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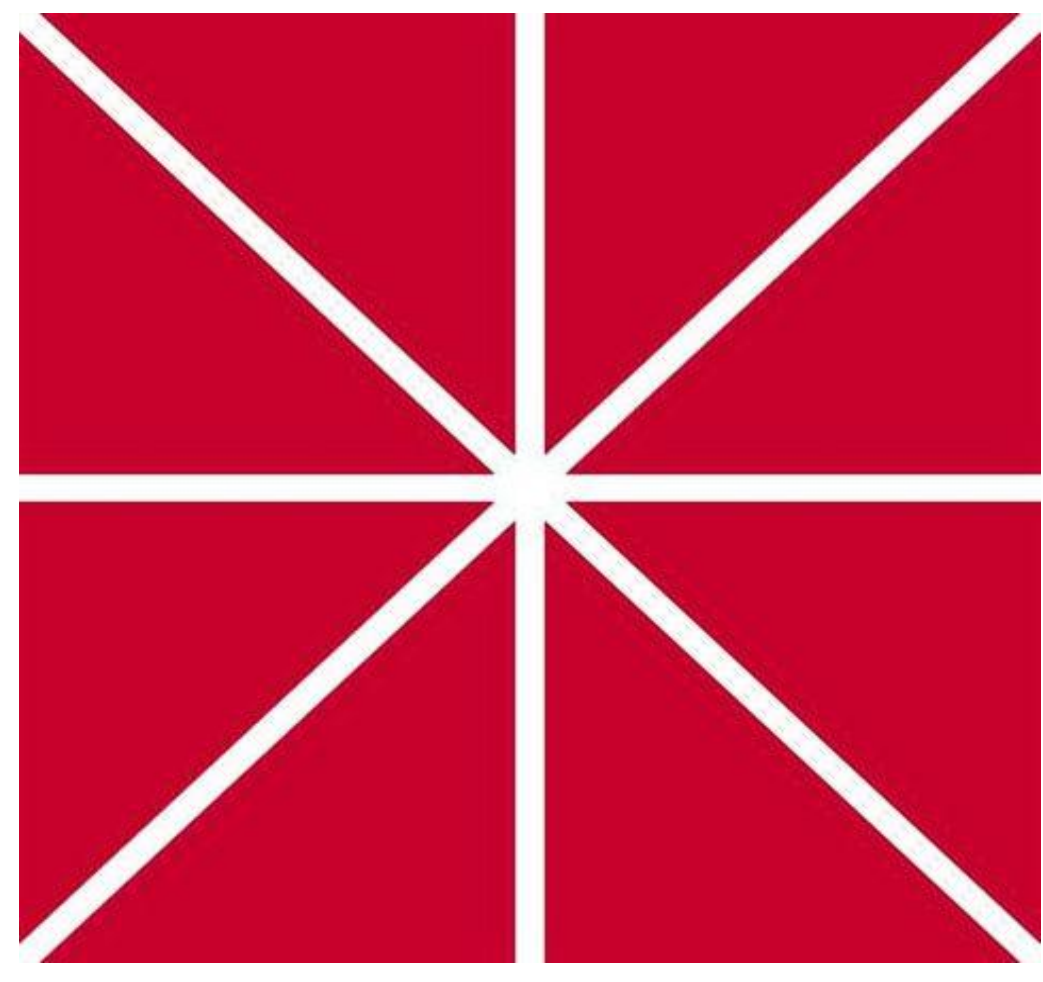
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The Experiences of Latinx Faculty, Staff, and Students at a Predominantly White Institution aspiring to become a Hispanic-Serving Institution

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Introduction

Over recent years, higher education has experienced an increase in underrepresented racial populations, translating into an urge for institutions' diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts (Gasman & Samayoa, 2019). In an increasingly diverse nation, predominantly white institutions seeking to become Hispanic Serving Institutions must acknowledge the challenges associated with this designation. The experiences of Latinx faculty, staff, and students are interconnected, which impacts their success, access, and retention within higher education. Thus, fostering an inclusive and supportive environment for these populations is critical for their future success. As predominantly white institutions develop better resources for Latinx populations, institutions can create a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive environment.

Guiding Research Questions

1. What does existing literature tell us about the experiences of Latinx populations in higher education spaces?
2. What do predominantly white institutions need to consider as they aspire to become Hispanic-serving institutions?
3. What are the experiences of Latinx faculty, staff, and students at predominantly white institutions?
4. How can institutional policies and practices be designed to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion for Latinx faculty, staff, and students?

Background and Significance

- With the ongoing demographic changes across the nation, the Latinx population has seen a rapid increase in enrollment at higher education institutions.
- A federal definition of Hispanic-serving institutions (HSIs) under the Higher Education Act was established in 1995 after years of lobbying by the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities and other advocates (Marin & Aguilar-Smith, 2023).
- The U.S. Department of Education (2008) states that an HSI is a historically underfunded postsecondary institution with at least 25% Latina/o/x undergraduate enrollment and 50% Pell-eligible enrollment (Marin & Aguilar-Smith, 2023). Most higher education institutions have many white faculty, staff, and students.
- As stated by Brown and Dancy (2010), predominantly white institutions (PWIs) are defined as higher education institutions with a 50% or greater population of white students. Therefore, like all higher education institutions, predominantly white institutions reflect and serve the multitude of societal forces that help create and continue to sustain them (Marx et al., 2022)
- The discrimination, isolation, and disproportionate workloads that Latinx faculty, staff, and students face in predominantly white institutions may often outweigh their potential benefits (Vargas et al., 2020). As a result, they may be adversely affected by this and have a lower chance of remaining at the institution and contributing to its mission and goals.
- Representation and equitable resources can impact students meaningfully and contribute to a safer space at institutions for Latinx populations.

Methodology

For this study, I searched for literature to present the obstacles Latinx populations face within institutions and with current resources and support that positively impact Latinx populations. The study aims to further understand Latinx faculty and staff narratives at a predominantly white institution aspiring to become a Hispanic-Serving Institution. For this study, faculty and staff members will be interviewed to capture their personal experiences.

Implications and Significance

This study analyzes existing literature surrounding Latinx faculty, staff, and students. The study also aims to explore these populations' interconnected experiences and how predominately white institutions can aim to support these populations better. This study seeks to contribute to the ongoing efforts to create a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive higher education environment for Latinx faculty, staff, and students.

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