

NAVIGATING RESOURCES FOR EQUITY: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN
MULTICULTURAL STUDENT PROGRAMS AND SERVICES UNIT POWER, AND
STUDENTS OF COLOR'S RETENTION.

by

J. QUINTON STAPLES II

(Under the Direction of Katie Koo)

ABSTRACT

This study examines the relationship between institutional resource allocation to Multicultural Student Programs and Services (MSPS) and the retention rates of students of color at public higher education institutions. Situated in the sociopolitical context influenced by the Black Lives Matter movement and rising anti-diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) legislation, the research seeks to understand if targeted investments in MSPS significantly enhance retention for Asian, Black, Hispanic, and multiracial students. Using Quantitative Critical Race Theory (QuantCrit), this study employs correlation and multiple regression analyses to assess the effectiveness of MSPS expenditures. Results demonstrate that institutional investment in MSPS positively correlates with improved retention outcomes for students of color. Additionally, the research highlights the critical role of MSPS administrators' unit power—characterized by their environmental influence, institutional authority, and negotiation capabilities—in securing necessary funding. These findings contextualize the financial decisions institutions face amidst legislative pressures questioning the validity of diversity initiatives. This study contributes to existing literature by demonstrating how resource allocation strategies directly impact equity and retention outcomes, advocating for strategic, data-driven investments in MSPS as essential components for institutional effectiveness, credibility, and sustainable diversity practices.

INDEX WORDS: Anti-DEI, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI), Multicultural Student Programs and Services, QuantCrit, Student Retention, Students of Color

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DEDICATION

They say it takes a community to nurture a dream, and my own stands on the shoulders of ancestors who transformed freedom into possibility. Their courage, faith, and resilience anchor this work, reminding me that scholarship is not merely the pursuit of knowledge but a testament to hope and perseverance.

I honor those newly freed from enslavement who charted bold paths of faith and possibility—a legacy woven into every page of my research. I pay tribute to the faith leaders whose conviction in the truth of Jesus and the power of God became the foundation of my journey.

To my grandparents—Aileen, Jim, Hattie, and Vincent—thank you for modeling boldness, wit, steadfastness, and quiet presence. To my aunts—Pinky, D, Sheila—and my uncle Lamont: you blazed new trails and taught me that audacity, tenacity, and style belong in both life and scholarship. To my parents, Rev. Jerry Q. Sr. and Marchelle, who showed me how to fight with mind and heart and rise again like a phoenix—I carry your resilience into every chapter.

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To my wife, Evie—my breath and guiding truth: your unwavering faith reshapes worlds and inspires every page. My daughter, Judah, whose floors will always be my ceilings: you embody the future I strive to serve, proof that knowledge is inheritance and promise.

And to my students, past, present, and future—this dissertation is yours as much as mine. May it spark hope, illuminate paths, and remind you that tomorrow’s scholars stand on today’s relentless pursuit of what is yet unknown.

Above all, thank you to the mentors, colleagues, and friends whose encouragement, critiques, and insights challenged me to refine my ideas and push beyond my comfort zone. This dissertation represents a collective effort—an affirmation that none of us ever grows alone. May these pages serve as a testament to resilience, faith, and the transformative power of education—proving that our history can light the way for generations yet to come.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION.....	1
Background.....	1
Problem Statement.....	8
Purpose of Study.....	10
Research Questions.....	10
Research Paradigm.....	11
Researcher Positionality.....	13
Assumptions and Delimitations of the Study.....	15
Theoretical/Conceptual Framework/Conceptual Orientation.....	16
Integrating the Frameworks.....	22
Figure 1:.....	23
Operational Definitions.....	25
Significance of Study.....	27
Conclusion.....	27
CHAPTER 2 – LITERATURE REVIEW.....	29
Research on Multicultural Student Programs and Services (MSPS).....	29
Retention of Students of Color.....	30
The Role of MSPS Administrators in Retention.....	31
Campus Environment and Retention.....	32
Black Lives Matter & Higher Education.....	34
Reception of the Black Lives Matter (BLM) Movement.....	34
Long-Term Impacts of BLM.....	36
State Legislation and Budget Appropriation.....	37
Role of Government in Financing.....	38
Government Funding Trends and Challenges.....	39
Funding Allocation and Impact.....	40
Institutional Resource Allocations.....	42
Institutions as Organizational Open Systems.....	43
Resource Allocation Dynamics and Perspectives.....	43
Factors Impacting Resource Allocation.....	44
Power Dynamics and Institutional Frameworks.....	45
Unit Power.....	45
Institutional Expenditures in Higher Education.....	47
Institutional Expenditures and Revenue as a Function of Principal Agent Theory.....	48
The Role of MSPS Administrators.....	48
Institutional Expenditures and Revenue Impact on Student Success.....	50
Theoretical Framework.....	53
Tinto's Theory of Institutional Action.....	53

Principal Agent Theory	54
Conclusion	56
CHAPTER 3 - METHODOLOGY	58
Data	59
Criteria	59
Data Collection Plans	60
Settings of the Sample	63
Timing	64
Variable Specification	64
RQ1: Can Institutional Expenditures on MSPS Predict Retention Rates for Students of Color?	64
RQ2: What is the Relationship Between MSPS Administrators' Unit Power and Institutional Expenditures for MSPS?	67
Data Analysis	70
Data Preparation	70
Sample Description and Representativeness	74
Analysis Plans	75
Sensitivity Testing	75
Descriptive Statistics	78
Correlation Analysis RQ1	78
Multiple Regression Analysis RQ1	79
Correlation Analysis RQ2	80
Multiple Regression Analysis RQ2	81
Data Visualization, Reporting, and Findings	83
Protection of Subjects	83
Validity and Reliability	84
Instrument Reliability (Hackman's Survey)	85
Statistical Reliability and Robustness Checks	85
Limitations	86
Conclusion	88
CHAPTER 4 - RESULTS	90
Introduction	90
Figure 2	91
Sensitivity Test: Relationship Between MSPS Expenditures and Retention Rates for Students of Color	91
Sensitivity Test: Principal Component Analysis for MSPS Administrator Unit Power	94
Descriptive Statistics	94
Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Student Retention Rates by Race/Year	96
Table 2. Descriptive Statistics for State MSPS Expenditures (in Millions)	97
Table 3.1 Environmental Power Indicators (2022)	97
Table 3.2 Institutional Power Indicators (2022)	98

Table 3.3 Resource Negotiation Indicators (2022)	98
RQ1: Can institutional expenditures on MSPS predict retention rates for students of color?..	99
Correlation	99
Table 4. Correlations Between State MSPS Expenditures and Students of Color Retention	99
Multiple Regression	100
Table 5.1. Hierarchical Multiple Regression Predicting Retention Rates by Race (2018).	101
Table 5.2. Hierarchical Multiple Regression Predicting Retention Rates by Race (2019).	104
Table 5.3. Hierarchical Multiple Regression Predicting Retention Rates by Race (2020).	107
Table 5.4. Hierarchical Multiple Regression Predicting Retention Rates by Race (2021).	110
Table 5.5. Hierarchical Multiple Regression Predicting Retention Rates by Race (2022).	112
RQ2: What is the relationship between MSPS administrator's unit power and institutional expenditures for MSPS?	115
Correlations	115
Table 6.1: Correlation Analysis MSPS Expenditures & Environmental Power (2018-2022)	115
Table 6.2: Correlation Analysis MSPS Expenditures & Institutional Power (2018-2022)	116
Table 6.3: Correlation Analysis MSPS Expenditures & Resource Negotiation (2018-2022)	118
Multiple Regression	118
Table 7.1 – Hierarchical Multiple Regression Predicting State MSPS Expenditure Using Environmental Power (2018–2022)	119
Table 7.2 – Hierarchical Multiple Regression Predicting State MSPS Expenditure Using Institutional Power (2018–2022)	122
Table 7.3 – Hierarchical Multiple Regression Predicting State MSPS Expenditure Using Resource Negotiation (2018–2022)	127
Unit Power & MSPS Administrator Role Correlations	130
Theoretical Framework Regression Model	131
Table 8. Theoretical Framework Regression Analysis Retention, MSPS Expenditures, & MSPS Unit Power	133
CHAPTER 5 - DISCUSSION	136
Summary of Key Findings	137
MSPS Expenditures and Student Retention	137
Variations Across Groups and Contexts	138
The Role of Administrative Leadership and Unit Power	138
Sociopolitical Pressures and the Policy Environment	139
Limitations	139
Methodological and Data Constraints	140
Conceptual and Contextual Limitations	140
Generalizability and External Validity	141
Discussion and Interpretation	141
Historical Continuities and the Present-Day Marginalization of MSPS	141
QuantCrit: Emphasizing Small Gains Amid Structural Barriers	142
Principal-Agent Theory and the Contingencies of MSPS Funding	143

Tinto's Retention Theory: Resource Allocation as Institutional Action	144
Hackman's Unit Power Framework: Negotiation, Authority, and Institutional Politics	145
Extended Theoretical Integration: Reconciling CRT with Institutional Models	145
Predictors of Retention for Students of Color.....	149
Variation Across Subgroups and Contexts	150
MSPS Expenditures as a Key Predictor in Retention Models	151
Unit Power and Resource Negotiation.....	151
Sociopolitical Pressures and Historical Underinvestment	152
Role of Campus Leadership and Unit Centralization	152
Integrating Empirical Insights with Theoretical Frameworks	153
MSPS Expenditures and Institutional Action	153
Theoretical Validation: Tinto, Principal-Agent, and Hackman	155
Theoretical Integration and the Centrality of MSPS.....	159
Figure 3:	160
Implications.....	160
Contextual Influences: Pandemic, Racial Turmoil, and Anti-DEI Pressures	160
Institutional Gatekeeping and External Funding	161
Reinterpreting "Small" Effect Sizes Through a Critical Race Lens	163
Implications for Public and External Stakeholders.....	165
Implications for MSPS Administrators and DEI Practitioners	167
Implications for Institutional Leaders, Policymakers, and Governance	169
Long-Term Strategic Investments and Innovations	171
Recommendations for Future Research	173
Directions for Data Collection and Scope Expansion.....	173
Exploring Admissions and Enrollment Dynamics.....	174
Addressing Variations Across Racial Groups.....	174
Methodological and Analytical Enhancements	175
Practitioner Recommendations	176
Quantitative Findings and Sociohistorical Critique	177
Data-Centered Advocacy	178
Navigating Capitalist Systems and Institutional Logics	179
Rebranding and Adaptation in Hostile Environments	181
Self-Care and Communal Support.....	183
Balancing Interest Convergence and Structural Reform	184
Confronting Capitalism and White Supremacy	185
Cross-analysis: Student services and MSPS expenditures.....	186
Institutional Logics and Tenuous DEI Commitments	187
Challenging Power Structures Beyond the Institution.....	188
Case Vignettes: Illustrating Performative and Adaptive Approaches	190
Case Study: Northville State University (NSU)	191
Case Study: Oxbridge Regional University (ORU).....	193
Case Study: Midlands Public University (MPU).....	195
Institutional Action & Accountability	198

