that are distinct from their online networks of known ties in ways that respect their autonomy, privacy, and support needs. Prior work (e.g., Andalibi, 2019) also implores

designers to consider ways to at once facilitate both connectivity and separation in the context of social media disclosures. Additionally, focusing only on developing insular communities may foster a sense of exclusivity or elitism within FGLI communities wherein those in these communities (the newly privileged poor) are closed off from those who have not yet accessed these spaces (i.e., the doubly disadvantaged).

Balancing the tradeoffs of support and exclusivity is complex and requires careful consideration. While students pointed to identity verification mechanisms to ensure that their peers in anonymous or pseudonymous Discord servers are, in fact, first-generation and low-income, logistically and morally, this proves quite difficult. Logistically, it is difficult to verify one's first-generation status. First, individuals and institutions have different definitions of "first-generation" (Peralta & Klonowski, 2017). Second, proving a lack of education is more complicated than proving that you possess a degree. Third, there is no enforcement mechanism to ensure honesty. Regarding income, official tax documentation is extremely sensitive private information that students would likely be unable and/or unwilling to provide as verification. Moreover, morally the idea of this kind of identity verification proves dubious. Identity verification mechanisms linked to government documentation, such as "real-name policies" are problematic because of safety and security violations and how they prohibit authentic self-presentation for users whose identities are deemed non-normative (Haimson & Hoffmann, 2016). Finally, proving one's FGLI status by sharing your experiences is also fraught, as this may encourage conformity and homogeneity among first-generation students rather than recognizing the complexity and heterogeneity that characterizes the group. In all likelihood, students will have to rely on self-report rather than formal identity verification to develop supportive insular spaces as key components of their broader social media ecosystems.

Perhaps platforms can provide FGLI students with other forms of control. Within broader social media communities, designers may take advantage of social user experience (UX) principles (e.g., gamification) to promote communal moderation and enforcement of pro-social, equitable norms. For instance, reputation systems could be leveraged to demonstrate how a various community (or community member) contributes (or does not) to equitable and inclusive community conversations. Furthermore, the kinds of distributed crowdsourced moderation discussed in prior work (e.g., Lampe et al., 2014) can potentially overcome the barriers to effective moderation that emerge when commercial content moderators are geographically and culturally displaced from the online communities they moderate. Regardless, the mismatch between what participants desire and what is logically and morally feasible suggests avenues for future work that aims to elucidate what control mechanisms FGLI students need to effectively develop and govern both insular and more broad, open spaces online, as each are integral parts of students' broader social media ecosystems.

Conclusion

In conclusion, FGLI students' identity disclosures on social media platforms could facilitate *and* disrupt their access to college-related social support and navigational capital. While supportive exchanges made in response to identity disclosures could prepare students academically, logistically, and emotionally for what they would experience in elite postsecondary environments, stigmatizing responses to FGLI students' identity disclosures call into question the ways that platforms can (or should) intervene to promote the safety of these marginalized adolescents. Participants also perceived recommendation and content curation algorithms as performing dual roles, sometimes facilitating and at other times disrupting their ability to access social support and navigational capital through social media interactions.Throughout this paper, I have argued that a) social media platforms can facilitate or disrupt students' access to college-related social support, b) that access (or lack thereof) to social support in response to identity disclosures has broader-level implications for upwardly mobile identity transitions, c) that educational researchers and practitioners can and should study micro-level social media interactions to more deeply understand college access and persistence for FGLI students, and d) that social media designers can play a role in promoting supportive interactions on social media that can help students develop the forms of support and capital that may be integral to their access and persistence in postsecondary environments.

References

Albrecht, T. L., & Adelman, M. B. (1987). Communicating social support. Sage Publications, Inc.

Andalibi, N., & Garcia, P. (2021). Sensemaking and coping after pregnancy loss: the seeking and disruption of emotional validation online. Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction, 5(CSCW1), 1-32.

Andalibi, N., Haimson, O. L., De Choudhury, M., & Forte, A. (2016, May). Understanding social media disclosures of sexual abuse through the lenses of support seeking and anonymity. In Proceedings of the 2016 CHI conference on human factors in computing systems (pp. 3906-3918).

Andalibi, N., Haimson, O. L., Choudhury, M. D., & Forte, A. (2018). Social support, reciprocity, and anonymity in responses to sexual abuse disclosures on social media. *ACM Transactions on Computer-Human Interaction (TOCHI)*, *25*(5), 1-35.

Andalibi, N., & Forte, A. (2018, April). Announcing pregnancy loss on Facebook: A decision-making framework for stigmatized disclosures on identified social network sites. In Proceedings of the 2018 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (pp. 1-14).

