Engaging the Disengaged: Examining African American Male Student Engagement at Predominately White Public Research Universities

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2010 AIR Forum  •  Chicago, IL  •  June 1, 2010
African American males have been categorized as a population at-risk in education.

- Vanishing from college campuses in the past two decades
- Experience difficulty in education (i.e. low graduation rates, high rates of placement in special education, etc.)
- Lag behind peers, cluster at the bottom of academic performance indicator & not “on par with other students
- Small proportion of students in college -- less than 5% African American males
- 15% of African American males ages 25-29 hold a bachelor’s degree
Methodology: Survey Administration

National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)

- Administered Spring 2004 & Spring 2007 via the web
- Measures the constructs of student engagement and satisfaction
- Benchmark Scales —Level of Academic Challenge, Active & Collaborative Learning, Student-Faculty interaction, Enriching Educational Experiences, and Supportive Campus Environment
Methodology: Sampling

Population

- First Year & Seniors Students
- 17 institutions
- Sample representative of the population

Response Rate – 20% - 40%
Respondent Characteristics

Senior Transfer Status

- AfAm M
- White M
- AfAm F

2004
- AfAm M: 60%
- White M: 60%
- AfAm F: 60%

2007
- AfAm M: 80%
- White M: 80%
- AfAm F: 100%

Graph shows the percentage of senior transfer status by race and gender from 2004 to 2007.
Respondent Characteristics

Living Situation: First Year Dorm or other Campus Housing (not fraternity or sorority house)

- AfAm M
- White M
- AfAm F

2004

2007
Respondent Characteristics

Living Situation: Senior Dorm or other Campus Housing (not fraternity or sorority house)

- AfAm M
- White M
- AfAm F

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>AfAm M</th>
<th>White M</th>
<th>AfAm F</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td></td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<td>20%</td>
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</tbody>
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Respondent Characteristics

Member of Fraternity/Sorority - First Year

Member of Fraternity/Sorority - Senior
Respondent Characteristics

Student Athlete - First Year

- AfAm M: 0%, 0%
- White M: 2%, 2%
- AfAm F: 4%, 4%

2004: AfAm M, White M, AfAm F
2007: AfAm M, White M, AfAm F

Student Athlete - Senior

- AfAm M: 2%, 10%
- White M: 5%, 5%
- AfAm F: 10%, 0%

2004: AfAm M, White M, AfAm F
2007: AfAm M, White M, AfAm F
Respondent Characteristics

Father's Educational Attainment (no college)
First Year Students

Mother's Educational Attainment (no college)
First Year Students
Respondent Characteristics

Father's Educational Attainment (no college)
Senior Students

Mother's Educational Attainment (no college)
Senior Students
Methodology: Data Analysis

- Scale Development
- T-Test
- Regression
Methodology: Data Analysis

- Academic Challenge (AC)
- Active & Collaborative Learning (ACL)
- Student-Faculty Interaction (SFI)
- Supportive Campus Environment (SCE)
- Enriching Educational Environment (EEE)
- Gains
- Satisfaction
Data Analysis: Results

Comparison of
African American Males and White Males
Data Analysis: Results

Comparison of African American Males and African American Females
Regression

- Multivariate Regression

  - Individual scales as dependent variable and demographic variables as predictors

  - Satisfaction as the dependent variable using demographic variables and other scales as predictors
Further Research

- Are low grades during freshmen year a predictor of retention for African American Males more so than for White Males?

- Does a Supportive Campus Environment act as a mitigating factor on the retention of African American males who have low grades as freshmen?
Recommendations

1. University committee should be established to identify African American male students, upon admission.

2. University admissions & registrar’s offices should work closely with mentoring staff.

3. Recruit and encourage the participation of African American males on campus.

4. Encourage males to network with a diverse group of students, especially the larger community of African American students.

5. Make and maintain connections with mentors and professionals who share their abilities and interests.
References


References


Questions?