Failure of Performative Allyship in Higher Education	198
Influence of Institutional Risk-Aversion and Anti-DEI Pressures	200
Complicity Through Inaction.....	201
A Call for Genuine Accountability	202
Broader Interpretations	206
Validating the Conceptual Framework	207
Countering Narratives.....	207
Positioning for the Future	207
DEI, Profitability, and Long-Term Viability	208
Implications for the Current Sociopolitical Environment.....	209
Relating Back to the Problem and Purpose.....	210
From 2018–2022 Findings to 2025 and Beyond.....	210
Revisiting Theoretical Tensions in Light of Findings	213
Leveraging QuantCrit Insights for Practitioner Resilience.....	213
Toward a Multi-Pronged, Equity-Driven Future	214
Implications for the Field of Education	215
Limitations and a Path Forward.....	215
Study Conclusion	216
Critical Reflection and Personal Epilogue	220
Institutional DEI in a Moment of National Reckoning.....	220
Legislative Pressures.....	221
QuantCrit: A Methodology That Mirrors the Work	223
The Data in This Study: Bringing Theory to Life.....	223
Reviewing Results and Personal Validation	224
Linking to Tinto’s Evolution and the Principal-Agent Dynamics	225
Why the Quantitative Gap Persists, and Why It Must Be Closed	225
Seeing the Research Gap from the Inside	226
Identity vs. Expertise	227
Final Reflection.....	228
REFERENCES	230
APPENDIX.....	265
Appendix 1 - MSPS Survey Documents.....	265
Appendix 2 – University Of Georgia Consent Form	267
Appendix 3 – Multicultural Student Programs and Services Budget Manager Unit Power Survey	269
Appendix 4 -Variable Definitions & Data Codes	274
Carnegie Classification	274
Institution Size	274
Selectivity Score	274
Anti-DEI legislation.....	274
Student services expenditures	275
MSPS Expenditures	275

Respondent Role	275
MSPS Administrator Unit Power Level	275
Appendix 5 – Supplemental Tables	276
Table A1.1 Frequencies of Data Sources.....	276
Table A1.2 Frequency of Mutual Peer Institutions.....	276
Table A1.3 Frequency of IPEDS Data.....	276
Table A2 Selectivity Score Range	276
Table A3 Student Services Expenditure Tier.....	277
Table A4 Institution Size	277
Table A5 Carnegie Grouping.....	277
Table A6 Role Code.....	278
Table A7 Descriptive Statistics for Retention Rates (2018–2022).....	279
Table A8 Descriptive Statistics for Student Services Expenditures (in Millions).....	279
Table A9.1 Correlation Analysis Environmental Power and MSPS Administrator Roles.	280
Table A9.2 Correlation Analysis Institutional Power and MSPS Administrator Roles	281
Table A9.3: Correlation Analysis Resource Negotiation and MSPS Administrator Roles	282
Table A10 Retention Rates – White Students (2018–2022).....	282
Table A11 Correlations Between State MSPS Expenditures and White Student Retention	283
Table A12 MSPS Expenditure & Retention by Race Regression (White Students)	283
Table A13. Sensitivity Testing for Correlation Analysis.....	286
Table A14. Sensitivity Testing for Hierarchical Regression Analysis	287
Table A15. Principal Analysis Component	289
Table A16. Correlation Between MSPS Expenditures and Adjusted Black Retention Under Varying Weight Schemes	291

CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

Background

From the earliest days of higher education in what would become the United States, institutional growth and prestige were intimately bound to systems of racial hierarchy, settler colonialism, and economic exploitation (Wilder, 2013). Universities such as Harvard benefited from land taken from Indigenous communities, while others, including Yale and Georgetown, relied heavily on endowments and labor connected to enslavement (Harris et al., 2019; Lee & Ahtone, 2020). These intertwined legacies of land dispossession and forced labor established the economic and social foundations upon which many institutions were built. The Land-Grant Acts of 1862 and 1890, for instance, demonstrated how federal policies and colonialist frameworks combined to reinforce existing power structures (Smith & Rodriguez, 2015). Although these acts expanded educational access for white students, they simultaneously dispossessed Indigenous nations of their lands, often with minimal to no compensation. So, the very foundations of American higher education—whether they were built on direct profits from chattel slavery or the taking over of Native American land—keep long-lasting injustices alive (Patton, 2016; Stein & de Oliveira-Andreotti, 2017). Modern discourses concerning diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) thus draw from a legacy in which power and resources were historically restricted to privileged groups. This historical backdrop frames present-day debates over resource allocation, particularly for initiatives such as Multicultural Student Programs and Services (MSPS). Calls for racial justice, galvanized by movements like Black Lives Matter, have intersected with

legislative efforts to curtail DEI programming, highlighting unresolved structural imbalances. In this evolving landscape, the way colleges and universities allocate and justify their resources is integral to both institutional operations and broader commitments to equity.

Institutional resources, specifically institutional funds to support unit expenditures, are necessary for the operations of higher education institutions as they attempt to reach goals related to student success (Barr & McClellan, 2018). Additionally, as institutions navigate external pressures, unit resource allocation can fluctuate (Rubin, 1976). Furthermore, higher education institutions have been called on to respond to national events centered on race by allocating additional fiscal resources to diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives (Williams et al., 2005). Coupled with the reaction of institutions of higher education is the response by state governing agencies to curtail or reduce the efforts of public colleges and universities attempting to make their campuses more inclusive to rectify systemic and historical exclusionary practices in higher education (Huiskeys, 2023; Schermele, 2023; Surovell, 2023). At the center of this tug-of-war between institutions and state governing agencies are the leaders responsible for negotiating resources to support the retention of the students they serve in a volatile fiscal landscape. Inadequate allocation of resources can negatively impact student retention beyond the first year (Schneider, 2010; Seidman, 2005). Scholars agree that if institutions take the right steps, like allocating resources and spending money in the first year, it can help keep students (Gansemertopf, 2004; Gansemertopf & Shuh, 2006; Tinto, 2012).

For this study, the modern Black Lives Matter Movement's reaction to the senseless, violent, and immoral murders of Black individuals in the United States serves as the national

incident on race that sparks institutional (re)investment in diversity, equity, and inclusion (Kaplan, 2023; Pendarkhar, 2022). The group was formed by Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors, and Opal Tometi, three Black women, after George Zimmerman was acquitted in the trial of the murder of Trayvon Martin (Garza et al., 2013). The BLM movement continued to gain national attention as a modern political movement after the death of Michael Brown by using social media and political protest (Garza et al., 2013). The socio-political unrest in Ferguson galvanized modern efforts for racial justice through the BLM Movement (Kaplan, 2023). The BLM movement and activists would continue to push for policy changes by applying pressure to elected officials as the death of Black Americans continued to be highly politicized (Taylor, 2016). The deaths of Freddie Gray in Baltimore, Eric Garner in New York, and others fueled the movement's momentum and visibility in the media and the American socio-political environment (Taylor, 2016).

The social consciousness spurred on by the BLM movement demanded responses from higher education institutions (Hailu & Sarubbi, 2019; Slagle et al., 2022). Students on college campuses organized protests as a part of the nationwide BLM movement but also to demand changes in curriculum, policies, and practices that perpetuated racial inequalities (Hailu & Sarubbi, 2019). In response to the student demand, many institutions allocated resources to diversity and inclusion initiatives, including curriculum changes, reorganization to expand or develop diversity offices, and campus policies around policing and free speech (Hailu & Sarubbi, 2019). Each of these institutional improvements focused on giving different resources to deal with race, racism, and social justice issues to create a campus climate and culture that fixed past

wrongs and made it easier for students from underserved and marginalized groups to do well in school and stay there (Hailu & Sarubbi, 2019; Slagle et al., 2022). But people have had different reactions to these changes. For example, the student-led Black Lives Matter movement has been criticized for how they try to make social change (Hailu & Sarubbi, 2019), and some institutions have only tried to respond on the surface to protect their brand, image, and reputation (Slagle et al., 2022).

In recent years, institutions of higher education have encountered intensifying legislative scrutiny regarding their diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives. Proposals and laws introduced in states such as Florida and Texas illustrate a growing trend to limit or abolish race- and identity-focused programming. Florida's Senate Bill 266 (2023), for example, bans public universities from dedicating financial or staffing resources to any form of "diversity, equity, or inclusion" initiative, while Texas Senate Bill 17 (2023) calls for the closure of DEI offices on public campuses. Because of these laws, whole departments have had to rename or shut down important MSPS programs, which has hurt budgets and made it harder for administrators to defend programs with racial or identity-based goals.

Concurrently, judicial decisions have amplified this climate of volatility. In 2023, the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling in *Students for Fair Admissions v. Harvard* ended race-conscious admissions nationwide, foreshadowing obstacles for race-focused retention and scholarship programs (Garces & Jayakumar, 2014). At the same time, a wave of anti- "Critical Race Theory" sentiment has ignited initiatives to remove DEI statements from faculty hiring, restrict the teaching of race-related topics, and penalize institutions accused of endorsing racial equity

(Ladson-Billings, 2020). As a result, university leaders and MSPS administrators must contend with the threat of punitive legal or policy measures, even for work previously viewed as integral to campus inclusivity.

