



Association of Mexican American Educators Journal

A peer-reviewed, open access journal

Volume 14 Issue 3

2020

AMAE Special Issue

Latinx Students at Minority-Serving Institutions

Guest Editors

Taryn Ozuna Allen
Texas Christian University

Charles Lu
University of California, San Diego

Emily Calderón Galdeano
Elevate Consulting Group

Editors

Patricia Sánchez
The University of Texas at San Antonio

Antonio J. Camacho
AMAE, Inc.

Associate Editors

Julie L. Figueroa
Sacramento State

Lucila D. Ek
The University of Texas at San Antonio

Managing Editor

Christian Fallas-Escobar
The University of Texas at San Antonio

<http://amaejournal.utsa.edu>

ISSN: 2377-9187

Entrando en el juego: The Role of Hispanic-Serving Institutions in Fostering Educational and Athletic Outcomes for Latinx Athletes

Nikola Grafnetterova

Jocelyn A. Gutierrez

Rosa M. Banda

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi

Abstract

Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) enroll the majority of Latinx undergraduate students and constitute the second-largest institutional type in the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division I (DI). Yet, little is known about the role intercollegiate athletics play in fostering educational outcomes for Latinx students at HSIs. Under the guise of Latinx critical race theory, this qualitative study examined how HSIs operate both the federal designation and NCAA DI membership in relation to athletic participation and completion outcomes for Latinx student-athletes. Document analysis was utilized to disaggregate data from various reports to identify the HSI-DI institutions and their Latinx athletes' participation, and graduation rates. These findings were then compared to the overall NCAA DI averages. Among the findings, Latinx student-athletes graduated at higher rates than non-athletes from the HSI-DIs. However, as an aggregate, these institutions had below average graduation rates of Latinx students and student-athletes in comparison to the national rates across NCAA DI membership. Furthermore, HSI-DIs provided limited athletic participation opportunities for Latinx athletes. The study concluded with the implications of findings and recommendations for future studies.

Keywords: Latinx Athletes, College Athletics, Hispanic-Serving Institutions

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.24974/amae.14.3.400>

A Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) is a federal designation for higher education institutions (HEIs) that enroll a minimum of 25% of full-time equivalent (FTE) undergraduate students who identify as Latinx (Mendez et al., 2015) and have at least 50% FTE undergraduate students considered as needs-based (Corral et al., 2015). HSIs comprise over 15% of non-profit HEIs but enroll 66% of all undergraduate Latinx students (Hispanic Association of Colleges & Universities, 2019). As such, HSIs play a critical role in providing access to educational opportunities for Latinxs. Given the rising demography of Latinxs, HSI continue to increase numerically; as of 2017-2018, 523 HSIs were established (Excelencia in Education, 2019). Additionally, there are 328 Emerging HSIs (eHSIs), which have Latinx undergraduate FTE of at least 15% but less than 25% (Excelencia in Education, 2019). HSIs constitute the second-largest institutional type in the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), which is the largest and most well-known association governing college sports at 4-year HEIs. NCAA divides its members into three divisions (D1, D2, and D3); D1 members comprise the most well-funded and competitive level (Sweitzer, 2009).

In 2018, 8% of all NCAA D1, 13% of D2, and 5% of D3 members were HSIs (NCAA, 2018a). Limited research has examined the role of athletics at HSIs in providing educational and athletic outcomes for Latinxs who constitute a small proportion of the NCAA's participants. Specifically, in 2018-2019, only 6.1% of all male and 5.8% of all female NCAA student-athletes were Latinxs (Lapchick, 2020). Slight differences exist across divisions: 5.1% male and 5.4% female (D1), 7.3% both male and female (D2), and 6.2% male and 5.5% female (D3). Minimal research exists that explores the reasons for the low representation of Latinxs in the NCAA. Accordingly, some scholars use the term "los olvidados," the forgotten ones, when describing Latinx athletes (Osanloo et al., 2018), and their disparity in college athletic participation rates.

As HSIs continue to rise in the proportion of HEIs, Osanloo et al. (2018) posit that the existing NCAA demographic student-athlete data is disaggregated by institutional type to evaluate what role HSIs play in providing opportunities for Latinxs to participate in athletics and experience successful outcomes. As such, the purpose of this study was to examine how HSIs operate both the federal designation and NCAA D1 membership in relation to athletic participation and completion outcomes for Latinx student-athletes. The primary research question asked was: What role, if any, do HSI-D1s have in fostering educational and athletic outcomes for Latinx athletes?

Literature Review

The demographics of the U.S. population has shifted, and Latinxs have become the second-largest racial/ethnic group living in the U.S. (National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 2017). Today, they comprise 17% of the overall undergraduate student body (NCES, 2016). As a result of these demographic shifts, HSI have emerged on the landscape of higher education.

Hispanic-Serving Institutions

As part of the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act, Title III, HSIs were established to improve post-secondary education for Latinxs (Garcia; 2019; Hirt; 2006; Mendez et al., 2015). HSIs were also created (1) through legislative efforts on behalf of educational leaders who recognized that the growing numbers of Latinxs in higher education need equitable federal funding; (2) educational support programs for significant growth of Latinx enrollment; and most significantly, (3) that institutional cultures intentionally organized to serve Latinx students (Mendez et al., 2015; Santiago & Andrade, 2010). Consequently, even at HSIs, the deficit framing of Latinx students has created many obstacles for them in higher education. Research (Mendez et al., 2015) posits that Latinxs enrolled at HSIs are often viewed as deficit because they are often first-generation college students that are perceived as maladjusted due to living in poverty and attending poorly resourced schools. Still, the broad access to postsecondary education that HSIs provide are essential for Latinxs to succeed in higher education (Hurtado & Ruiz, 2012; Nuñez et al., 2013), but even more so when HSIs operationalize an NCAA membership.