Andalibi, N., Ozturk, P., & Forte, A. (2017, February). Sensitive Self-disclosures, Responses, and Social Support on Instagram: the case of# depression. In *Proceedings of the 2017 ACM conference on computer supported cooperative work and social computing* (pp. 1485-1500).

Anderson, M., & Jiang, J. (2018). Teens, social media & technology 2018. *Pew Research Center*, *31*(2018), 1673-1689.

Antheunis, M. L., Vanden Abeele, M. M., & Kanters, S. (2015). The impact of Facebook use on micro-level social capital: A synthesis. Societies, 5(2), 399-419.

Ardoin, S. (2017). *College aspirations and access in working-class rural communities: The mixed signals, challenges, and new language first-generation students encounter*. Lexington Books.

Auclair, R., Bélanger, P., Doray, P., Gallien, M., Groleau, A., Mason, L., & Mercier, P. (2008). First-Generation Students: A Promising Concept?.

Bailey, M. (2021). Misogynoir Transformed: Black Women's Digital Resistance (Vol. 18). NYU Press.

Bayer, J. B., Triệu, P., & Ellison, N. B. (2020). Social media elements, ecologies, and effects. Annual review of psychology, 71, 471-497.

Blackwell, L., Dimond, J., Schoenebeck, S., & Lampe, C. (2017). Classification and its consequences for online harassment: Design insights from heartmob. Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction, 1(CSCW), 1-19.

Blandford, A., Furniss, D., & Makri, S. (2016). Qualitative HCI research: Going behind the scenes. *Synthesis lectures on human-centered informatics*, *9*(1), 1-115.

Calhoun, C. (2011). The public mission of the research university.

Cataldi, E. F., Bennett, C. T., & Chen, X. (2018). First-Generation Students: College Access, Persistence, and Postbachelor's Outcomes. Stats in Brief. NCES 2018-421. *National center for education statistics*.

Chen, H. T., & Li, X. (2017). The contribution of mobile social media to social capital and psychological well-being: Examining the role of communicative use, friending and self-disclosure. *Computers in Human Behavior*, *75*, 958-965.

Cho, S. J., Hudley, C., Lee, S., Barry, L., & Kelly, M. (2008). Roles of gender, race, and SES in the college choice process among first-generation and nonfirst-generation students. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education*, *1*(2), 95.

Cutrona, C. E., & Suhr, J. A. (1992). Controllability of stressful events and satisfaction with spouse support behaviors. Communication research, 19(2), 154-174.

DeAndrea, D. C., Ellison, N. B., LaRose, R., Steinfield, C., & Fiore, A. (2012). Serious social media: On the use of social media for improving students' adjustment to college. *The Internet and higher education*, *15*(1), 15-23.

De Choudhury, M., & De, S. (2014, May). Mental health discourse on reddit: Self-disclosure, social support, and anonymity. In *Eighth international AAAI conference on weblogs and social media*.

Deslippe, D. (2012). *Protesting Affirmative Action: The Struggle over Equality after the Civil Rights Revolution*. JHU Press.

Duncheon, J. C. (2021). Making sense of college readiness in a low-performing urban high school: Perspectives of high-achieving first generation youth. *Urban Education*, *56*(8), 1360-1387.

Edwards, L., Philip, F., & Gerrard, Y. (2020). Communicating feminist politics? The double-edged sword of using social media in a feminist organisation. *Feminist Media Studies*, *20*(5), 605-622.

Ellison, N. B., Vitak, J., Steinfield, C., Gray, R., & Lampe, C. (2011). Negotiating privacy concerns and social capital needs in a social media environment. In *Privacy online* (pp. 19-32). Springer, Berlin, Heidelberg.

Ellison, N., Gray, R., Vitak, J., Lampe, C., & Fiore, A. T. (2013, June). Calling all Facebook friends: Exploring requests for help on Facebook. In *Seventh international AAAI conference on Weblogs and social media*.

Ellison, N. B., Gray, R., Lampe, C., & Fiore, A. T. (2014). Social capital and resource requests on Facebook. *New media & society*, *16*(7), 1104-1121.

Evans, S. K., Pearce, K. E., Vitak, J., & Treem, J. W. (2017). Explicating affordances: A conceptual framework for understanding affordances in communication research. Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication, 22(1), 35-52.

Faraj, S., & Azad, B. (2012). The materiality of technology: An affordance perspective. Materiality and organizing: Social interaction in a technological world, 237, 258.

Feuston, J. L., Taylor, A. S., & Piper, A. M. (2020). Conformity of Eating Disorders through Content Moderation. *Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction*, *4*(CSCW1), 1-28.

Fry, R., & Cilluffo, A. (2019). A Rising Share of Undergraduates Are from Poor Families, Especially at Less Selective Colleges. *Pew Research Center*.

Gerrard, Y. (2018). Beyond the hashtag: Circumventing content moderation on social media. *New Media & Society*, *20*(12), 4492-4511.