Adding to these challenges, several federal directives issued in 2025—five Executive Orders and Dear Colleague Letters from the Office for Civil Rights (OCR)—reinforce an administration-level emphasis on “merit” over any form of equity-centered consideration. These directives characterize DEI measures as unlawful discrimination and narrow the interpretive scope of Title IX, thereby subjecting programs aimed at specific racial or gender identities to intensified federal scrutiny (Murphy, 2020). Through the lens of QuantCrit, these policy actions illustrate how the infrastructure of data collection, compliance, and enforcement can be manipulated to dismantle the very initiatives designed to support historically marginalized groups (Taylor & Antony, 2000). Administrators who previously leveraged DEI-driven metrics to secure funding must now reassess how “diversity” or “equity” are framed, given that mere invocation of these terms may trigger budgetary retractions, investigations, or public backlash.

To date, there have been 40 bills introduced by state legislators that would “prohibit colleges from having diversity, equity, and inclusion offices or staff; ban mandatory diversity training; prohibit institutions from using diversity statements in hiring and promotion; or prohibit colleges from using race, sex, color, ethnicity, or national origin in admissions or employment” (Huiskeys, 2023; Schermele, 2023; Surovell, 2023). In 7 states, the proposed legislation has become law (Huiskeys, 2023; Schermele, 2023; Surovell, 2023). Additionally, Schermele (2023) has questioned the fiscal efficacy of institutions that spend on diversity, equity, and inclusion

(DEI). Republican-backed state officials in Mississippi, Florida, Oklahoma, Ohio, North Carolina, and South Carolina have called for performance accountability (Kearns, 2023), auditing of fiscal resources (Brown, 2023), and bans of DEI in the curriculum (Surovell, 2023). These efforts, across states in the southeastern United States, have sought to undermine the negotiation and allocation of resources garnered during the BLM movement by placing pressure on higher education institutions to prove the fiscal efficacy of expenditures related to DEI to foster student academic success outcomes. Representative Knight, a member of the House of Representatives Appropriations Committee in the Georgia General Assembly, asked the University System of Georgia about any money that was given to an office or person who spent at least half of their time on diversity efforts (Knight, 2022). Like many other states in the United States, this committee has oversight of the finances of higher education institutions in Georgia. Representative Knight requested the review to understand the use of state resources allocated to higher education institutions to support diversity, equity, and inclusion areas for the retention and academic success of students of color.

For anti-DEI policymakers, the allocation of resources to DEI leaders and the offices they manage serves as nerve centers for campus liberalism, where faculty teach dangerous ideologies to subvert gender norms, where students are taught radical anti-American sentiment, and where campus policies are now designed to exclude white individuals from opportunities while simultaneously shaming white individuals for the identities they hold (Charles, 2023). In the face of all this opposition, DEI leaders on college campuses continue to balance their role of negotiating for resources to foster inclusive campuses while serving as first responders when

national racial events occur (Charles, 2023). DEI managers serve as navigators, leading their campuses through the tumultuous waters of social unrest on their campuses to make them better. To get institutional responses to work, DEI leaders and senior campus leaders need to be willing to set a vision that shows how DEI fits in with the institution's mission and values (Seeger & Ulmer, 2001; Seeger et al., 2005; Sellnow et al., 1998; Ulmer et al., 2019). By doing so, they can set expectations for model behavior throughout campus (Ulmer et al., 2019). Correctly done, the of DEI leaders can potentially aid in an institution's ability to manage resources around race to build trust among constituents and ensure future success when another national racial crisis occurs (Slagle et al., 2022).

Institutions of higher education, led in part by DEI administrators, are accountable to state agencies that set budgets, regulate operations, and set expectations for performance (Natow & Dougherty, 2015). Institutions and DEI leaders also face accountability to students for their degree attainment and development. More research needs to be done on the effects of giving resources to institutional spaces that promote diversity, equity, and inclusion on academic performance as well as on how campus administrators negotiate resources for these spaces to help keep students. The request from Representative Knight and other anti-DEL legislation provides a unique opportunity to understand how much an institution spends on average to support programs related to diversity, the extent of the services provided, and the subsequent impact of those programs and services.

Lastly, resource allocation and negotiation strategies reflect that colleges and universities operate as open systems directly interacting with their environment (Katz & Kahn, 1978; Miller,

1978). Unique to higher education is an institution's ability to garner essential resources like faculty, staff, students, funds, and other services in exchange for goods and services (Hackman, 1985; Hills & Mahoney, 1978; Pfeffer & Salancik, 1974). It is possible for institutional units to get more resources if they have strong unit power (meaning they are important to the institution's goals), enough environmental power, enough institutional power, and good resource negotiation strategies (Hackman, 1985). It is important for institutional units to use the resources they get in a way that is in line with their institutional goals and missions (Barr, 2018). These are usually related to student success outcomes like retention (Gansemmer-Topf & Schuh, 2006; Layzell, 1999; Ryan, 2004; Tinto, 2012).

Problem Statement

Despite the increased demand for increased resource allocations to diversity, equity, and inclusion in higher education following the recent 2020 Black Lives Matter Movement, there is a considerable gap in the research on the correlation between resource allocations to Multicultural Student Programs and Services (MSPS) of higher education in the form of institutional expenditures as a means for advancing DEI and the retention of students of color. The limited literature is intensified by the lack of research exploring the unit power of MSPS administrators to garner the allocation of additional resources in the form of institutional expenditures to support student retention in the wake of the BLM movement. Concurrently, the rapid increase in anti-DEI legislation, research on the ramifications of MSPS unit power in context with state policy changes still needs to be explored. Additionally, while previous scholars have attempted to explore the connection between institutional resource allocation and student retention

(Gansemer-Topf, 2004; Ryan, 2004; Umfress, 2010), there is limited research on resource allocation for specialized units like Multicultural Programs and Services and the retention of students of color.

It is crucial to understand the relationship between MSPS institutional expenditures as a form of resource allocation and students of color retention while also understanding the underlying unit power of MSPS administrators and their ability to influence those investments. This study tries to shed light on these interconnected issues by looking at the link between how much MSPS administrators negotiate for institutional spending and the benefit students receive by engaging in these spaces. This is necessary because the BLM movement and anti-DEI laws have made the current political and social climate more intense. Ultimately, this study gives a full look at how unit power and institutional expenditures work together to help keep students, which can help MSPS make better budget decisions based on more accurate data. Few studies have looked at how overall institutional resource allocation affects student retention (e.g., Gansemer-Topf, 2004; Ryan, 2004; Umfress, 2010). This means that there is a significant gap in the research regarding the precise effects of targeted spending for specialized units, such as Multicultural Student Programs and Services (MSPS). While prior studies have addressed general funding trends, they have not disaggregated the unique effects of MSPS investments on advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion, particularly in relation to the retention of students of color. There is also a noticeable lack of exploration into how well administrators can negotiate and get resources for their units. Given the significant sociopolitical shifts following the 2020 Black Lives Matter movement and the concurrent rise in anti-DEI legislation, it is essential to

investigate not only the quantitative relationship between MSPS funding and student retention but also how the strategic positioning and negotiation abilities of MSPS leaders influence retention outcomes. By explicitly examining these intertwined dimensions against the backdrop of an even more complex, and often hostile, sociopolitical environment, this study fills an important gap in the literature and offers nuanced insights that can inform more effective, data-enriched budgeting practices for MSPS.

Purpose of Study

The increased focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in higher education following the 2020 Black Lives Matter Movement presents two key challenges: assessing how investments in Multicultural Student Programs and Services (MSPS) influence the retention of students of color and analyzing the organizational power dynamics that determine funding allocations for these programs. This research investigates how recent financial commitments to MSPS affect student retention outcomes, as well as how MSPS administrators leverage organizational power to secure resources aimed at improving retention rates. Understanding these dynamics, particularly amidst evolving state-level policy changes, will assist institutions in developing data-informed budgeting strategies for MSPS.

Research Questions

Driven by Tinto's (2012) premise that institutional efforts can significantly influence student success, the following research questions explore how targeted investments in Multicultural Student Programs and Services (MSPS) shape the retention of students of color. They also examine the role of MSPS administrators' leadership strategies—referred to here as

Unit Power (Hackman, 1985)—in attracting institutional resources. By centering on these two focal points, this section underscores the importance of strategic funding and administrative authority in cultivating equitable higher education outcomes. To that end this study poses two questions:

- RQ 1: Can institutional expenditures on MSPS predict retention rates for students of color?
- RQ 2: What is the relationship between MSPS administrators' unit power and institutional expenditures for MSPS?

The first research question expands on earlier studies by Gansemer-Topf and Schuh (2006), Ryan (2004), and Umfress (2010), which discovered both positive and negative relationships between institutional expenditures as a means of allocating resources and student success outcomes, such as student retention. While previous research has not focused on targeted student populations or specialized services, this current research anticipates similar results to the Umfress (2010) research, which found that institutional expenditures for student services can be positive predictors of student retention. Research question two expands upon previous studies by Hackman (1985), Hills and Mahoney (1978), Pfeffer and Salancik (1974), and Schmoke (2016), which indicate that institutional unit centrality, environmental power, institutional power, and resource negotiation strategies can enhance resource allocations to institutional units. This study is unique in that previous research has not studied specific subunits.

Research Paradigm

Biddix (2018) asserts that numerous factors, such as advisor influences, past experiences, and personal backgrounds, shape a researcher's perspective. Ultimately, these elements coalesce into the research questions posed, the data collected, and the analytical methods employed. Scholars likewise suggest that research paradigms and methodologies drive how we find answers to various phenomena (Biddix, 2018). This study builds on these ideas by using QuantCrit, a combination of quantitative methods and Critical Race Theory (CRT), to look at how racism and race affect the way higher education institutions are set up and how data is used. CRT highlights the ongoing centrality of race in society, demonstrating how racism intersects with patriarchy, class-based hierarchies, and additional systems of structural inequality (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). In merging CRT's social justice mandate with robust quantitative approaches, QuantCrit reveals how seemingly "neutral" numbers and metrics can perpetuate or conceal inequities (Covarrubias et al., 2018; Sablan, 2019).

