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Retention of Chicano Students in College

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Abstract

This study will be reviewing the reasons why Chicano/a students have a high entry rate in post high school education and why graduation rates are so low. The following factors will be considered gender, culture, financial support, emotional support, network building and self-image of Chicano/a students. From 1996 to 2012 colleges have had the number of Hispanic students increase on average 240% (Fry, 2008). This paper will discuss research done by researchers who are experts in their fields and have been peer reviewed for validity. The parameters used by researchers were students had to finished high school and attended post high school education. Research proves that Chicano students are more likely not to graduate from college than their European counterparts. These studies also prove that male Chicano students are less likely to graduate from post-secondary institutions than female students. The findings from this study can help Universities and organizations increase the number of Chicano/a students that attend school and finish with a degree.

Key words: Chicano, Retention, College, Dropout, Graduate

Retention of Chicano Students in Post Highschool Education

Chicano Americans have become the biggest minority group in the United States. There is currently almost 57 million Chicanx people living in the United States as of 2015 (Fry 2002). According to the United States Census Chicanos currently makes up about 18 percent of the total United States population and the percentage continues to grow. The dramatic rise in population also means that the newer generations are seeking to obtain an education and become productive members of society. Currently 11.4 million Chicano American students attend some post high school education making Chicano one of the highest minority group to go to college seconded by Asians. However Chicano Americans are less likely to graduate than any social group. This paper will review studies done to find the reasoning why the number of post high school education attained by Chicanos is so low. The research done may be able to help colleges fix and improve their institutions to increase the number of Chicano graduates.

Chicano background can help explain why Chicano students are not graduating college in the high numbers they enter post-secondary education. A psychological report done by Carlos H. Arce “A Reconsideration of Chicano Culture and Identity” (2018 pg.180) tells us how assimilation is affecting the newer Chicano American generation. Carlos findings tell us that assimilation begins when a group begins to understand the newer culture principles and begin to adapt to them. However, this is more difficult for those who are in the lower income area of the United States. Chicanos tend to hold on to their culture because of their beliefs and discrimination in society.

Chicano culture tends to hold onto traditional methods only changing when necessary. The Chicano culture also holds high respect for previous generation creating strong family ties. The younger generation usually will not question what they are told. This is one reason why it is difficult for Chicano students to succeed. The students spend most of their lives in low income and told they will not succeed. This makes it harder for the newer generations to become educated and seen different in society.

In 2002 Richard Fry wrote a research document titled “Latinos in Higher Education: Many Enroll, Too Few Graduate.”. Richard Fry is an Economist studying the issues of college enrollment trends in society. Fry wrote this document to describe the growing issue of Chicano ethnic students enrolling in college and not completing their studies. During his research Richard Fry was able to determine that Latinos who go to college have a 75 percent chance of working during their school education. Fry research shows among low skilled Latino immigrants, household incomes are often built to acceptable levels by combining the earnings of several workers who each might be taking home poverty-level wages. This makes it difficult for the newer generation to go to college because families can barely afford living cost here in the United States. Fry’s research shows that 16-19 year old are no longer following the previous generation career paths taken by their parents. Chicanos are beginning to seek education and make better lives for themselves and their families. There are currently 11.4 million Chicano students in post high school education (Fry, 2018). Research shows among 2-year college undergraduate student’s 44 percent is going to be of Latin origin while 30 percent come from white or black ethnic groups (Fry, 2018).

Maria Estela Zarate and Rebeca Burciaga wrote “Latinos and College Access: Trends and Future Directions” (Zarate, 2008) to acknowledge the demographic shift is associated with a

widening gap in college enrollment between Latino and white students. Their research also shows that the strong work ethic in Latinos do not hinder them attending college part time. This however sometimes does explain why some don't go into full time education. Research shows that on average income is one the biggest reason for Latinos not attending College. A financial aid report released in 2005 called "How Latinos Students Pay for College" believes it would be best to show student in high school how to pay for college (Zarate, 2008). It would be beneficial not just to Latino students but to all students is when in high school they would implement a plan on how to pay for college. The government report released in 2005 "How Latinos Students Pay for College" is about how financial aid is distributed to students. The report shows that on average 73 percent of Latino students apply for loans or government aid to pay for their post high school education. On average since 1995 Latino students also receive the least amount of aid than any other ethnic group. Since 1995 the amount of aid given to Latino students has not changed averaging about 6,250 dollars. While Asians receive the highest amount averaging about 7,620 dollars. The report shows that every year the number of Latinos applying for financial aid is increasing. Since 1995 the amount of money they receive on average is not increasing. The Report data shows that 49 percent of the applicants were first generation students and more than half of them had to work part time to pay for their education (Zarate, 2008). The fact that most Chicanos must work to pay for their education is one of the reasons that hinder them from finishing their college education. This is because Chicanos are working and begin to lose interest in school. Most of their paychecks are already going to school and Chicano students begin to believe no one truly is interested in them finishing their education This decreases student moral and makes it harder for them to finish school.

