Inspiring Latino youth: Latino teachers through their own experiences

By: Daniel Corral
EDYS 276 Latino Education, Agency, and Policy
Why?

- Hispanics are the fastest growing minority (Albert, Ennis & Rios-Vargas, 2011)
- However, 21% Students, 7% Teachers (Samuels 2011)
- Characteristic of effective teaching needs a student-teacher relationship
Assumptions

• Latino teacher teaching Latino students will automatically improve their course work and grades.
• Latino teachers are genuine, good teachers.
• Teachers of other ethnicities cannot teach Latino students as well Latino teachers.
Research Questions

• How does having a Latino teacher affect Latino students in high school to pursue a higher education?
• More importantly, how does this impact the students’ performance?
• How does the lack of Latino teachers impact a Latino student’s possibility to further their education?
• How do these teachers address the student’s learning needs as opposed to a white educator?
• Is there a clear-cut advantage for Latino students to learn from someone from their own race?
Importance

• Felt there was a problem with Hispanic proportion
• Loss of cultural ties
• No role models
• Hispanic graduation rate
On the topic...

• Educación
  – Authentic Caring
    • Teachers form greater relationships with students that are rooted in Latin culture

• Education
  – Aesthetic Caring
    • Formal, simple relationship between student and teacher

• Role Models
On the topic...

• “If we are truly going to reform education...greater attention [needs to be] given to teacher ethnic distribution and shortages in critical fields for diverse populations” (Flores & Claeys 2010)

• “Teachers also show interest in students by respecting them and their familial and peer cultures and giving them a sense of inclusion in the school community” (Hallinan, 2008)
Methodology

• Large metropolitan public school system & small Midwestern town school district
• 2 Methods: Interviews & Primary Sources
• Interviewed three teachers
• No Child Left Behind Act
  – 2001, teach to the test
• Left me with two different approaches
Findings

• Teacher #1
  – “Students see an authority figure who looks like them”
  – “Teachers have to know their content, respect students and families, and know how to engage students in relevant learning”
  – “I’m going to contribute to social justice by creating the maximum learning opportunity in my students by creating a safe environment where students can challenge themselves to learn and question”
Findings

• Teacher #2
  – “I think the students wanted to be educated by a minority teacher, but would accept being taught by a white teacher if the white teacher proved to be caring, knowledgeable and can genuinely relate to them”
  – “A part of me feels that this trend will only get better when many Latinos themselves find the intrinsic motivation to change the trend. This applies to the young kids, teenagers, young adults, parents, grandparents – the Latino community”
Findings

• Teacher # 3
  – “Minority students need to feel connected to their backgrounds whether it be religion, language, music, ethnicity, and culture”
  – “They feel that their cultural, ethnic, religious, or social connections are looked as detrimental to the American public education system”
  – “One of the most important experiences I can offer minority students is the ability to navigate the high school and college preparation process”
Findings

• No Child Left Behind
  – “An Act To close the achievement gap with accountability, flexibility, and choice, so that no child is left behind”
  – It measures the student’s ability on a standardized test
  – Disregard for culture
  – More and minorities are left behind.
Potential Significance

• Create awareness of minority (Latino) teachers
• Possibly help improve Latino graduation rates and education
• Make clear connections between teacher-student relationships
Bibliography

• ACT. (2012). Why take the act?.
• Samuels, R. (2011, November 15). With Hispanic students on the rise, Hispanic teachers in short supply. The Washington Post
• New York, NY: State University of New York Press