At its core, QuantCrit posits four central tenets that guide how quantitative data should be collected, interpreted, and contextualized with a critical focus on power and inequality (Sablan, 2019; Suzuki et al., 2021). First, it acknowledges that numbers are not neutral: racism, racial inequality, and race relations are all woven into quantitative findings. This means that both the data itself and the methods used to collect it need to be carefully looked at (Sablan, 2019). Second, QuantCrit positions quantitative data as a racial project, pointing out that data reflect human agency; researchers can use them to either reinforce or challenge existing inequalities (Sablan, 2019). Third, it urges the interrogation of data collection practices, emphasizing the

need to question how metrics are defined, which categories are created, and whose perspectives remain excluded (Sablan, 2019). Finally, it underscores that sociohistorical context matters, insisting on situating every dataset within the broader racial and historical dynamics that shape it (Sablan, 2019). Taken together, these tenets orient researchers toward a more critical, reflexive approach in any quantitative inquiry that involves race and equity.

QuantCrit encourages researchers to critically examine all phases of quantitative research (data collection, analysis, and reporting) to uncover structural biases and inequalities embedded in these processes (Gillborn et al., 2018; Sablan, 2019). Unlike traditional quantitative approaches, QuantCrit challenges the assumption of neutrality in quantitative methods, emphasizing the importance of examining how variables are defined, how data is collected, and how statistical analyses either reinforce or challenge existing power structures. By doing so, scholars can better understand how social inequalities and ideological biases influence research outcomes (Gillborn et al., 2018; Sablan, 2019). Furthermore, integrating QuantCrit into quantitative research allows scholars to identify avenues for meaningful social change and equity-driven policy recommendations (Covarrubias et al., 2018; Garcia et al., 2018; Suzuki et al., 2021).

Researcher Positionality

A researcher's positionality influences how they identify research gaps, formulate hypotheses, and contextualize findings (Unluer, 2012). While reflexivity is more commonly associated with qualitative inquiry, critical quantitative frameworks like QuantCrit understand that all research decisions—like choosing variables, collecting data, and figuring out what it all

means—are affected by the researcher's theoretical lens (Garcia et al., 2018). Additionally, critical perspectives in education research suggest that quantitative data must be interpreted within historical and institutional contexts (Gillborn et al., 2018). By integrating a QuantCrit framework, this study contextualizes how institutional resource allocations influence student success outcomes without assuming that data alone are value-neutral (Sablan, 2019).

As a scholar and an MSPS administrator, the researcher conducting this study is familiar with institutional governance, budget allocations, and retention of students. The researcher's professional background allows for a more accurate operationalization of key variables, such as MSPS funding categories and student retention rates. This makes sure that this study accurately captures how resources are distributed in higher education. Thereby contextualizing the research by acknowledging that institutional expenditures and student retention are shaped by systemic factors, including financial policies and sociopolitical pressures (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). Taken together, QuantCrit does not merely describe disparities; it actively seeks to transform the structures that produce them (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002; Covarrubias et al., 2018). By employing QuantCrit to underscore how sociohistorical contexts shape educational policies, retention measures, and campus program decisions, specifically related to race (Sablan, 2019), thus setting the foundation to reject deficit-based interpretations of data by contextualizing quantitative research and assessment within broader institutional sociopolitical power dynamics. Ultimately, this study aims to illuminate how institutional resource negotiations impact MSPS effectiveness in retaining students of color, highlighting how reflexive, power-aware inquiry can lead to more equitable institutional practices and outcomes (Suzuki et al., 2021).

Assumptions and Delimitations of the Study

The researcher is a ten-year Multicultural Student Programs and Services (MSPS) veteran. Most of their career has been dedicated to advocating for and supporting students from diverse backgrounds, specifically those who frequent MSPS services. Their positionality in this research is deeply rooted in a commitment to advancing the MSPS field. As research has demonstrated, MSPS programs are essential to institutional sustainability, student success, and the innovation of higher education (Kezar & Holcombe, 2017).

However, firsthand experience with deeply underfunded MSPS spaces provides the researcher with an acute awareness of the systemic challenges these programs face. As both a practitioner and researcher, they are uniquely positioned to contribute to this study. As a practitioner, they seek data-backed evidence that could provide greater institutional investment in MSPS programs and initiatives. As a researcher, they are invested in producing empirical work that frames MSPS expenditures as a high-quality return on investment for institutions, aligning with research on student success and retention (Garcia et al., 2018). This study examines institutional expenditures for MSPS, their correlations to student success outcomes—such as first-year retention—and how MSPS administrators negotiate resources from their institutions to support student success. Given this study's focus, several delimitations apply. The data collection is based on self-reported surveys, which, while widely used in higher education research, are subject to response biases and institutional reporting variability (Porter, 2013). Additionally, institutional and organizational structures related to MSPS may differ significantly across institutions, affecting the consistency of the reported data.

Another limitation concerns the broader array of factors that influence student retention beyond institutional expenditures. Prior research has demonstrated that variables such as institutional characteristics, individual student demographics, and overall campus climate play significant roles in retention outcomes (Strayhorn, 2012). Although this study focuses on MSPS funding as a key variable, it acknowledges that retention is a multifaceted issue shaped by intersecting institutional and student-level factors. By integrating a reflexive and equity-driven approach, this study seeks to mitigate these limitations while contributing to the growing body of research on the institutional role of MSPS in fostering student success.

Theoretical/Conceptual Framework/Conceptual Orientation

Tinto's Institutional Action Model

The first theoretical framework guiding this study is Tinto and Pusser's (2006) Institutional Action Model, which builds on Tinto's earlier research on student retention by shifting the focus from individual student traits to the institutional conditions influencing retention. Tinto's framework emphasizes the organizational role in student persistence rather than attributing outcomes solely to personal characteristics (Tinto, 2012). According to this model, institutional commitment, supportive expectations, student support services, effective feedback, and campus engagement collectively shape student success. The Institutional Action Model thus places responsibility on institutional practices and policies to enhance retention, especially among underrepresented groups (Gansemer-Topf & Schuh, 2006). Empirical studies applying this model have demonstrated the effectiveness of proactive advising, student

engagement initiatives, and targeted resource allocation in improving retention outcomes (Braxton et al., 2004; Demetriou & Schmitz-Sciborski, 2011).

Key to Tinto's perspective is the premise that institutions should not view retention challenges as centered on student behavior, attitudes, or motivation, but should instead evaluate how effectively the institution meets students' social and academic needs (Tinto, 2012). Successful retention, in Tinto's view, hinges on organizational commitments, structural supports, and feedback loops—all of which emerge from policy decisions and resource allocations (Tinto, 2006). For instance, if a college truly commits to diversifying its student body and enhancing campus climate, it will allocate new resources and redesign policies to address the structural barriers that marginalized students encounter. This might entail augmenting advising services, incorporating culturally responsive curricula, or developing programming that affirms diverse student identities.

In the context of Multicultural Student Programs and Services (MSPS), Tinto's framework highlights how institutional commitments must go beyond rhetoric. If MSPS is chronically underfunded or marginalized, the institution signals that supporting racially minoritized students is not a core priority. Conversely, tangible investments—dedicated budgets, campus-wide DEI initiatives, and partnerships with faculty—indicate that the college is adapting to student needs (Tinto, 2012). Tinto also stresses the importance of institutional feedback: listening to students of color, gathering data on their experiences, and adjusting campus strategies accordingly.

While Tinto's Institutional Action Model prioritizes building environments conducive to academic and social integration, a QuantCrit lens demands scrutiny of how race and racialized conditions shape these environments and the metrics that measure success (Gillborn et al., 2018). For example, Tinto's model typically uses retention or graduation rates as feedback mechanisms for organizational improvement. However, QuantCrit questions whether such metrics are historically designed in ways that obscure or rationalize racialized disparities. An institution could celebrate a rising overall graduation rate, even if Black or Indigenous students see little or no improvement (Srinivasan et al., 2024). Thus allowing an institution to celebrate retention gains without ensuring that student success is equitability reflected across racial groups.

Under QuantCrit, institutional actions must involve disaggregated, context-rich measures—including qualitative data about bias or microaggressions—to ensure that improvements do not simply accommodate a privileged norm (Demetriou & Schmitz-Sciborski, 2011; Srinivasan et al., 2024). Tinto's (2012) focus on institutional commitment is even more important when you consider the power imbalances that have kept some groups out in the past. This resonates with QuantCrit's call to interrogate data regimes for systemic racism or marginalization, thus ensuring that what counts as "commitment to retention" goes hand in hand with explicit equity goals (Gillborn et al., 2018). Otherwise the reverse becomes true, disparities in student success along racial lines are representative of direct intentional commitment to upholding racial inequities. The intersection of Tinto's Institutional Action Model and QuantCrit supports a central research objective of this study: to explore how institutional commitments and

policies intersect with historical racial inequities, especially in terms of resource allocation to MSPS and student retention.

Principal-Agent Theory

This study's second theoretical framework is Principal-Agent Theory (PAT), situated within institutional theory. Institutional theory proposes that organizations operate as unique social entities shaped by formal and informal norms, rules, and practices, striving for legitimacy through alignment with external expectations (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Meyer & Rowan, 1977; Scott, 1987). Principal-Agent Theory complements this by explaining the social dynamics of resource allocation: principals (e.g., senior administrators, governing boards, state legislatures) delegate resources, while agents (e.g., MSPS or academic departments) act to fulfill strategic goals set by their principals. In the context of higher education, accountability is maintained through quantitative indicators such as retention rates, time to degree, and budget utilization, which principals use to monitor agent performance (Eisenhardt, 1989; Lane & Kivistö, 2008; Natow & Dougherty, 2015).

