Transitions into College: What leads students into Hispanic-Serving Institutions?

A Multilevel Analysis of High School Students’ Enrollment in Hispanic-Serving Institutions

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College choice of 4-year HSIs

- Focus on Hispanic students
- Even highly qualified Hispanic students may choose 4-year HSIs over elites
- Close to home
- Cost
- Racial climate
- Potential to get a good job
Research Question

What are the student- and high school-level characteristics that affect whether or not high school students enroll in a 2-year or 4-year HSI?
Theoretical framework

- Multiple capitals
  - Financial, academic, cultural, social
- Habitus - Reasons for choosing college
- Channeling - High school factors
Data Source

- Educational Longitudinal Study 2002/2006 (ELS) - National Center for Education Statistics
- Sophomores, Seniors, College enrollment
- Demographic background, college preparation, school environment
- 4-year model sample: 4400 students from 570 high schools
Analysis

- Complex clustered sample
- Students nested in schools
- Two-level Hierarchical Linear Modeling (HLM)
- Odds of enrolling in 4-year HSI vs. 4-year non-HSI
Student predictors - 4-year HSIs

(+) Hispanic
(+) Living close to home important
(-) First-generation immigrant
(-) Standardized math score
(ns) Female
(ns) Native English speaker
(ns) Second-generation immigrant
(ns) Socioeconomic status (SES)
(ns) # colleges applied to
School predictors - 4-year HSIs

(+) West
(+) School size
(+) % Hispanic teachers
(+) % Minority students Public (-)
(-) Suburban
(-) Midwest
(ns) Student-teacher ratio
(ns) Free and reduced price lunch
(ns) % Graduates who went to 2-year
(ns) % Graduates who went to 4-year
Limitations and possibilities

- Non-traditionally aged students
- Comparison group for HSIs
- Conceptual framework constructs
- Geography and policy - local, state, region
Implications for research

- Less access to capitals
- Habitus oriented toward being near home
  - Family, cost, community
- Lower math scores - remediation
- High school - cultural and social capital
  - Enrollment size, “college culture”
  - Teachers, peers
Implications for policy

- High school context matters
- Recruiting high school students
- P-20 collaboration
- HSIs and STEM graduation