The Role of HSIs

The role of HSIs was constructed with the intent of improving post-secondary education for Latinxs (Nuñez et al., 2013; Santiago & Andrade, 2010); as a result, the HSI designation does not correlate to a particular institutional structure (Garcia, 2019; Hirt, 2006) but rather is identifiable by the students they serve (Hirt, 2006). Therefore, HSIs enact institutional structures within the environments of the institutional host (Gutierrez, 2020). Additionally, HSIs are primarily in select states and cluster regions across the U.S. (Hirt, 2006), which has resulted in a conglomeration of institutional types and identities for HSIs (Hirt, 2006; Renn & Patton, 2017). The structural uncertainty for HEIs in operationalizing the HSI

designation continues to remain contentious (Greene & Oesterreich, 2012), as institutions are not distinguishable between HEIs who seek to serve Latinxs from those who receive the designation based on demographic growth (Contreras & Contreras, 2015; Garcia, 2019).

Latinx Student Experience

Between 2000 and 2015, the Latinx undergraduate enrollment “more than doubled” to 37% from 1.4 million to 3.0 million (NCES, 2017, p. 116). Latinx students continue to increase in enrollment in higher education by 15% above all other ethnic categories and in 2017-2018, 523 HSIs enrolled 66% of all Latinx undergraduates (Excelencia in Education, 2019). By enrolling more than half of all Latinxs, HSIs play a critical role in their development (Laden, 2001). Latinxs have made substantial progress in closing the gaps of their White counterparts. However, enrollment is not the same as completion, as persistence is a significant factor to completion for Latinx which includes familiarity of culture, social context, and faculty make-up (Ponjuan, 2013; Suro & Fry, 2005). Researchers have posited (Rendón et al., 2015) that underserved student populations’ experiences differ in higher education from “conferred dominate” groupings (Johnson, 2018) in relation to sense of belonging, when students are left to themselves to self-author and self-navigate higher learning experiences.

Latinx Student-Athletes

Latinxs have risen in proportion of undergraduate students but are underrepresented within NCAA DI (Lapchick, 2020). Studies on Latinx athletes remain minimal and primarily focus on their college choice (Martinez, 2018), athletic recruitment (Darvin et al., 2017), and undergraduate athletic and academic experiences (Grafnetterova, 2019; Ortega 2019, Ramos, 2018). Additionally, information continues to be limited in NCAA reports, with lack of detailed information about Latinxs, and HSI-D I members. For example, the NCAA (2018a) database divides members into Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), and non-HBCUs. Therefore, as Latinxs and HSIs continue to increase in higher education and athletics, it is imperative that they become part of the larger narrative, as it pertains to equitable participation opportunities within the NCAA.

Theoretical Framework

This study employed Latinx critical race theory (LatCrit) (Solórzano, & Delgado Bernal, 2001), which acknowledges the intersectionality of racism, sexism, classism, and other forms of systemic oppression relating to Latinx populations. LatCrit consists of five primary themes: (1) race, racism and the intersectionality within other forms of subordination, (2) the role and domination of White ideology, (3) the commitment to social justice, (4) experiential knowledge, and (5) an interdisciplinary perspective central to Latinx populations (Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001). Guided by LatCrit (Solórzano, & Delgado Bernal, 2001), this study examined how HEIs operationalize the HSI designation and NCAA membership, as it related to Latinx athletic participation and completion rates for Latinx student-athletes. Throughout this study, LatCrit emphasized that Latinxs' athletic participation and college degree attainment is not just a matter of individual motivation and effort (Núñez, 2014); instead, these outcomes are largely influenced by systemic barriers, and institutional racism.

Methods

This study utilized document analysis; a systematic procedure in which qualitative researchers review or evaluate both printed, and electronic documents (Bowen, 2009). The method of document analysis incorporates content and thematic analysis, and consists of organizing information into categories and themes (Bowen, 2009). This procedure is beyond quantification of data; rather, it involves uncovering themes pertinent to the studied phenomenon. Overall, document analysis involves finding, selecting, making sense of, and synthesizing information from various documents pertaining to the study's research questions (Bowen, 2009). The primary research question this study asked was: What role, if any, do HSI-DIs have in fostering educational and athletic outcomes for Latinx athletes?

Procedures

Data collection and analysis constituted an iterative process consisting of multiple layers. To guide in answering the primary research question, each layer of the analysis sought answers to specific ancillary research questions: (AQ1) What HSIs and eHSIs are NCAA DI members?; (AQ2) What are the participation rates of Latinx athletes at HSI-DIs?; (AQ3) What are the degree completion rates of Latinx athletes at HSI-DIs? Every layer focused on collecting data from various databases, and reports (see Table I below for an overview).