In higher education, PAT has been invoked to study governance structures, funding formulas, and how performance metrics drive administrative decision-making (Lane & Kivistö, 2008). On one hand, these indicators can usefully demonstrate the effectiveness of MSPS initiatives, for instance, by showing how targeted interventions increase retention among specific populations. However, reliance on limited or aggregated data can obscure ongoing disparities and unintentionally penalize departments investing heavily in supporting marginalized groups. Principal-Agent Theory also emphasizes information asymmetry—agents often have detailed

knowledge about challenges faced by specific student populations, insights that principals might overlook if they only focus on broad, aggregated metrics (Lane & Kivistö, 2008).

Principal-Agent theory commonly depends on quantitative performance metrics to align agent actions with principal goals. However, QuantCrit contends that these metrics may not be racially neutral; rather, they can reflect “color-evasive” or “color-blind” assumptions that overlook the unique experiences of historically marginalized students (Gillborn et al., 2018). For instance, an institution might reward units for overall retention gains, neglecting large retention gaps for students of color. “Color-blind” or “color-evasive” policies essentially treat race as irrelevant, failing to account for systemic barriers and risking the reinforcement of existing inequities (Birnbaum et al., 2021).

QuantCrit also critiques the asymmetrical power in defining which data “matter,” since principals often standardize one-size-fits-all indicators (e.g., GPA thresholds), inadvertently codifying policies that do not address the real obstacles students of color face (Gillborn et al., 2018; Srinivasan et al., 2024). Meanwhile, MSPS leaders—acting as agents—may better understand these racialized barriers to success. To reclaim agency, MSPS administrators can advocate for clearer data definitions and context-sensitive metrics, shifting accountability from generalized indicators toward equity-oriented goals (Srinivasan et al., 2024).

Hackman’s Unit Power

The third framework, Hackman’s (1985) Unit Power, examines how organizational subunits—such as departments, centers, or administrative offices—exert formal and informal authority within an institution. Formally, a unit might control budgets or have policy authority,

enabling it to set agendas or operational priorities. Informally, it can cultivate strategic alliances, harness specialized expertise, or leverage social networks to drive institutional outcomes. Some studies of campus operations use Hackman's approach to explain how particular units gain disproportionate influence when their expertise becomes critical to institutional strategy or accreditation (Kezar & Holcombe, 2017).

When a unit like MSPS demonstrates its strategic value (for example, by boosting retention among racially minoritized students), it gains leverage to negotiate budgets and influence campus-wide decisions (Hackman, 1985). Hackman underscores several conditions that enhance unit power, including centrality (the degree to which a unit's function aligns with core institutional missions), flexibility (the ability to adapt or pivot in response to changing policies or crises), and expertise (possession of specialized knowledge or skills not easily replaced) (Hackman, 1985). In higher education, environmental power—gained by managing external relationships, such as those with accrediting agencies, community groups, or national organizations—can further augment a unit's influence (Hackman, 1985; Kezar & Holcombe, 2017). MSPS units can use alliances within the institution to demonstrate accountability and compliance with accreditation standards, enhancing their perceived institutional importance (Hackman, 1985). However, if a unit experiences leadership instability, lacks strong alliances, or fails to provide clear evidence of impact, its organizational influence and ability to secure resources diminish, leaving it vulnerable (Hackman, 1985).

Under QuantCrit, the authority to generate, interpret, and frame data becomes a critical facet of Hackman's notion of "unit power." In addition to managing budgets and processes,

MSPS can question data categories that don't take race into account or suggest race-aware indicators that bring attention to the struggles of disadvantaged groups (Gillborn et al., 2018). By deploying disaggregated data, an MSPS can redirect institutional narratives away from simplistic “success” claims and toward systemic barriers affecting specific subpopulations (Castillo & Gillborn, 2022). Likewise, it can redefine accountability so that equity metrics—rather than cost efficiency—take priority. If the institutional environment is hostile to race-specific measures, a unit with strong alliances or documented expertise may still negotiate the leeway to collect and present nuanced data, ultimately shaping policy in more inclusive ways (Gillborn et al., 2018).

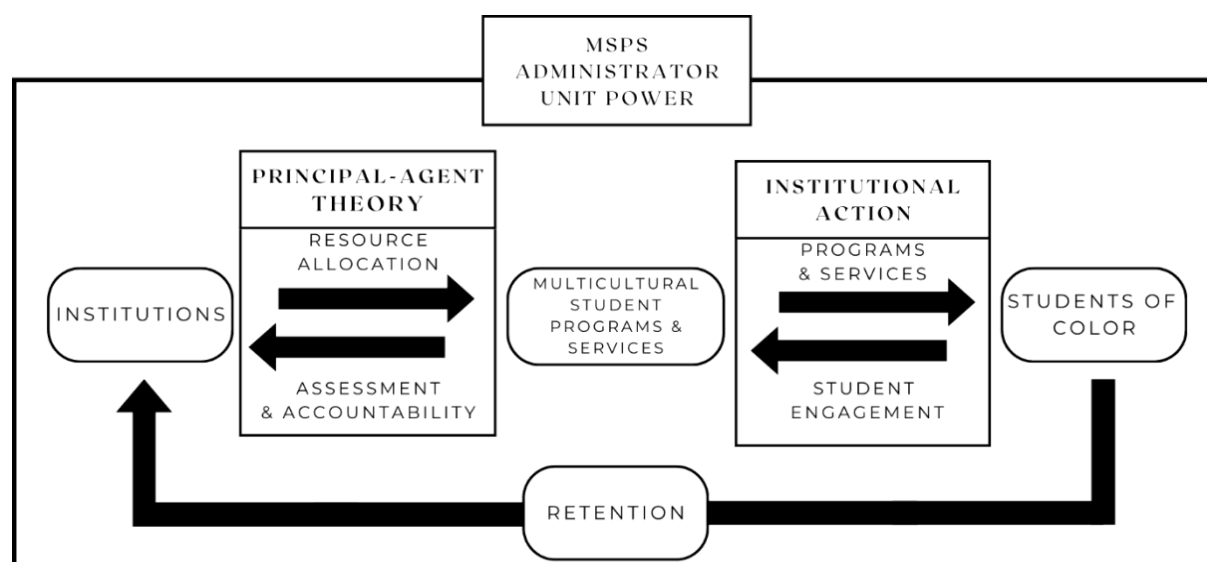
Hackman’s framework thus clarifies how subunits strategically exert their power (Hackman, 1985). Combined with QuantCrit’s imperative to question conventional data practices, the model underscores that power is measured not only by budget lines but also by a subunit’s ability to reshape how success is defined and tracked (Gillborn et al., 2018). For MSPS, this might involve revealing underrecognized student challenges to push the institution to acknowledge that overall retention metrics can sometimes mask racial inequities (Castillo & Gillborn, 2022).

Integrating the Frameworks

Integrating Tinto’s Institutional Action Model, Principal-Agent Theory, and Hackman’s Unit Power provides multiple perspectives on how higher education institutions allocate resources, establish accountability, and influence student outcomes. Tinto’s model emphasizes institutional responsibility in creating environments that promote student retention. Principal-Agent Theory addresses how resource distribution aligns or conflicts with the interests of various

institutional actors. Hackman’s framework reveals how subunits can influence decisions formally and informally. QuantCrit bridges these frameworks, critically examining how data and policies may inadvertently sustain racial inequities. By combining these perspectives, this research investigates how resource allocation practices affect retention, particularly for students of color, and how institutional data practices either reinforce or disrupt longstanding racial hierarchies. This can be represented in the following figure:

Figure 1:



The figure depicts how these theories converge. As principals, institutions supply MSPS with resources tied to accountability measures (Principal–Agent). MSPS administrators leverage unit power to secure, deploy, and justify those resources (Hackman), translating institutional action into targeted programs and student engagement (Tinto).

Tinto's Institutional Action Model (2012) helps us understand how proactive institutional commitments like counseling, cultural programs, and policy structures create a campus environment that encourages students to stay in school. According to Tinto, institutions rather than students bear primary responsibility for promoting retention, so concrete actions (e.g., targeted services, inclusive curricula) signal genuine commitment to academic and social integration. Simultaneously, Principal-Agent Theory (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Meyer & Rowan, 1977; Scott, 1987) explains the relationship between institutions (principals) and subunits (agents). In this context, the institution allocates resources with the expectation that MSPS administrators will deploy those funds effectively to meet student success goals. However, accountability pressures, often measured via quantitative indicators like graduation rates or time-to-degree, complicate this dynamic. The theories underscore the tension inherent in delegating authority—MSPS leaders possess on-the-ground insights that may not always be supported by institutional performance metrics, especially when those metrics overlook racialized disparities. Hackman's (1985) Unit Power framework then brings the notion of MSPS administrators' influence to the forefront. Formal budget authority, policy discretion, and informal alliances are all levers that can help a subunit like MSPS negotiate for resources and shape institutional priorities. When MSPS demonstrates strategic value—such as measurable gains in the retention of Black, Latinx, or other historically marginalized students—it enhances its ability to secure greater funding, staff, and institutional visibility. This process is especially significant given that institutions sometimes default to color-blind approaches that do not address or track racial inequities. MSPS leaders, wielding unit power, can insist on disaggregated data,

equitable accountability benchmarks, and culturally responsive programming, thus nudging campus culture toward genuine inclusivity (Castillo & Gillborn, 2022).

QuantCrit provides a unifying perspective by critically evaluating how race, racism, and structural inequalities are embedded in seemingly neutral data practices or policies. It encourages administrators to refine data definitions and advocate for more detailed, context-sensitive metrics that prioritize equity. Through this lens, this study examines how performance criteria and budgeting expectations are negotiated, emphasizing the need for race-conscious decision-making to address the realities faced by marginalized student populations.

Operational Definitions

For this study, the critical variables under review include institutional expenditures as the independent variable and data related to one-year retention rates for students of color as the dependent variables. The MSPS unit's power also serves as an independent variable, as this study investigates the unit's relationship to institutional expenditures, which is the dependent variable in the second part of this study.

- Institutional expenditure: Institutional expenditures are the total amount of money spent on students by colleges and universities (NCES, 2022).
- Resource allocation is how colleges and universities give money and other resources to different parts of the school so that they can carry out their missions and goals (Hackman, 1985).
- Resource negotiation is the process that institutional unit and subunit administrators use to get the resources they need to run their units (Hackman, 1985).