The research done shows that many Chicano students attend a more affordable two-year community college in the attempt to transfer. Unfortunately, on average many students who attend a two-year college instead of a four year have a higher chance of not finishing their education. The rates in graduates increase in four-year universities averaging about 6 out of 10 Chicano students finishing with a Bachelor degree (Zarate, 2008). In 2009 Leticia Oseguera, Angela M. Locks, and Irene I. Vega wrote a report on the research done by the National Center of Education. Statistics showed in 2003 an average of only 46 percent of Latinas graduated with a bachelor's degree. In total only about 10 percent of Chicano Americans in 2003 graduated from a four-year university. This research also corresponds with the findings of Richard Fry (2002). Who has seen a correlative pattern in Chicano entering College in high numbers but not as many of them are graduating. Some of the main issue Chicano student face are the ability to pay for their education and giving assistance to those still at home. On average school is seen as an unnecessary expense in Chicano homes because most families consider that the newer generation are a possible source of income. This unfortunately makes it, so the next generation doesn't advance themselves in the community and the problems don't end. The best way to begin improving this is convincing Chicano families that this is something that can help them in the future. The next thing we need to do is set up new methods of financial distribution among all students who apply for government aid. The amount received from each ethnicity should be the same or more depending on the background that they come from. The younger generation also must look after those at home that also hinders their education. Most Chicano families work in labor type industries which makes it difficult for them as they age. The younger generation is looked in the hopes to either cook, clean, and work in these jobs to lighten the stress at home.

Social views of the Chicano American will change if we increase the number of educated citizens. A social report done by Sylvia Hurtado and Deborah Faye Carter called “Effects of College Transition and Perceptions of the Campus Racial Climate on Latino College Students' Sense of Belonging” tells us how a rapidly growing educated workforce will improve the United States. Latinos in the United States are normally seen as an uneducated, cheap labor force that is here to take paying jobs from Americans. However, the United States got a new work force with high moral and magnificent work ethic. The report shows the transitional period will be very slow Chicano Americans will begin in beginner educational type of jobs. Slowly changing the views of the public and accepting them in modern day society. There will be some resistance to this because older generations will hold on to their ideas and it will become difficult to change their views. Chicano Americans will with time create a rapidly growing educated workforce becoming very important to society.

The Chicano culture in the United States normally receives a negative social view from the public. Society tends to like to blame a culture for all the issues they are facing. Currently the Chicano culture is blamed for issues with employment, social benefits and taxes to protect borders. This has made it more difficult for society to realize the issues Chicanos have to face trying to get an education and become a benefit to society. The Chicano culture has been forced to struggle for longer than most cultures. The United States has a habit of requiring aid from Mexico in its time of need but does not want to give aid to those who helped. Families left their homes in Mexico and migrated here to the north, so they have nothing to return to in Mexico. The newer generation have even less to fall back on they have not received the education of their native country, so they cannot go back to it. Chicanos have migrated to the United States and now a growing population and necessary to the growing work force. This newer generation of

Chicanx have received the same education as their Anglo student counterparts so they should also be entitled to the same values and financial benefits. The Chicano student should not be held to a lower standard because of their ethnicity. The average Chicano student is given the same education but is also given less financial aid, higher attendance cost, and negative social view on their education. The older generation is also needing to adapt to the new principles they hold on to their old beliefs. Men are not supposed to leave school and go to work at an early age and Women are not suppose stay at home. For change to happen both the education system and the family ideals need to also change to increase the number of Chicano student who graduate from college.

The Chicano culture has never enforced the idea of education on its people until now. The common Chicano family dream is for the males to go to work at an early age and provide for the family at home. The females are supposed to learn to cook, clean and stay at home taking care of the children. Time has passed and there is new idea is for the newer generation to go to college and become more educated breaking the stereotypical idea of the Chicano workforce. There are currently 11.4 million Chicano students enrolled in post high school education. This is going to a new workforce to introduce to the United States allowing more educated minds to help us grow as a society. The research done by these individuals can help us reform our education system and allow new ways to improve our old habits.

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