Table I

Overview of the Study's Procedures and Data Sources

	Layer 1 (AQ1)	Layer 2 (AQ2)	Layer 3 (AQ3)
Procedures	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gather list of NCAA D-Is 2. Gather list of HSIs and eHSIs 3. Cross-check the lists to identify HSI- and eHSI-DIs 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gather student enrollment and athletic participation rates by race/ethnicity for every HSI- and eHSI-DI 2. Find participation rates by race/ethnicity for the entire DI membership 3. Disaggregate this data by institutional type to compare Latinx athletic participation rates 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gather all FTE undergraduate student graduation rates by race/ethnicity at all HSI-DIs 2. Gather athlete graduation rates by race/ethnicity at all HSI-DIs 3. Compare tabulated data between Latinx and non-Latinx students 4. Compare tabulated data between Latinx and non-Latinx athletes
Data Sources (Collected Variables)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Excelencia in Education Reports: List of HSIs and eHSIs ▪ NCAA Website: NCAA DI Members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ NCAA's GSR Database: Institutional Reports for every HSI- and eHSI-DI (<i>Enrollment/Student-Athletes # for Hispanic & Total</i>) ▪ NCAA Website: Demographics Database Search by Student-Athletes by Race/Ethnicity (<i>All DI, All DI -HBCUs included, All DI HBCUs excluded</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ NCAA's GSR Database: Institutional Reports for every HSI-DI (<i>Enrollment/All Students # for Hispanic & Total; Freshman-Cohort Graduation Rates/4-Class Average, All Students, Student-Athletes #, Hispanic; Graduation Rates/Student-Athletes/GSR for Hispanic & Total</i>)

Note. All collected data were for the academic year of 2017-2018, which was the most available at the time of data analysis.

To address AQ1, layer 1 focused on cross-checking the directories of HSIs, eHSIs, and NCAA DI institutions. Layer 2, which corresponded to AQ2, consisted of an examination of the Latinx and non-Latinx student-athletes' enrollment rates at NCAA DIs across different institutional types, inclusive of HSI-DIs. To address AQ3, layer 3 analysis focused on student-athletes' graduation rates at HSI-DIs, which were compared with those for all undergraduate FTE students attending the same institutions.

The collected information was recorded in a Microsoft Excel document under different spreadsheet tabs. Two members of the research team reviewed the data and generated additional statistics, such as by combining institutional rates to record the overall rates for HSI-DI, and NCAA DI membership. Having multiple researchers (peer debrief) collect and analyze data increased trustworthiness of the study. Additional techniques, such as audit trail, and prolonged engagement, were followed to increase the trustworthiness of the findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Data Sources

Data from various databases and reports were gathered, disaggregated, and analyzed. At layer 1, a report (Excelencia in Education, 2019) provided a list of all HSIs and eHSIs. The directory of NCAA institutions by division was retrieved from the NCAA's website. Both lists consisted of members from 2017-2018, which was the most recently published year of data at the time of the analysis. The student-athlete participation data for layer 2 primarily came from the Graduation Success Rate (GSR) database housed at the NCAA website. This database provides access to individual reports for all DI members. Users can look up institutional statistics by cohort years, with the earliest dating 2004-2005. Two types of reports made available are report 1, which provides graduation rates for each athletic team sponsored by the institution; the second (report 2) provides information about (1) graduation rates for all undergraduate FTE students, student-athletes, student-athletes by sport category, and (2) undergraduate enrollment data for all students, student-athletes, student-athletes by sports category. As part of this study, each HSI-DI and eHSI-DI's (report 2) was downloaded and analyzed. Additionally, to gather the overall Latinxs' athletic participation rates for NCAA DI, a search in the NCAA demographics database was conducted. All collected data for this layer pertained to the 2017-2018 academic year.

The data for layer 3 of the document analysis was also retrieved from the GSR database. Graduation rates for all students and student-athletes by race/ethnicity were collected. Importantly, the NCAA reports included two types of graduation rates: the federal graduation rate (FGR) and Graduation Success Rate (GSR), which is a metric invented by the NCAA. The GSR rate does not penalize institutions for students who transfer to another HEI, unlike the FGR formula where students are considered non-graduates (NCAA, 2018b). In the analyzed NCAA reports, the GSR was only available for data on student-athletes on athletics aid whereas FGR was published for all students and student-athletes.

The collected graduation rates included three types. The first was FGR for 2012-2013, which is a 6-year graduation rate for first-time undergraduate FTE students whose studies begin 2012-2013 and graduated within six years (comparison of all students vs. athletes only). The second was FGR Four-Class Average, which is 6-year graduation rate average for the last four class cohorts – 2009-2010, 2010-2011, 2011-2012, and 2012-2013 (comparison for all students, Latinx students, all athletes, and Latinx athletes only). The last collected rate was GSR, which is comprised of FGR plus students who entered mid-year and athletes who transferred into an institution and received athletics aid (comparison of all athletes with Latinx athletes).

Positionality

The first author works as a full-time athletic academic coordinator at an HSI-DI institution and is a former NCAA D3 college athlete of European descent. The first author's primary research interests include Latinx college athletes, leadership, and administration within college athletics, and athletic academic services. The second author is a director of educational programs at an HSI and is of Latinx descent. The second author's research interest includes examining the organizational structure of HSIs, and issues relating to Diversity in Higher Education. The third author is an assistant professor in Educational Leadership and is of Latinx descent. The third author's research focuses on issues central to faculty and Latinx students, particular to Latinas in Engineering.

Findings

The findings were organized according to the layers from the document analysis:

(1) *NCAA HSI-DIs and eHSI-DIs*, (2) *Latinx Enrollment and Student-Athlete Participation Rates*, and (3) *Graduation Rates*.