- Unit Power is the sum of a unit's centrality, its environment's power, its institutional power, and its negotiation strategies that help it get resources (Hackman, 1985).
- Multicultural Student Programs and Services: Any funding where fifty percent or more of the organization or individual's compensated time:
 - Directly advancing, advocating for, or formally supporting affinity or identity groups based on racial, gender, sexual orientation or identity, or ethnicity.
 - Advocacy for social justice.
 - Advocacy for anti-racism.
 - Focused on serving students, faculty, or staff primarily belonging to specific identifications of race, gender, sex, sexual orientation, or identity.
 - Policies or recommendations to further diversity, inclusion, and equity. (CAS Standards, 2018; Knight, 2022).
- Enrollment: "The 12-month Enrollment count is the unduplicated headcount of students enrolled over a 12-month period. Because this enrollment measure encompasses an entire year, it provides a more complete picture of the number of students at non-traditional institutions that enroll students year-round or for short-term programs. "(NCES, 2023).
- Retention Rate: "A measure of the rate at which students persist in their educational program at an institution, expressed as a percentage. For four-year institutions, this is the percentage of first-time bachelor's (or equivalent) degree-seeking undergraduates from the previous fall who are again enrolled in the current fall. For all other institutions this is the percentage of first-time degree/certificate-seeking students from the previous fall who

either re-enrolled or successfully completed their program by the current fall” (NCES, 2023).

- MSPS administrator: MSPS administrators are individuals responsible for institutional expenditure strategies, prioritization, and spending (Barr, 2018).

Significance of Study

It is clear from current socio-political dialogues between pro-DEI entities like the Black Lives Matter Movement and anti-DEI entities like some state legislators that the resources allocated and negotiated for MSPS spaces in higher education institutions are important to the greater public. Furthermore, concerns regarding student success and completion are also crucial in higher education. This study adds to current research by investigating specific institutional expenditures for MSPS and students of color retention while acknowledging institutional resource allocation and negotiation’s direct influence in supporting student retention goals. The knowledge generated by this study is to equip practitioners and decision-makers with quantitative research to support continual and increased investment in diversity, equity, and inclusion programs like MSPS. This study will answer researchers’ and politicians' questions regarding the legitimacy of MSPS spaces, the impact on the students they serve, and the fiscal appropriateness for allocating funds to those spaces.

Conclusion

In recent years, several states have attempted to enact laws limiting divisive concepts in public educational spaces (Pendharkar, 2022). While most efforts have been targeted at K-12 institutions (Pendharkar, 2022), laws like Florida’s Stop WOKE aim to limit how public higher

education institutions operationalize diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives (Pendharkar, 2022). In the current socio-political environment, the roles that diversity, equity, and inclusion play are in question in higher education. Specifically, diversity initiatives like multicultural centers, LGBTQ centers, women's studies departments, and others face increasing criticism as a practical use of institutional resources. We can add to the current socio-political conversation about the utility of diversity, equity, and inclusion programs in public higher education (Brown, 2019). Simultaneously, student success is an ongoing goal of institutions as they attempt to improve student GPA, retention, enrollment, and graduation. It's clear from the research on how MSPS affects the success of students of color that these places give them the sense of community (Harper, 2007; Strayhorn, 2015), belonging (Egan, 2019; Palmer et al., 2014; Strayhorn, 2014), and academic support (Harper, 2007; Brooms, 2016; Strayhorn, 2015). These factors lead to positive student success outcomes among students of color (Egan, 2019; Harper, 2007; Palmer, 2014; Strayhorn, 2015). However, there is limited research in general regarding the influence that institutional expenditures have on student success outcomes (Davis, 2016; Dougherty & Reddy, 2011; Umfress, 2010). This study builds upon existing literature on institutional accountability to taxpayers and legislators, connecting principal-agent dynamics to contemporary discussions on institutional spending and student success outcomes. The research investigates institutional spending on multicultural programs, examines correlations between these investments and student success, and explores how MSPS administrators advocate for resources to effectively support diverse student populations.

CHAPTER 2 – LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter reviews relevant literature related to the research questions. Starting with research on the retention of students of color and how institutional resources are sourced from state legislators for higher education operations. The chapter then outlines how institutions allocate resources within institutions to units and ends with research on MSPS. Lastly, this chapter expands on the guiding theoretical frameworks.

Research on Multicultural Student Programs and Services (MSPS)

Researchers suggest that community building, outreach, administrative practices, and cultural programming are the pillars of multicultural center operations (Jenkins, 2010). Specifically, these spaces act as cultural buffers for students as they engage with most spaces that may not support their cultural identity (Yosso, 2005). In addition, Yosso & Lopez (2010) propose that cultural centers do that by placing the histories and experiences of students of color at the center and forefront of services offered to students. This connects MSPS back to their original inceptions in that they were established to “meet the needs of target racial and ethnic groups on campus” (Shufford, 2011, p. 31).

The Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) provides guidelines for distinct functional areas within higher education institutions. As a functional area of higher education, MSPS originated as a response to close institutional gaps in services for students of color as a direct result of efforts after passing the Civil Rights Act (CAS, 2018). Though most modern iterations seek to support all students on campus, their primary focus and

purpose centers around advocating “for the academic, personal, and social development of underrepresented students” (CAS, 2018, p. 2). For the MSPS Standards, CAS outlines 12 standard criteria functional areas dedicated to Multicultural Student Programs. Regarding contextualizing the current literature discussion, the CAS Standards suggest that MSPS supports students of color retention by promoting personal growth, contributing to students' progression and timely completion of educational goals, and reaching programmatic and administrative responsibilities (CAS, 2018).

Additionally, administrative practices are best supported when cultural centers are “physically structured to be of actual use to students and encouraging staff in the center to establish a cultural environment of warmth and welcome, [so that] culture is not only about celebration, ritual, and tradition but also about space, rootedness, and belonging (Jenkins, 2010, p. 144). By allocating resources to develop multicultural student programs, institutions can address the institutional retention gap among these traditionally underserved populations (Jenkins, 2010).

Retention of Students of Color

Students of color, also known as students from traditionally underserved populations, have unique methods that foster positive outcomes related to student success, which MSPS most often provides. However, researchers suggest numerous interventions, and three key themes emerge: peer-to-peer interactions, faculty/staff interactions, and campus environments (Brooms, 2016; Egan, 2019; Palmer, 2014; Strayhorn, 2015). When adequately resourced, MSPS can support traditionally underserved student populations, and thus, these students have higher

retention rates when involved in peer-to-peer interactions, including student organizations and mentorship (Brooms, 2016; Egan, 2019; Palmer, 2014; Strayhorn, 2015). This is because these interactions help foster greater campus integration of traditionally underserved populations (Brooms, 2016; Palmer et al., 2014), which include involvement in student organizations, Black Greek Letter organizations, multicultural centers, and other opportunities for students of color to have positive interactions inside and outside the classroom (Palmer et al., 2014). Citing these spaces promotes group motivation and success (Brooms, 2016; Egan, 2019), a sense of community (Egan, 2019; Harper, 2016; Palmer et al., 2014), and affirming identity spaces (Egan, 2019; Harper, 2016). Specifically highlighting the value that TRIO programs, affirmative action, and college readiness programs provide, Palmer et al. (2014) outline each program's history, successes, and limitations and how they provide access to postsecondary institutions for Black men. Additionally, Harper (2016) builds upon other scholars' research by outlining several strategies institutions can employ to help support Black male success. It also highlights the role of student organizations, peer interactions, faculty-student interactions, Black Greek Letter Organizations, Black Male Initiatives, and mentorship, all providing positive opportunities for Black men to integrate into the college setting and find success (Harper, 2016; Palmer et al., 2014).

The Role of MSPS Administrators in Retention

The literature implies that any positive interaction between a student from a traditionally underserved background and a professional member of the college can yield positive outcomes related to student success, such as retention (Brooms, 2016; Harper, 2016). But researchers often

point to problems with campus integration that MSPS tends to fix or lessen. For example, they say that bad working conditions for minority faculty on campuses are one reason why students of color can't fully integrate at those schools (Harper, 2016). Brooms (2016) argued that unfair and unjust treatment of students of color in colleges is exacerbated by the limited representation of minority faculty, specifically Black male faculty and staff. To further support the relationship between students and faculty, Egan references that the “Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System showed that 77.3 % of full-time faculty in the United States were White, 5.5 % were Black, and 3.9 % were Latino, while only 2 % of full-time faculty at research institutions were Black in 2009.” (Egan, 2019, p. 91). Researchers argue that faculty and staff of color are vital supporters and gatekeepers for students of color to integrate successfully into campus culture. Specifically, the value MSPS programs give students is fostering socio-cultural capital with faculty and staff while they attend college (Egan, 2019). Palmer et al. (2014) support that institutions should invest in MSPS programs as they yield positive qualitative results related to the college experience of students of color. Researchers argue that staff and faculty of color are vital supporters and gatekeepers for students of color to integrate successfully into campus culture via the programs provided by MSPS (Egan, 2019; Harper, 2016).

Campus Environment and Retention

The literature identified campus climate as a critical indicator of students of color's success (Brooms, 2016; Egan, 2019; Palmer et al., 2014). From their research, researchers say that institutional subunits like MSPS help students of color in postsecondary schools gain the sociocultural capital they need, help students of color stay in school, and make campuses less

hostile (Duran et al., 2020; Egan, 2019). While many researchers highlight the importance of MSPS in fostering an inclusive campus environment for student retention of color, Brooms (2016) offers a deeper dive in that their findings suggest four distinct outcomes of MSPS as related to fostering a campus environment. As a result of their involvement in MSPS programs, students of color can develop: “(a) sense of belonging – comprised of statements of mattering and feeling connected on campus; (b) gaining access – comprised of statements where students expressed the importance of increased access to socio-cultural capital; (c) academic motivation – comprised of statements positing the efforts to support and enhance students' academic and educational performances, and (d) heightened sense of self, or feeling connected to a collective identity and consciousness among staff and peer members” (Harper, 2016, p. 146). However, scholars often focus on various factors MSPS has that influence a positive campus climate for students of color. MSPS promotes positive campus environments for students of color by providing financial support, spirituality, family support, racial identity development, gender identity development, and non-cognitive factors (Egan, 2019). Throughout the literature, most authors push higher education professionals to advocate for funding and resources to support subunits like MSPS to uphold the retention of students of color (Egan, 2019; Palmer et al., 2014).

