Perceived Barriers and Supportive Factors Influencing Hispanic/Latino Students at Texas State University

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Introduction/Literature Review

○ Hispanics/Latinos only account for 8.1% of the graduation class population with a Bachelor's degree in the U.S. (U.S. Census, 2009

○ Only a 2% increase since 2000

Introduction/Literature Review

- Hispanic/Latino students are typically the first in their family to attend college

- These students also don't feel the need to have a close kinship support (Fiebig, 2010)

Introduction/Literature Review

○ As compared to whites, Hispanic/Latino students are less likely to take college prep curriculum in high school

○ Also, less likely to take advantage of financial aid opportunities (Zarate & Burciaga, 2010)

Introduction/Literature Review

○ Overall, first generation Hispanic/Latino college students may be characterized as underprepared for college

○ Research points to low performance on placement tests (Boden, 2011)

Introduction/Literature Review

- Vega and Martinez (2012) suggest that Hispanic/Latino students who enter Texas public universities should consider the following factors that will impact their overall university experience and probability for success:

  - Graduation rates

  - Instructional costs

  - Affordability

  - Diversity

  - Access-factors

Introduction/Literature Review

○ Although families of race and ethnic backgrounds struggle to finance their education, Hispanics/Latinos are the fastest growing group in the U.S. making it imperative to increase their educational attainment (Diaz-Strong et al., 2011)

Theoretical Framework

○ Herzberg's theory of motivators and hygiene factors (1959)

○ Maslow's hierarchy of needs (1954)

Purpose

- Understanding the factors that influence Hispanic/Latino students is important for furthering their education into a brighter tomorrow.

- Identifying barriers that prevent education of these students

- Identifying supportive factors that aid these students in achieving an education

Research Question 1

○ What are the self-perceived barriers preventing Hispanic/Latino students from attaining a higher education?

Research Question 2

○ What are the self-perceived barriers preventing Hispanic/Latino students from attaining a higher education at Texas State University?

Research Question 3

○ What factors aid Hispanic/Latino students in the pursuit of higher education?

Research Question 4

○ What factors motivate Hispanic/Latino students in the pursuit of higher education?

Methods

○ A non-experimental, mixed method survey instrument was developed following a review of literature

○ 5 sections:

○ Factors supporting higher education

○ Factors preventing higher education

○ Factors preventing higher education at Texas State University

○ Motivational factors of students seeking higher education

○ Demographics

Methods

○ A panel of experts ($n = 5$) was utilized to review the survey instrument for face and content validity

○ After the review, the researchers utilized suggestions to improve the instrument

Methods

○ A pilot test ($n = 15$) was conducted to assess the reliability of the survey instrument

○ Concluding a pilot test, results were analyzed using Cronbach's alpha coefficient to estimate reliability

Methods

- Results of the reliability analysis indicated that each Likert – type scaled questions were reliable:
  - Factors supporting higher education=.88
  - Factors preventing higher education=.72
  - Barriers at Texas State University=.81
  - Motivation factors of students=.94

Methods

○ A simple-random sample ($n = 372$) of the overall Hispanic/Latino student population ($N = 9{,}000$) at Texas State University (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970)

○ Dillman's Tailored Design Method was utilized for data collection (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2014)

○ Spring and Summer 2013

Methods

○ 31.72% ($n = 118$) response rate after 5 contacts

○ Used *Method 3* (Lindner, Murphy, & Briers, 2001) to handle non-response error

○ No threats to external validity existed

Data Analysis

o For all research questions, measures of central tendency were used when appropriate

o Utilized IBM SPSS 21.0 for all statistical analysis

Research Question One

Table 1
Self-perceived barriers preventing Hispanic/Latino students from attaining a higher education

Factor	*M*	Median	Mode	*SD*
Top 3				
Personal Financial Issues	2.62	3.00	1	1.52
Family Financial Issues	2.45	2.00	1	1.51
Current Geographic Location to the University	1.42	1.00	1	0.86
Bottom 3				
Aunts	1.05	1.00	1	0.23
Uncles	1.04	1.00	1	0.21
Spouse	1.01	1.00	1	0.09

Note: 1 = No Influence, 2 = Little Influence, 3 = Some Influence, 4 = Moderate Influence, 5 = Substantial Influence

Research Question Two

Table 2
Self-perceived barriers preventing Hispanic/Latino students from attaining a higher education at Texas State University

Factor	*M*	Median	Mode	*SD*
Top 3				
Personal Financial Constraints	2.95	3.00	3	1.29
Family Financial Constraints	2.84	3.00	1	1.39
Availability of Financial Aid	2.77	3.00	2	1.34
Bottom 3				
Location of Buildings on Campus	1.61	1.00	1	0.94
Campus Size	1.58	1.00	1	0.94
Child Care	1.12	1.00	1	0.45

Note: 1 = No Influence, 2 = Little Influence, 3 = Some Influence, 4 = Moderate Influence, 5 = Substantial Influence

Research Question Three

Table 3
Self-perceived influential factors aiding Hispanic/Latino students in their pursuit of higher education

Factor	*M*	Median	Mode	*SD*
Top 3				
Parents	4.49	5.00	5	0.98
Siblings	3.73	4.00	5	1.37
College Professors	3.49	4.00	5	1.52
Bottom 3				
Community Leaders	2.29	2.00	1	1.34
Children	1.42	1.00	1	1.16
Spouse	1.29	1.00	1	0.97

Note: 1 = No Influence, 2 = Little Influence, 3 = Some Influence, 4 = Moderate Influence, 5 = Substantial Influence

Research Question Four

Table 4
Self-perceived motivational factors influencing Hispanic/Latino students in the pursuit of higher education

Factor	*M*	Median	Mode	*SD*
Top 3				
Parents	4.51	5.00	5	0.94
Siblings	3.85	4.00	5	1.33
Friends	3.68	4.00	4	1.05
Bottom 3				
Community College Counselors	1.75	1.00	1	1.26
Clergy	1.70	1.00	1	1.18
Children	1.58	1.00	1	1.30

Note: 1 = No Influence, 2 = Little Influence, 3 = Some Influence, 4 = Moderate Influence, 5 = Substantial Influence

Conclusions

- RQ 1
  - Financial issues (personal and family) were the most significant factor
  - Barriers of extended family support were the least significant factor
- RQ 2
  - Financial constraints (personal and family) were the most significant factors
  - Location on campus, campus size, and childcare were the least significant factors

Conclusions

- RQ 3
  - Parents, Siblings, and College Professors were the most influential factors
  - Spouses were the least influential factors (most students unmarried)
- RQ 4
  - Parents, Siblings, and Friends were the most significant motivational factors
  - Community College Professors, Clergy, and Children were the least significant motivational factors

Implications

- Financial constraints were the most significant barriers to higher education for Hispanic/Latino students

- Immediate family (parents & siblings) were the most influential factors in students pursuing higher education

- Additionally, immediate family motivated students the most

Implications

- Students having access to financial support seems to break down barriers to higher education

- Immediate family motivates and influences students to pursue higher education

Recommendations

○ Universities and government programs should consider bridging the gap between financial resources and higher education to impacted students

○ Universities should consider any barriers that exist on the campus level that impact students pursuit of higher education and seek to improve these barriers