NCAA HSI-DIs and eHSI-DI Institutions

Among the 351 NCAA DI institutions, 32 were HSIs, 40 eHSIs, and 24 HBCUs in the 2017-2018 academic year. Accordingly, nearly 10% of NCAA DI members were HSIs, while more than 11% were eHSIs (see Appendix A and Appendix B). The majority of NCAA HSI-DIs were in California and Texas (see Table 2 below). Ten of the states with eHSI-DIs and HSI-DIs were in regions with the largest proportion of Latinxs, which are New Mexico, Texas, California, Arizona, Nevada, Florida, Colorado, New Jersey, New York, and Illinois (U.S. Census, 2018). Overall, HSIs and eHSIs consisted of the majority of NCAA DI members in seven of the states: Arizona, California, Florida, New Jersey, New Mexico, Nevada, and Texas.

Table 2

States with NCAA HSI- and eHSI-DI Institutions, 2017-2018

State	Total # of DI		
	Members	HSIs	eHSIs
AZ	4	1	2
CA	24	12	10
CO	5	-	1
FL	13	3	6
IL	13	1	3
NJ	8	2	3
NM	2	2	-
NV	2	1	1
NY	22	-	4
PA	14	-	1
TX	23	10	8
WA	5	-	1
Total:	351	32	40

Latinx Enrollment and Student-Athlete Participation Rates

In 2017-2018, all HSI-DIs enrolled 656,895 undergraduate FTE students of which approximately 40.5%, or 265,954, were Latinxs. Overall, the HSI-DIs varied in the proportion of Latinx enrollees among the student body. The percentages ranged from 25.8% to 91.4% among the HSI-DIs (see Appendix A). Moreover, a total of 9,258 Latinxs competed in NCAA DI and approximately 15% of Latinx athletes enrolled at HSIs, 11% at eHSIs, and 4% HBCUs. The remaining student-athletes (70%) attended DI institutions that were neither HSIs nor eHSIs. Latinx participation varied among the HSI-DIs, with some consisting more than 25% of the student-athlete body. However, a few of the institutions had an abysmal representation of Latinx athletes (see Appendix A for this rate by HSI-DIs).

The disaggregated data revealed that DI athletes comprised 4.3% of all undergraduate FTE students, where Latinx athletes constituted 1.6% of all Latinx and 0.2% of the overall FTE undergraduate populations. In comparison, at HSI-DIs, student-athletes comprised a smaller proportion of the FTE undergraduate student body (1.4%) where the percentage of Latinx athletes in the overall Latinx FTE population was lower (0.5%), the percentage of Latinx athletes in the overall student FTE population was equal to that of all NCAA DIs (0.2%) (see Table 3 below). Overall, the data suggests that Latinx athletes have a far less chance of athletic participation at HSI-DIs, just the same Latinx comprised the same proportion of student bodies at DIs with similar minimal opportunity in participating in college athletics.

Table 3

Comparison of Athletic Participation Rates, HSI-DIs vs. All NCAA DIs

	% of Athletes in Overall Student Population	% of Latinx Athletes in Overall Latinx Student Population	% of Latinx Athletes in Overall Student Population
HSI-DIs	1.4%	0.5%	0.2%
All NCAA DIs*	4.3%	1.6%	0.2%

**Includes all NCAA DI institutions including HSI-DIs*

Graduation Rates

The first data analysis compared FGR between HSI-DIs and the rest of the DI membership using the six-year FGR for the 2012-2013 class (see Table 4 below). The FGR averaged 57% for all undergraduate students at HSI-DIs, a rate subpar to the overall DI rate of 68%. In comparison, the FGR for the same class of student-athletes only averaged 60% at HSI-DIs, a below overall average DI rate for student-athletes at 68%. For HSI-DI differences within revealed that the FGR for student-athletes (60%) surpassed that of all undergraduate students (57%); the rate was the same between athletes and non-athletes throughout all NCAA DIs. In other words, based on the FGR both students and student-athletes from the 2012-2013 cohort graduated at lower rates at HSI-DIs in comparison to the overall DI. Still, as an aggregate within HSI-DIs, athletes graduated at slightly higher rates than non-athletes.

Table 4

Comparison of Six-Year FGR (Class 2012-2013), HSI-DIs vs. All NCAA DIs

FGR (Class 2012-2013)		
	All Students	Athletes Only
HSI-DIs	57%	60%
All NCAA DIs*	68%	68%

**Includes all NCAA DI institutions including HSI-DIs*

In the second data analysis, the NCAA also reported the FGR four-class average (see Table 5 below), which provided similar findings as the single cohort FGR. Specifically, while the FGR for *all undergraduate students* attending HSI-DIs stood at 56%, the rate averaged 61% for *student-athletes*. The FGR rate was 53% for all *Latinx students* and 60% for *Latinx student-athletes* at the *HSI-DIs*. Still, the national graduation averages surpassed those of HSI-DIs. Specifically, the FGR for student-athletes was 64%, 64% for Latinx student-athletes, and 62% for Latinx students. In other words, all athletes (including Latinx) graduated at higher rates than non-athletes at HSI-DIs, on average, the graduation rates were still lower than those for all of the NCAA DI.

Table 5

Comparison of Six-Year FGR (Four Class Average), HSI-DIs vs. All NCAA DIs

FGR (Four Class Average)				
	All Students	Latinx Students	Athletes Only	Latinx Athletes
HSI-DIs	56%	53%	61%	60%
All NCAA DIs*	NA	62%	64%	64%

**Includes all NCAA DI institutions including HSI-DIs*

Based on the GSR, an NCAA’s metric, Latinx athletes on average graduated at slightly lower rates (81%) than all student-athletes (84%) at HSI-DIs. Notably, the GSR was lower among the HSI-DIs in comparison to the entire NCAA DI for all athletes (84% vs. 88%) and Latinx athletes (81% vs. 85%) (see Table 6).