Research on MSPS proves that these programs effectively support students of color in excelling academically and having a positive college experience. MSPS was initially established to address the lack of services for students of color to advocate for their personal and social growth. These centers serve as havens for students of color, creating an environment that embraces their identities and experiences. Studies indicate that MSPS have played a role in the

retention and success of students, fulfilling a unique role that the mainstream campus climate may not provide.

Black Lives Matter & Higher Education

The Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement has had a significant impact on both higher education and the media narratives that shape public discourse around race and activism. Within the context of colleges and universities, BLM-inspired student protests have served as catalysts for institutional accountability, challenging campus policies and practices that uphold racial inequity (Hailu & Sarubbi, 2019). These student-led movements not only amplify demands for justice but also disrupt dominant narratives about Blackness in academic spaces, urging a reexamination of campus culture and historical legacies (Sarubbi, 2019). However, media coverage of BLM activism in higher education frequently follows a “protest paradigm,” which frames student protests through a lens of disapproval, focusing on disruption, violence, or blame while downplaying the structural injustices being challenged (Leopold & Bell, 2017). Although reporting on BLM evolved between 2014 and 2020—acknowledging its roots in a broader tradition of Black resistance—mainstream media often erases the leadership of Black women and the gendered dimensions of state violence (Carney & Kelekay, 2022). To better reflect the complexity and legitimacy of campus-based activism, scholars recommend increasing racial diversity in newsrooms and holding media outlets accountable for racialized language that distorts the goals of student resistance movements (Leopold & Bell, 2017).

Reception of the Black Lives Matter (BLM) Movement

It's clear that the way BLM and institutions responded shows a change in the ways that people are mobilized. People are relying more on the internet for communication and organization, which seems to be working to get institutions to respond, even though overall reactions may not have been positive (Brown, 2022; Hailu & Sarubbi, 2019; Slagle et al., 2022). While some researchers acknowledged BLM as a significant social movement akin to those in the 1960s, the movement was met with suspicion and even fear, outright challenging the validity of BLM in higher education (Hailu & Sarubbi, 2019). In modern-day student activism, social media has become a powerful tool for increasing awareness about protests and garnering public attention (Hailu & Sarubbi, 2019). While the use of photographs for activism is not new, the ease of sharing images in the digital age amplifies their impact, reaching a broader audience (Hailu & Sarubbi, 2019). Researchers emphasize the importance of "optics" in contemporary student-led protests, highlighting how the visual representation of protests shaped public perception and pressured institutions to respond (Hailu & Sarubbi, 2019).

Discussion of the movement often painted student activists involved in BLM as emotionally driven individuals rather than rational actors, undermining the movement's policy objectives and institutional change (Hailu & Sarubbi, 2019). This portrayal unfairly skewed administrators' perceptions and possibly hindered the broader understanding of the movement's goals (Hailu & Sarubbi). Also, researchers found that institutions were more likely to make rules that limited the power of student activists. This meant that administrators would sometimes show some sympathy, but more often they would punish students who heckled and limit free speech at

public institutions (Hailu & Sarubbi, 2019). In contrast, there were marginal attempts by universities to develop communication strategies during racial equity movements to shape stakeholders' perceptions and trust in the institutions as a good-faith actor (Slagle et al., 2022). Ongoing empathetic communication effectively responded to civil unrest caused by racial injustice (Slagle et al., 2022).

Institutional response to the BLM movement and student activism seemed to be highly influenced by media perception and reporting. This, in turn, prompted administrators to respond in varying ways to the impact the BLM movement had on students and their expectations. Because of this, schools had to try to address the concerns of underrepresented groups by putting money into diversity programs (Slagle et al., 2022).

Long-Term Impacts of BLM

Student activism as a part of Black Lives Matter (BLM) had a profound impact, prompting meaningful dialogues about campus policies and structural changes on college campuses (Hailu & Sarubbi, 2019; Slagle et al., 2022). Student activism compelled institutions to engage in critical self-assessment and address enduring inequities (Hailu & Sarubbi, 2019). Despite mixed responses to policies, which emerged in response to the BLM Movement, student activists were able to make some ground in pushing their institutions to adjust policies to foster a more inclusive and welcoming environment (Hailu & Sarubbi, 2019; Slagle et al., 2022). University leaders took various approaches to address diversity issues, including setting up focus groups of Black and Brown faculty, staff, and students to identify problems and concerns related to diversity on campus (Brown, 2022; Slagle et al., 2022). In response to the death of George

Floyd and others, institutional leaders began to provide space for faculty and staff to form affinity groups to create pathways for feedback regarding the experiences of marginalized individuals (Slagle et al., 2022). Some universities' reactions to the larger movement for equity were also studied through surveys that compared how people on campus felt about diversity, equity, and inclusion before and after the movement (Slagle et al., 2022). Furthermore, some institutions attempted to reopen or expand funding for diversity centers (Brown, 2022; Slagle et al., 2022). The strategy behind these attempts was for administrators to quickly address concerns and foster open communication (Browning, 2022; Slagle et al., 2022).

Despite the mixed reception of institutions, the BLM movement has had a lasting impact on higher education policies, leading to discussions and actions related to racial equity and social justice (Browning, 2022; Hailu & Sarubbi, 2019; Slagle et al., 2022). The most salient influence of BLM activism is reflected in higher education policies, with academic institutions being urged to confront racial inequity and address concerns raised by people of color (Slagle et al., 2022). However, research is also clear that the more substantive institutional changes were to limit student activism, while policies intended to improve campus climates were limited (Browning, 2022). As a result, student activism can be a powerful force for positive change in higher education, but a more inclusive approach is needed to fully realize its potential (Hailu & Sarubbi, 2019).

State Legislation and Budget Appropriation

State governments play a role in shaping students' achievement in public higher education institutions. The way financial resources are allocated by state governments directly

affects the accessibility and quality of education for students and the long-term sustainability of these institutions (Hauptman, 2007; Laderman et al., 2023). However, some factors impact how state funds are allocated, including conditions, public perception, and competing societal needs. As economic conditions change, state governments may adjust their funding priorities, leading to fluctuations in funding for educational institutions (Kretovics & Michael, 2004). These changes in government funding have resulted in increased scrutiny with a focus on performance-based funding systems that require the use of resources. But these systems can also put pressure on institutions to make the best use of their resources and get the results they want in education (Hauptman, 2007; Kretovics & Michael, 2004; Laderman et al., 2023). State budget appropriations can directly impact the total resources allocated to institutions and the prioritization of subunit resources based on state government priorities around student success and retention.

Role of Government in Financing

Government funding is pivotal in the longevity and sustainability of public higher education. In contrast to private entities, the public sector notably hinges on state government revenue (Kretovics & Michaels, 2004). Government agencies play a critical role as key stakeholders in higher education, strategically allocating resources influenced by public opinion, economic conditions, competing societal demands, and the overall demand for higher education (Laderman et al., 2023). These decisions reflect complex governmental priorities and have broad implications for educational accessibility and quality. Public funding from tax revenues creates an essential link between government priorities and the operations of higher education

institutions, underscoring the importance of public resource allocation in achieving educational goals (Hauptman, 2007). The funding structure of higher education institutions is characterized by a twofold approach: direct institution funds, termed operating appropriations, and student financial aid (Laderman et al., 2023). This dual approach embodies the multifaceted nature of government support, catering to the institutional operations and the individual aspirations of students. The significance of these mechanisms lies in their ability to simultaneously bolster institutions' ability to provide quality education and facilitate students' access to learning opportunities (Kretovics & Michaels, 2004; Laderman et al., 2023).

Government Funding Trends and Challenges

When it comes to allocating resources and negotiating, higher education faces many complicated issues that affect leadership, the freedom and responsibility of institutions, and the public's view of higher education as a public good (Hauptman, 2007). Government funding reflects economic conditions and societal priorities, shaped by economic performance, the cost of addressing diverse public needs, and the demand for higher education (Hauptman, 2007). Therefore, the fiscal stability of public higher education is intrinsically tied to state government priorities, funding mechanisms, and overall economic conditions (Laderman et al., 2023). Public higher education funds are sourced through tax revenues (Kretovics & Michaels, 2004). The fluctuations of broader economic changes directly impact the willingness of state governments to allocate funds to higher education institutions (Laderman et al., 2023). The evolving economic landscape has made public institutions susceptible to changes in policymakers' priorities in funding allocation. The ramification of those fluctuations over the years is underscored by the

overall reduction of state funding allocations for higher education from approximately 80% in the 1980s to just over 50% as of 2021 (Laderman et al., 2023). Because of these problems, colleges and universities changed over time to become localized arms of the government instead of independent, well-funded places to learn and explore knowledge (Kretovics & Michael, 2004).

Furthermore, policymakers are continuously challenged with balancing the need for higher education funding alongside other public needs like K-12 education, healthcare, and other state infrastructures (Hauptman, 2007). This leaves an environment where policymakers and higher education administrators can weigh the inherent trade-offs between providing high-quality culturally responsive education in order to garner additional resources for higher education (Hauptman, 2007; Kretovics & Michael, 2004). This tug-of-war has led to various funding models that seek to maintain the quality of education as a public good, hold institutions accountable for student outcomes, and ensure fiscal responsibility (Hauptman, 2007). Research indicates a positive correlation between increased financial investment in higher education by state agencies and enrollment in postsecondary education (Hauptman, 2007). This indicates that the perceived benefits of education are directly aligned with the willingness of government agencies to provide adequate funding for higher education (Hauptman, 2007). Considering these dynamics, the success of higher education is predicated on the fair, judicious, and responsible allocation of fiscal resources to be well received by constituents and promote education attainment (Kretovics & Michael, 2004).

