Achieving Goals: The Role of Support & Structure for Latina/o Student Goals

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Significance

- 8.4% of MN public school students identify as Latina/o.
- 24% of US public school students identify as Latina/o.
- 53% of Latina/o MN high school students graduate.
- Latina/o students represent the fastest growing population of the United States.
- After-school activities play a critical role in positive youth development and success for all youth.

Latina/o Critical Theory

- LatCrit is important because Latina/o students have been constantly undermined and unacknowledged as intellectual learners by policy makers and researchers.
- Many Latina/o students are wrongly placed in remedial level courses or special education classrooms. Research on Latina/o youth is overwhelmingly based on deficit liabilities rather than positive assets.

Mixed-Methods

- 2013 Minnesota Student Survey; descriptive analysis of Latina/o student responses for TSS and OST activities
  - 2763 9th graders
  - 2090 11th graders
  - Interviewed 4 Latina/o high school students
  - Interviewed 3 Teachers and 1 Counselor

Main Findings

- There are small gender differences in goals set by Latina versus Latino high school students.
- Students with higher GPAs report higher TSS.
- Students with 4-year college goals report higher TSS.
- Students with 4-year college and career-certificate goals are participating in more structured OST activities and less unstructured activities than students with other goals.
- Although students with 4-year college and career-certificate goals participate in more structured activities, it is unrelated to whether activities are academic or nonacademic.

Further Research:

- Are Latina/o students with high levels of support who are engaged in structured activities more likely to graduate from high school and achieve their goals?