Table 6

Comparison of Six-Year GSR (Class 2012-2013), HSI-DIs vs. All NCAA DIs

GSR (Class 2012-2013)		
	All Athletes	Latinx Athletes
HSI-DIs	84%	81%
All NCAA DIs*	88%	85%

**Includes all NCAA DI institutions including HSI-DIs*

Overall, a detailed look at FGR and GSR among the NCAA-HSIs revealed a large difference among the individual HSI-DIs. As an observable trend, when an HSI-DI reported low graduation rates, typically, the graduation rates were also lower for athletes and Latinxs; similarly, HSI-DIs graduated students at higher than average national rates. In those instances, Latinx students and student-athletes also benefited as they graduated at comparable rates.

Discussion

This study explored the role of HSI-DIs in fostering educational and athletic outcomes for Latinx athletes. College athletics are credited with extending educational opportunities for many traditionally marginalized populations (Denhart et al., 2009); for example, over \$2.9 billion is awarded in athletic scholarships (NCAA, n.d.-b). Therefore, it is essential that HSI-DIs recruit Latinx athletes and allow them the opportunity to benefit from both the HSI designation and NCAA DI affiliation. However, systemic barriers prevent access to underrepresented groups to the NCAA (Hextrum, 2018; Martinez, 2018; McGovern, 2018). As Hextrum (2018) noted, the NCAA's focus on amateurism caters to student-athletes from middle- and upper-class families who have access to economic and social capital, which then converts to cultural capital. This cultural capital is needed at HSIs in furthering support for Latinx students at their respective institutions (Hurtado & Ruiz, 2012). As LatCrit (Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001) suggests, the findings of this study exposed the existing embedded systems of power and privilege within intercollegiate athletics, which limit access to students from traditionally underrepresented groups such as Latinxs. While Latinxs dominate the student enrollments at HSI-DIs, the opposite is true about their representation as athletes.

The disaggregation of data from various reports and databases uncovered that there were 32 HSI-DIs with an additional 40 eHSI-DIs soon projected to be HSIs. Combined, these institutions comprise over 20% of the NCAA DI membership; HSIs and eHSIs constitute the majority of the NCAA DI members throughout seven states. As the United States continues to experience rise in population growth, so have shifts and increase in demographic growth for Latinxs populations (NCES, 2017); as such, it is likely that NCAA HSI-DIs will also increase in representation across other states.

HSIs are the primary institutional type in educating Latinx students (Hirt, 2006; Nuñez, et al., 2013). However, as this study found, the majority of Latinx athletes participate in DI sports at non-HSIs. In 2017-2018 academic year, only 15% of all Latinx athletes enrolled at HSIs and 11% at eHSIs. This is problematic given that athletics exist to operate and support the institutional mission of educating students (NCAA, n.d.-a). HSIs were an afterthought on the landscape of higher education and were not federally mandated to serve Latinxs (Mendez et al., 2015). However, shifts in the demographic growth of Latinxs and changes in Latinx student enrollment at HEIs influenced legislation and can be accredited for the construction of the

federal HSI designation (Contreras & Contreras, 2015; Mendez et al., 2015). This study focused on furthering scholarship (e.g., Calderon, 2015; Contreras & Contreras, 2015) which questions the institutional structure of HSIs in carrying out the mission to properly serve Latinx students.

Access is just a first step in accomplishing educational equity, as enrollment is not the same as completion (Suro & Fry, 2005). HEIs must also support Latinxs for retention and subsequent graduation. Unfortunately, as the national statistics reveal, Latinxs have been rising in proportion of college enrollees but the rates have not been converting to actual student retention and graduation (NCES, 2017). Scholarship on HSIs reports mixed findings about the effectiveness of this institutional type in graduating Latinx students (e.g., American Council on Education, 2017; Contreras & Contreras, 2015; Laden, 2001).

As this study suggests, HSI-DIs graduated athletes at higher rates than non-athletes. Similarly, Latinx athletes graduated at higher rates than Latinx non-athletes. These findings are consistent with NCAA's yearly reports dating back to 1993 indicating that DI athletes surpass non-athletes in graduation rates in all subgroups based on gender and ethnicity (NCAA, 2018b). Importantly, when compared to the overall NCAA DI, this study found that HSI-DIs graduated students at lower rates across all examined groups (athletes vs. non-athletes, Latinxs, etc.). In other words, students attending HSI-DIs were less likely to graduate than those of their peers at other NCAA DI institutions. LatCrit (Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001) posits that systems of oppression are often structurally diverse but are intended to maintain the status quo. For these HSI-DIs, they continue to perpetuate the cycles of systemic oppression for Latinxs when the institutions are not reflective of producing equitable outcomes (Garcia, 2019). LatCrit (Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001) also suggests that college degree attainment is not central to individual motivation and effort (Núñez, 2014) but rather the educational outcomes of Latinx largely depend on an institution's ability to address issues of racism and negative stereotypes.

Lastly, all NCAA DIs graduated Latinx athletes at lower than the average rate for all athletes. HSI-DIs followed this similar trend, suggesting that Latinx athletes participate in athletics but that educational opportunities are limited at NCAA DI institutions regardless of the institutional type. This finding is problematic given that the role of HSIs in regard to student life, which includes college athletics, is to serve Latinx students (Contreras & Contreras, 2015;

Mendez et al., 2015; Santiago & Andrade, 2010). Thus, while HSIs are “entrando en el juego” [getting in the game] of the NCAA DI, they still have ways to go to actually foster athletic and educational outcomes for Latinx athletes.

