



Exploratory Research on Minority-Serving Institutions

Valerie C. Lundy-Wagner

Community College Research Center
Teachers College, Columbia University

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Community College Research Center

- Established in 1996
- Leading, independent authority on two-year colleges
- Works with individual institutions, systems, and states on improving student success and institutional performance
- Conducts research and evaluations, and provides technical assistance to **both** two- and four-year institutions

Center for Analysis of Postsecondary Education and Employment

- Housed within the Community College Research Center at Teachers College, Columbia University
- Funded by the Institute for Education Sciences in 2011
- Research in partnership with five states
 - Ohio, Michigan, Florida, Virginia, and North Carolina
- Understand employment and earnings benefits associated with a range of postsecondary pathways

Relevance of Minority-Serving Institutions

- Persistent disparities in educational and economic success by ethnicity/race;
- MSIs comprise 20% of postsecondary institutions;
 - Including HBCUs, TCUs, HSIs and AANAPISIs
- On average, 70% of students at MSIs are ethnic/racial minorities;
 - Appropriate for understanding how MSIs can help decrease gaps in educational and economic success

Definitional Challenges in MSI Research

- Inconsistent definition of MSI
 - Relevance of eligibility, designation, and/or funding status
- Variation in MSI definition over time
 - Historical evolution of various designations
 - HBCUs 1964
 - TCUs 1968
 - HSIs 1972
 - AANAPISIs 2008

Example of Differences Across MSIs

MSI Type	# Eligible Institutions (% Public)	Ethnicity/race Requirement	Needy Student Requirement (% Pell eligible)	Proof of Ethnicity/race
HBCUs	105 (50%)	No.	No. (70%)	No.
TCUs	34 (75%)	Yes, 51% Native American	No. (58%)	Yes.
HSIs	356 (70%)	Yes, 25% FTE Hispanic	Yes. (48%)	No.
AANAPISIs	153 (60%+)	Yes, 10% Asian American or Pacific Islander	Yes. (38%)	No.

Literature on MSIs

- Focus on MSIs as a point of access to college;
- Benefits of attending an MSI
 - Academic, psychological, economic, and social benefits
- Attention to student experiences and outcomes
- Historically more attention on HBCUs, increasing data on HSIs and AANAPISIs

Limitations of Previous Literature

- Little comparative “apples to apples” research on MSIs;
- Poor acknowledgement of the federal MSI program;
- Dominated by descriptive statistics
 - Inability to make causal claims about the effects of MSIs on minority (and non-minority) students;

CAPSEE MSI Project Purpose

- Given MSIs' disproportionate role in providing postsecondary access to ethnic/racial minority students:
 - Clarify how MSIs can be incorporated more explicitly in education policy research;
 - Identify the role of MSIs in closing postsecondary educational attainment and economic gaps

MSIs and non-MSIs

- How do the following characteristics vary in terms of what institutions are called MSIs:
 - Undergraduate ethnic/racial composition;
 - Undergraduate low-income population;
 - Eligibility for MSI status;
 - Federal designation of MSI status;
 - Receipt of federal MSI funds

Descriptive Overview of MSIs

- Are there significant differences in:
 1. The background characteristics and academic profiles of students attending MSIs and non-MSIs?
 2. Institutional characteristics among institutions considered MSIs? Do these differences persist across designations?
 3. Institutional characteristics between institutions considered MSIs and non-MSIs?

Types of Data Needed for MSI Research

- Aggregate institution-level data (IPEDS)
- Institution program-level data (Institutional Research)
- Individual-level wage data (State - Department of Labor)

Documenting the Federal MSI Program (DOE)

- What is the history of the DOE MSI programs?
- How much has been allocated to MSIs, and for what purposes (e.g., infrastructure, physical plant, teaching, etc.)?
- What are the funding mechanisms, and how do they vary if at all?
- Is there documentation on how MSI funds are spent to help improve educational attainment?

Closing Thoughts

- MSIs are an important part of the American postsecondary system;
- We need a better understanding of MSIs, particularly with reference to education policy;
- Better situate MSIs as an exclusive group, but also alongside non-MSIs

When you have mastered numbers, you will in fact no longer be reading numbers, any more than you read words when reading books. You will be reading meanings.

-Du Bois

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Center for Analysis of Postsecondary Education and Employment

Teachers College, Columbia University

525 West 120th Street, Box 174, New York, NY 10027

capsee@columbia.edu

212.678.3091