Gibson, J. J. (1977). The concept of affordances. *Perceiving, acting, and knowing*, *1*.

Gist-Mackey, A. N., Wiley, M. L., & Erba, J. (2018). "You're doing great. Keep doing what you're doing": socially supportive communication during first-generation college students' socialization. *Communication Education*, *67*(1), 52-72.

Goldrick-Rab, S. (2006). Following their every move: An investigation of social-class differences in college pathways. *Sociology of Education*, *79*(1), 67-79.

Gray, R., Vitak, J., Easton, E. W., & Ellison, N. B. (2013). Examining social adjustment to college in the age of social media: Factors influencing successful transitions and persistence. Computers & Education, 67, 193-207.

Haimson, O. (2018). Social media as social transition machinery. *Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction*, *2*(CSCW), 1-21.

Haimson, O. L., Delmonaco, D., Nie, P., & Wegner, A. (2021). Disproportionate Removals and Differing Content Moderation Experiences for Conservative, Transgender, and Black Social Media Users: Marginalization and Moderation Gray Areas. *Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction*, *5*(CSCW2), 1-35.

Haimson, O. L., & Hoffmann, A. L. (2016). Constructing and enforcing" authentic" identity online: Facebook, real names, and non-normative identities. *First Monday*.

Hammack, P. L., Hughes, S. D., Atwood, J. M., Cohen, E. M., & Clark, R. C. (2021). Gender and Sexual Identity in Adolescence: A Mixed-Methods Study of Labeling in Diverse Community Settings. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 07435584211000315.

Haythornthwaite, C. (2005). Social networks and Internet connectivity effects. *Information, Community & Society*, *8*(2), 125-147.

Heckhausen, J. (2021). Invited commentary: Societal constraints and individual agency: Navigating educational transitions for upward mobility.

Jack, A. A. (2019). The privileged poor. Harvard University Press.

Jeon, G. Y., Ellison, N. B., Hogan, B., & Greenhow, C. (2016, February). First-generation students and college: The role of Facebook networks as information sources. In Proceedings of the 19th ACM Conference on Computer-Supported Cooperative Work & Social Computing (pp. 887-899).

Jourard, S. M. (1971). Self-disclosure. An experimental analysis of the transparent self.

Kim, A. S., Choi, S., & Park, S. (2020). Heterogeneity in first-generation college students influencing academic success and adjustment to higher education. The Social Science Journal, 57(3), 288-304.

Lampe, C., Zube, P., Lee, J., Park, C. H., & Johnston, E. (2014). Crowdsourcing civility: A natural experiment examining the effects of distributed moderation in online forums. *Government Information Quarterly*, *31*(2), 317-326.

Lingel, J., Naaman, M., & Boyd, D. M. (2014, February). City, self, network: transnational migrants and online identity work. In Proceedings of the 17th ACM conference on Computer supported cooperative work & social computing (pp. 1502-1510).

Luo, M., & Hancock, J. T. (2020). Self-disclosure and social media: motivations, mechanisms and psychological well-being. *Current Opinion in Psychology*, *31*, 110-115.

Margolis, E. (Ed.). (2001). *The hidden curriculum in higher education*. Psychology Press.

Morioka, T., Ellison, N. B., & Brown, M. (2016, February). Identity work on social media sites: Disadvantaged students' college transition processes. In Proceedings of the 19th ACM conference on computer-supported cooperative work & social computing (pp. 848-859).

Morris, M. R., Teevan, J., & Panovich, K. (2010, May). A comparison of information seeking using search engines and social networks. In *Fourth International AAAI Conference on Weblogs and Social Media*.

Mulligan, D. K., Kluttz, D., & Kohli, N. (2019). Shaping our tools: Contestability as a means to promote responsible algorithmic decision making in the professions. *Available at SSRN 3311894*.

Okimoto, T. G., Wenzel, M., & Feather, N. T. (2009). Beyond retribution: Conceptualizing restorative justice and exploring its determinants. *Social Justice Research*, *22*(1), 156-180.

Patfield, S., Gore, J., & Fray, L. (2020). Degrees of "being first": toward a nuanced understanding of first-generation entrants to higher education. Educational Review, 1-20.

Paulsen, M. B., & John, E. P. S. (2002). Social class and college costs: Examining the financial nexus between college choice and persistence. *The Journal of Higher Education*, *73*(2), 189-236.

Peralta, K. J., & Klonowski, M. (2017). Examining conceptual and operational definitions of" first-generation college student" in research on retention. *Journal of College Student Development*, *58*(4), 630-636.

Pryor, J. B., Reeder, G. D., & Monroe, A. E. (2012). The infection of bad company: Stigma by association. Journal of personality and social psychology, 102(2), 224.