Limitations

This study focused on HSI-DI institutions, due to the NCAA only providing detailed reports about graduation and participation rates for individual institutions. Although eHSIs were noted in this study, only the HSI-DIs examined in this study acquired the federal designation. Lastly, the reports from the NCAA GSR database (e.g., FGR and GSR data) contain information on athletes on athletic scholarship only; as such, the disaggregated data within this study pertained only to Latinx athletes who receive an athletic aid.

Implications for Research and Practice

This study is among the first to disaggregate NCAA data by institutional type in regard to the HSI designation, and the role HSIs play in fostering athletic and educational outcomes for Latinx student-athletes. This study solely analyzed data via document analysis for HSI-DIs; as such, future studies could disaggregate data for NCAA D2 and D3, as to improve academic offerings, and athletic participation for Latinx students. Further, scholars could replicate this study and focus on eHSI-DIs given that many of these institutions will likely earn the federal designation in the future.

The findings of this study suggest that HSIs are members of the NCAA DI and that Latinx student-athletes from these institutions graduate at higher rates than non-athletes. However, the findings also evidence that Latinxs have minimal opportunities to participate in athletics at HSI-DIs. Based on these findings, the following implications for practice are offered:

- I. *Institutions must provide equitable participation opportunities for Latinxs at HSIs.* Latinxs have minimal opportunities to participate in athletics at HSI-DIs. Institutions operationalizing an HSI designation must reexamine their institutional policies to include the participation of student-athletes reflecting the HSIs' intended designation population. For example, DI institutions could be

pro-active in educating athletic departments on recruitment practices relating to the population the HSI designation is intended to serve.

2. *Transparency in Latinx student success is needed.* As this study suggests, Latinx student-athletes have higher completion rates than non-student-athletes, as well as all other ethnic and racial groups. However, there is minimal data published on NCAA repositories reflecting the academic success rate of Latinx student-athletes. As an example, when considering the institutional choice, Latinxs could benefit from additional data relating to enrollment and successful graduation rates of Latinx student-athletes at HSI-DIs.

Conclusion

Given that HSIs constitute the second-largest institutional type in the NCAA and continue to expand rapidly, it is important to examine the role of intercollegiate athletics at these HEIs in terms of their contributions in fostering educational outcomes for Latinx student-athletes. The findings of this study fill a void in scholarly literature and provide foundational knowledge useful for other researchers who study Latinxs in college athletics, which is the most understudied subpopulation of NCAA student-athletes today.

References

- American Council on Education. (2017). *Pulling back the curtain: Enrollment and outcomes at Minority Serving Institutions*. <https://www.acenet.edu/Documents/Pulling-Back-the-Curtain-Enrollment-and-Outcomes-at-MSIs.pdf>
- Bowen, G. (2009). Document analysis as a qualitative research method. *Qualitative Research Journal*, 9(2), 27-40. <https://doi.org/10.3316/QRJ0902027>
- Calderon, B. (2015). Achieving “first in the world”: Hispanic Serving Institutions and closing the attainment gap. *Harvard Journal of Hispanic Policy*, 27, 60-64.
- Contreras, F., & Contreras, G. (2015). Raising the bar for Hispanic-Serving Institutions: An analysis of college completion and success rates. *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education*, 14(2), 151-170. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1538192715572892>
- Corral, D., Gasman, M., Nguyen, T., & Samayoa, A. (2015). An examination of existing and emerging Hispanic serving institutions Latino initiatives and culture. *Center for Minority Serving Institutions*. http://repository.upenn.edu/gse_pubs/344
- Darvin, L., Cintron, A., & Hancock, M. (2017). ¿Por qué jugar? Sport socialization among Hispanic/Latina female NCAA division I student-athletes. *Journal of Amateur Sport*, 3(2), 27-54. <https://doi.org/10.17161/jas.v3i2.6460>
- Denhart, V. (2009). The academics–athletics trade-off: Universities and intercollegiate athletics. In J. Hall (Ed.), *Doing more with less* (pp. 95–136). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4419-5960-7_5
- Excelencia in Education. (2019). *Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs): 2017-18*. <https://www.edexcelencia.org/research/fact-sheets/hispanic-serving-institutions-hsis-fact-sheet-2017-2018>
- Garcia, G. (2019). *Becoming Hispanic-Serving Institutions: Opportunities for colleges and universities*. Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Grafnetterova, N. (2019). *¡Échale ganas!: Student engagement experiences of first-generation Latinx collegiate student-athletes* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi.
- Greene, D., & Oesterreich, H. (2012). White profs at Hispanic-Serving Institutions: Radical revolutionaries or complicit colonists? *Journal of Latinos and Education*, 11(3), 168-174. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15348431.2012.686351>
- Gutierrez, J. (2020). *Beyond the moniker: An in-depth analysis of faculty roles in shared governance when research I institutions receive a Hispanic serving-institution designation* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi.
- Hextrum, K. (2018). Amateurism revisited: How U.S. college athletic recruitment favors middle-class athletes. *Sport, Education, and Society*, November 2018, 1-13. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13573322.2018.1547962>
- Hirt, B. (2006). *Where you work matters: Student affairs administration at different types of institutions*. University Press of America.
- Hispanic Association of Colleges & Universities. (2019). *2019 fact sheet: Hispanic higher education and HSIs*. https://www.hacu.net/hacu/HSI_Fact_Sheet.asp
- Hurtado, S., & Ruiz, A. (2012). *Realizing the potential of Hispanic-Serving Institutions: Multiple dimensions of institutional diversity for advancing Hispanic higher education*. In A., Nuñez, S. Hurtado, & E. Galdeano, *Hispanic-Serving Institutions: Advancing research and transformative practice* (pp. 39–60). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315747552-8>
- Johnson, A. G. (2018). *Privilege, power and difference* (3rd ed.). McGraw-Hill Education.

- <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429494802-12>
- Laden, B. (2001). Hispanic-Serving Institutions: Myths and realities. *Peabody Journal of Education*, 76(1), 73-92. https://doi.org/10.1207/S15327930PJE7601_05
- Lapchick, R. (2020). The 2019 racial and gender report card: College sport. *The Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sport*. https://43530132-36e9-4f52-811a-182c7a91933b.filesusr.com/ugd/7d86e5_d69e3801bb8146f2b08f6e619bcddf22.pdf
- Lincoln, Y., & Guba, E. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Sage.
- Martinez, E. (2018). College choice processes and experiences of Latino/a/x student-athletes in the community college context. *Journal for the Study of Sports and Athletes in Education*, 12(1), 14-34. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19357397.2018.1444700>
- McGovern, J. (2018). “You have to have money to be good”: How capital accumulation shapes Latinas’ pathways to college sports. *Journal of Intercollegiate Sport*, 11, 149-171. <https://doi.org/10.1123/jis.2018-0038>
- Mendez, J., Bonner F., II, Méndez-Negrete, J., & Palmer, R. (2015). *Hispanic-Serving Institutions in American higher education: Their origin, and present and future challenges*. Stylus.
- National Center for Education Statistics. (2016). *Enrollment*. <https://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=98>
- National Center for Education Statistics. (2017). *The condition of education 2017*. <https://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2017144>
- National Collegiate Athletic Association. (n.d.-a). *Office of the President: On the mark*. <http://www.ncaa.org/about/who-we-are/office-president/office-president-mark>
- National Collegiate Athletic Association. (n.d.-b). *Scholarships*. <http://www.ncaa.org/student-athletes/future/scholarships>
- National Collegiate Athletic Association. (2018a). *Institutional characteristics of NCAA member schools: Institutional characteristics study findings*. http://www.ncaa.org/sites/default/files/2017RES_institutional_characteristics_edited_20180119.pdf
- National Collegiate Athletic Association. (2018b). *Trends in Graduation Success Rates and Federal Graduation Rates at NCAA Division I institutions*. https://ncaaorg.s3.amazonaws.com/research/gradrates/2018DIRES_DI FedGSRTrends.pdf
- Núñez, A. M. (2014). Advancing an intersectionality framework in higher education: Power and Latinx postsecondary opportunity. *Handbook of Theory and Research in Higher Education*, 29, 33-92. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-017-8005-6_2
- Núñez, A., Hoover, R., Pickett, K., Stuart-Carruthers, C., & Vazquez, M. (2013). *Latinos in higher education and Hispanic-Serving Institutions: Creating conditions for student success*. Jossey-Bass
- Ortega, G. (2019). Examining the intersection of race and athletics for Latino male student-athletes. *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1538192719876091>
- Osanloo, A., Parra, J., & Pedraza, C. (2018). “Los olvidados:” An integrative review of the extant literature review on the forgotten ones in intercollegiate athletics. *Journal for the Study of Sports and Athletes in Education*, 12(1), 53-74. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19357397.2018.1444697>
- Ponjuan, L. (2013). Recruiting and retaining Latino faculty members: The missing piece to Latino student success. *The Education Digest*, 78(5), 64.

- Ramos, R. (2018). *Latina/o college student-athletes: Influences on recruitment, enrollment and degree completion* (Doctoral dissertation). ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database. (UMI No. 11017061)
- Rendón, L., Nora, A., Kanagala, V. (2015). Ventajas/assets y conocimientos/knowledge: Leveraging Latin@ assets to foster student success. In Mendez, J. P., Bonner, I. F. A., Méndez-Negrete, J., Palmer, R. T. (Eds.), *Hispanic-Serving Institutions in American higher education: Their origin, and present and future challenges* (pp. 92–118). Stylus.
- Renn, K., & Patton, L. (2017). Institutional identity and campus climate. In J. Schuh, S. Jones, & V. Torres (6th), *Student services: A handbook for the profession* (pp. 58-72). Jossey-Bass.
- Santiago, D., & Andrade, S. (2010). Emerging Hispanic-Serving Institutions: Serving Latino students. *Excelencia in Education*. www.edexcelencia.org/research/emerginghispanic-serving-institutions-hsis-serving-latino-students
- Solórzano, D. G., & Delgado Bernal, D. (2001). Examining transformational resistance through a critical race and LatCrit theory framework. Chicana and Chicano students in an urban context. *Urban Education*, 36(3), 308-342. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085901363002>
- Suro, R., & Fry, R. (2005). Leaving the newcomers behind. In R. Hersh, & J. Merrow. *Declining by degrees: Higher education at risk* (pp. 169-183). Palgrave MacMillan.
- Sweitzer, K. (2009). Institutional ambitions and athletic conference affiliation. *New Directions for Higher Education*, 148, 55-63. <https://doi.org/10.1002/he.368>
- U.S. Census. (2018). *Hispanic heritage month 2018*. <https://www.census.gov/newsroom/facts-for-features/2018/hispanic-heritage-month.html>