Quinn, D. M., & Chaudoir, S. R. (2009). Living with a concealable stigmatized identity: the impact of anticipated stigma, centrality, salience, and cultural stigma on psychological distress and health. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, *97*(4), 634.

Redford, J., & Mulvaney Hoyer, K. (2017). First generation and continuing-generation college students: A comparison of high school and postsecondary experiences.

Reinecke, L., & Trepte, S. (2014). Authenticity and well-being on social network sites: A two-wave longitudinal study on the effects of online authenticity and the positivity bias in SNS communication. Computers in Human Behavior, 30, 95-102.

Roberts, S. T. (2016). Commercial content moderation: Digital laborers' dirty work.

Robinson, R. K., Franklin, G. M., & Epermanis, K. (2007). The supreme court rulings in grutter v. bollinger and gratz v. bollinger: The brave new world of affirmative action in the 21st century. *Public Personnel Management*, *36*(1), 33-49.

RTI International. (2019). *First-generation College Students: Demographic Characteristics and Postsecondary Enrollment*. Washington, DC: NASPA. Retrieved from **https://firstgen.naspa.org/files/dmfile/FactSheet-01.pdf**

RTI International. (2019). *First Year Experience, Persistence, and Attainment of First-generation College Students*. Washington, DC: NASPA. Retrieved from **https://firstgen.naspa.org/files/dmfile/FactSheet-02.pdf**

Saldaña, J. (2015). The coding manual for qualitative researchers. Sage Publications.

Sarcedo, G. L., Matias, C. E., Montoya, R., & Nishi, N. (2015). Dirty dancing with race and class: Microaggressions toward first-generation and low income college students of color. Journal of Critical Scholarship on Higher Education and Student Affairs, 2(1), 1.

Saunders, K. C. (2016). A double-edged sword: Social media as a tool of online disinhibition regarding American sign language and Deaf cultural experience marginalization, and as a tool of cultural and linguistic exposure. *Social Media+ Society*, *2*(1), 2056305115624529.

Scambler, G. (2004). Re-framing stigma: felt and enacted stigma and challenges to the sociology of chronic and disabling conditions. *Social Theory & Health*, *2*(1), 29-46.

Schoenebeck, S., Haimson, O. L., & Nakamura, L. (2021). Drawing from justice theories to support targets of online harassment. *new media & society*, *23*(5), 1278-1300.

Selkie, E., Adkins, V., Masters, E., Bajpai, A., & Shumer, D. (2020). Transgender adolescents' uses of social media for social support. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, *66*(3), 275-280.

Smith, E. E. (2016). "A real double-edged sword:" Undergraduate perceptions of social media in their learning. *Computers & Education*, *103*, 44-58.

Stutzman, F., Vitak, J., Ellison, N., Gray, R., & Lampe, C. (2012, May). Privacy in interaction: Exploring disclosure and social capital in Facebook. In *Proceedings of the International AAAI Conference on Web and Social Media* (Vol. 6, No. 1).

Utz, S., & Muscanell, N. (2015). Social media and social capital: Introduction to the special issue.

Vaccaro, K., Sandvig, C., & Karahalios, K. (2020). " At the End of the Day Facebook Does What ItWants" How Users Experience Contesting Algorithmic Content Moderation. *Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction*, *4*(CSCW2), 1-22.

Vickery, J. R., & Everbach, T. (Eds.). (2018). Mediating misogyny: Gender, technology, and harassment. Springer.

Vogels, E. A. (2021). The state of online harassment. Pew Research Center, 13.

Walker, A. M., & DeVito, M. A. (2020, April). "'More gay'fits in better": Intracommunity Power Dynamics and Harms in Online LGBTQ+ Spaces. In *Proceedings of the 2020 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems* (pp. 1-15).

Ward, L., Siegel, M. J., & Davenport, Z. (2012). First-generation college students: Understanding and improving the experience from recruitment to commencement. John Wiley & Sons.

Ware, P., & Ramos, J. (2013). First-generation college students: mentoring through social media. International Journal of Mentoring and Coaching in Education.

Warnock, D. M., & Hurst, A. L. (2016). "The poor kids' table": Organizing around an invisible and stigmatized identity in flux. Journal of Diversity in Higher Education, 9(3), 261.

Wohn, D. Y., Ellison, N. B., Khan, M. L., Fewins-Bliss, R., & Gray, R. (2013). The role of social media in shaping first-generation high school students' college aspirations: A social capital lens. Computers & Education, 63, 424-436.

Yang, C. C. (2020). Similar patterns, different implications: first-generation and continuing college students' social media use and its association with college social adjustment. Journal of College Student Retention: research, Theory & Practice, 1521025120902755.

Yosso*, T. J. (2005). Whose culture has capital? A critical race theory discussion of community cultural wealth. Race ethnicity and education, 8(1), 69-91.