Appendix A

Hispanic-Serving Institutions in the NCAA DI ($n = 32$) by State, Conference, and Enrollment

Institution	State	Athletic Conference	UG FTE Latinx Enrollment	Latinx Athlete Enrollment
University of Arizona	AZ	Pac-12 Conference	26.4%	6.6%
California State University-Bakersfield	CA	Western Athletic Conference	57.3%	16.9%
California State University-Fresno	CA	Mountain West Conference	51.7%	10.3%
California State University-Fullerton	CA	Big West Conference	43.4%	33.2%
California State University-Long Beach	CA	Big West Conference	41.7%	15.6%
California State University-Northridge	CA	Big West Conference	48.5%	23.3%
California State University-Sacramento	CA	Big Sky Conference	31.5%	11.7%
Saint Mary's College of California	CA	West Coast Conference	27.6%	14.2%
San Diego State University	CA	Mountain West Conference	30.4%	8.5%
San Jose State University	CA	Mountain West Conference	27.9%	13.5%
University of California-Irvine	CA	Big West Conference	26.5%	25.0%
University of California-Riverside	CA	Big West Conference	40.5%	26.7%
University of California-Santa Barbara	CA	Big West Conference	26.7%	7.5%
Florida Atlantic University	FL	Conference USA	26.2%	8.4%
Florida International University	FL	Conference USA	66.4%	17.2%
University of Central Florida	FL	American Athletic Conference	25.8%	7.2%
The University of Illinois at Chicago	IL	Horizon League	32.6%	10.2%
University of Nevada-Las Vegas	NV	Mountain West Conference	28.9%	7.4%
Fairleigh Dickinson University-Metropolitan Campus	NJ	Northeast Conference	34.3%	13.9%

Saint Peter's University	NJ	Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference	45.1%	22.9%
New Mexico State University-Main Campus	NM	Western Athletic Conference	58.6%	17.3%
University of New Mexico-Main Campus	NM	Mountain West Conference	47.9%	8.3%
Houston Baptist University	TX	Southland Conference	35.7%	16.8%
Texas A & M University-Corpus Christi	TX	Southland Conference	49.6%	14.9%
Texas State University	TX	Sun Belt Conference	37.2%	9.9%
Texas Tech University	TX	Big 12 Conference	27.8%	12.1%
The University of Texas at Arlington	TX	Sun Belt Conference	28.2%	9.9%
The University of Texas at El Paso	TX	Conference USA	82.7%	17.9%
The University of Texas at San Antonio	TX	Conference USA	54.6%	20.8%
The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley	TX	Western Athletic Conference	91.4%	31.5%
University of Houston	TX	American Athletic Conference	33.2%	1.7%
University of the Incarnate Word	TX	Southland Conference	56.1%	28.2%

Appendix B

Emerging Hispanic-Serving Institutions in the NCAA DI ($n = 40$) by State, Conference, and Enrollment

Institution	State	Athletic Conference	UG FTE Latinx Enrollment
Arizona State University-Tempe	AZ	Pac-12 Conference	20.4%
Northern Arizona University	AZ	Big Sky Conference	23.7%
California Polytechnic State University-San Luis Obispo	CA	Big West Conference	16.8%
Loyola Marymount University	CA	West Coast Conference	21.2%
Santa Clara University	CA	West Coast Conference	17.7%
Stanford University	CA	Pac-12 Conference	15.6%
University of California-Berkeley	CA	Pac-12 Conference	15.3%
University of California-Davis	CA	Big West Conference	21.5%
University of California-Los Angeles	CA	Pac-12 Conference	22.3%
University of San Diego	CA	West Coast Conference	19.6%
University of San Francisco	CA	West Coast Conference	21.6%
University of the Pacific	CA	West Coast Conference	19.8%
University of Northern Colorado	CO	Big Sky Conference	20.5%
Florida Gulf Coast University	FL	ASUN Conference	20.3%
Florida State University	FL	Atlantic Coast Conference	20.3%
Stetson University	FL	ASUN Conference	15.9%
University of Florida	FL	Southeastern Conference	21.2%
University of Miami	FL	Atlantic Coast Conference	21.8%
University of South Florida-Main Campus	FL	American Athletic Conference	20.2%
DePaul University	IL	Big East Conference	18.9%
Loyola University of Chicago	IL	Missouri Valley Conference	15.5%
Northern Illinois University	IL	Mid-American Conference	17.9%
New Jersey Institute of Technology	NJ	ASUN Conference	20.0%

Rider University	NJ	Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference	15.0%
Seton Hall University	NJ	Big East Conference	17.7%
University of Nevada-Reno	NV	Mountain West Conference	20.6%
Iona College	NY	Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference	23.5%
Manhattan College	NY	Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference	21.8%
St Francis College	NY	Northeast Conference	21.6%
SUNY at Albany	NY	America East Conference	17.2%
La Salle University	PA	Atlantic 10 Conference	17.5%
Abilene Christian University	TX	Southland Conference	17.0%
Baylor University	TX	Big 12 Conference	15.2%
Lamar University	TX	Southland Conference	16.5%
Sam Houston State University	TX	Southland Conference	23.2%
Stephen F Austin State University	TX	Southland Conference	18.8%
Texas A & M University-College Station	TX	Southeastern Conference	23.4%
The University of Texas at Austin	TX	Big 12 Conference	23.1%
University of North Texas	TX	Conference USA	24.4%
Eastern Washington University	WA	Big Sky Conference	15.4%