Funding Allocation and Impact

The pivotal role of state funding as a substantial revenue source for public higher education institutions is apparent, as state governments dedicated approximately 8.5 % of their budgets to higher education (Laderman et al., 2023). This allocation reflects the interdependence between state financial commitments and the sustainability of higher learning institutions, highlighting the pivotal role of state funding in shaping the educational landscape (Hauptman, 2007; Laderman et al., 2023). Financial allocations, therefore, directly influence institutional operations, student accessibility, and overall educational outcomes.

In the past, funding models were based on traditional distributions. Now, modern approaches are based on enrollments, costs per student, and, more recently, policy variables and performance-based funding mechanisms (Hauptman, 2007). In higher education, institutions are held responsible for their performance and how well they use their resources (Hauptman, 2007; Laderman et al., 2023). This change shows a move toward a more strategic and results-driven approach. Accountability and regulatory measures are important parts of this complicated system because they make sure that money is spending correctly. These measures are particularly relevant in performance-based funding, where performance metrics and outcomes are directly linked to funding incentives or penalties (Hauptman, 2007). By putting these kinds of systems in place, policymakers hope to encourage responsible spending and give institutions a reason to make the best use of their resources so that students get the education they deserve (Hauptman, 2007; Laderman et al., 2023). Institutions can garner more resources as they achieve higher levels of student success, like retention.

Sufficient funding increases participation and fosters better educational quality by enabling institutions to enhance staff, services, and facilities, enriching the learning experience (Hauptman, 2007). However, when state appropriations are reduced, academic success is impacted, resulting in lower graduation rates and a reduction in the number of degrees awarded, posing a significant challenge to educational attainment (Hauptman, 2007; Laderman et al., 2023). As state appropriations decline, the possible consequences on degree completion are expressly salient (Laderman et al., 2023).

Higher education's growing economic significance further magnifies these dynamics' interconnectedness. The increasing economic value of advanced education beyond secondary levels results in burgeoning demand, driven by the rising rates of return on educational investment (Hauptman, 2007). Universities are consequently compelled to adapt and align their offerings with evolving market demands, reflecting the intricate interplay between economic forces and the higher education landscape. Sufficient resources empower institutions to improve their staff, services, and facilities (Kretovics & Michael, 2004; Laderman et al., 2023). This enriches students' offerings and support services (Laderman et al., 2023). Insufficient state funding can also lead to graduation rates and a decrease in the number of degrees awarded, which challenges educational attainment (Kretovics & Michael, 2004; Laderman et al., 2023). It is crucial to ensure funding for higher education, as it plays a key role in increasing participation rates and enhancing overall learning experiences.

Institutional Resource Allocations

Institutions as Organizational Open Systems

Organizational theorists believe universities operate as open systems directly influenced by their environments as they garner and allocate resources for institutional outputs like degrees (Pfeffer & Moore, 1980; Pfeffer & Salancik, 1974). Considering this dynamic, how institutions allocate resources is impacted by the power dynamics of those institutions and the strategies employed to maintain those power dynamics through resource allocation (Hackman, 1985; Pfeffer & Moore, 1980). Organizational theory says that it's difficult for institutions to make decisions because they have to take into account both logical and political ideas, as well as the internal and external environments and how power works in the process of allocating resources (Hackman, 1985; Pfeffer & Moore, 1980; Slaughter & Thomas, 2001).

Resource Allocation Dynamics and Perspectives

Multiple theorists have described institutions as being like all organizations in their behavior, including how higher education institutions behave as organizations in allocating resources (Pfeffer & Moore, 1980; Pfeffer & Salancik, 1974). Foundational to this paradigm is the idea that organizations and, by proxy, colleges and universities allocate their resources in two specific ways: rationally and politically (Hackman, 1985; Pfeffer & Salancik, 1974). Rational allocation involves systematically and efficiently distributing resources to units and subunits (Hills & Mahoney, 1978). Political allocations consider how power, power dynamics, and context influence decision-making around resource distribution to units and subunits (Hills & Mahoney, 1978). While most institutions consider their resource allocation processes rational,

researchers argue that the distribution of resources within higher education institutions is often rooted in the relational power dynamics at play (Hills & Mahoney, 1978; Pfeffer & Salancik, 1974). Theorists also consider the influence that internal and external environments use power to influence decision-making in resource allocation (Hackman, 1985; Slaughter & Thomas, 2001). Within this context, MSPS administrators must navigate the complexities of politics and power as they attempt to negotiate for resources for their respective areas.

Factors Impacting Resource Allocation

Centrality is always seen as a source of power for subunits as they compete for institutional resources (Hackman, 1985; Pfeffer & Moore, 1980). Centrality is defined as the closeness a unit or subunit is in its mission to the overall goals and missions of the institutions (Hackman, 1985). Historically, units that were seen as important to the institution's mission have been given more resources, and this trend has continued through every budget cycle (Hackman, 1985; Pfeffer & Moore, 1980; Rubin, 1977). Typically, units and subunits defined as central tend to be academic units, as degree production is central to institutional missions and goals. During times of scarcity, institutions allocate resources to their central units to maintain institutional goals, while peripheral ancillaries like student affairs or student services lose resources (Hackman, 1985). It is important to note that times of scarcity and abundance influence resource allocation (Rubin, 1977; Tolbert, 1985). However, resources gained during fiscal abundance do not transfer in times of scarcity and vice versa (Rubin, 1977). In fact, for units with centrality, the budgets they gain during abundant fiscal periods remain intact during times of scarcity (Rubin, 1977). Conversely, peripheral units can lose resources in either time of abundance or

scarcity (Hackman, 1985). The most significant way that units can consistently gain resources regardless of centrality leans on their ability to leverage external influences like grants, stakeholders, advisory boards, etc., that inevitably force institutions to continually supplement resource allocations (Hackman, 1985; Hills & Mahoney, 1978; Pfeffer & More, 1980).

Power Dynamics and Institutional Frameworks

As mentioned previously, power and the wielding of power dynamics directly impact how institutions allocate resources (Hackman, 1985; Pfeffer & Moore, 1980; Pfeffer & Salancik, 1974). Sources of power derive from two distinct areas: internal and environmental (Hackman, 1985; Pfeffer & Moore, 1980; Pfeffer & Salancik, 1974). Internal power deals with an institution's fiscal and political dynamics and how those dynamics influence power held by units and subunits (Hackman, 1985; Pfeffer & Moore, 1980; Pfeffer & Salancik, 1974; Slaughter & Thomas, 2001). For instance, a subunit might hold internal power based on its support from institutional leadership like the president or other C-suite executives (Hackman, 1985; Slaughter & Thomas, 2001). Environmental power is the influence a subunit obtains from external forces directly impacting an institution (Hackman, 1985). An environmental power could be federal grants, corporate sponsorships, or other substantial external influences on the institution (Hackman, 1985). How leaders of units and subunits get resources for themselves is affected by how power works within and outside the institution and how important it is to the institution's mission.

Unit Power

As outlined in previous literature, the resource allocation process is typically centered around an individual unit's closeness to the central mission of the institution (Hackman, 1985). Therefore, administrators typically align their negotiation strategies with the institution's strategic priorities as they attempt to garner more department resources (Rowley & Sherman, 2001). Any administrator seeking to expand the resources allocated to them would attempt to align new staff, facilities, student services, programs, and institutional goals (Rowley & Sherman, 2001). By doing so, administrators are more likely to garner increased resources for their area. Furthermore, additional strategies to increase resources may include engaging multiple stakeholders (Crocco et al., 2022). Strategies may be different for internal stakeholders like staff, students, and faculty, but administrators may get the help they need from external stakeholders like alumni, community groups, and government agencies to get more resources for the institution (Crocco et al., 2022; Hackman, 1985). Stakeholders have different points of view, which is very helpful for deciding how to divide up resources and puts more pressure on institutions to help individual units (Hackman, 1985; Rubin, 1977).

Performance-based funding by state legislators has pushed higher education institutions to be more data-informed in their decision-making (Natow & Dougherty, 2015). To that end, administrators aim to use data to provide context for resource allocations (Hackman, 1985; Norris & Poulton, 2008). In the current socio-political environment, institutions must ensure specific institutional and state metrics are met and attempt to direct resources where they are most impactful (Natow & Dougherty, 2015). As resources get tighter, smart administrators use

data to help them make decisions (Rubin, 1977). New budget models (Ginger, 2009) and performance-based funding (DeJear, 2016) continue to shape how institutions make decisions.

Institutional Expenditures in Higher Education

We can trace this study of institutional expenditures, specifically how state agencies hold institutions accountable, back to the early 1980s (St. John, 1991). As institutions attempt to respond to increased oversight and accountability, we see a trend in higher education where institutions take three distinct strategies to navigate the new political climate (Chaffee, 1983). The adaptive model is the form that consists of institutions changing reactively and proactively to align with stakeholder expectations (Chaffee, 1983). However, he also found linear and interpretive strategies to adjust to the new dynamic between institutions, stakeholders, and institutional funding. From there, institutional accountability in many states becomes tied to student success metrics like graduation or retention rates (Titus, 2006). Policymakers are effectively looking for ways to tie public funding to higher education amidst historically low funding (Titus, 2006). Chaffee (1983) observed institutions attempting to become market responsive as creative ways to supplement decreased funds via grants, tuition, and contracts. There is an emerging tendency for institutions to adjust internal spending to respond to reduced funding and increased pressure to meet policymaker expectations regarding graduation and retention rates (Francis & Hampton, 1999). Institutional expenditures, therefore, become how institutions hope to achieve and maintain financial solvency while garnering the support of policymakers by having positive student success outcomes. Understanding the significance of institutional expenditures is crucial for comprehending student success as an institutional

investment. Based on this paradigm, higher education budget allocations would build budgets based on practices that yield the highest functionality. Therefore, institutions that have higher student success outcomes would allocate more resources to those higher-performing areas.

Institutional Expenditures and Revenue as a Function of Principal Agent Theory

Institutional theory sheds light on budget decisions by characterizing relationships as contracts between principals and agents (Eisenhardt, 1989). Legislators, policymakers, and administrators in higher education have used some forms of institutional theory to prioritize initiatives and manage resource allocation (Cai, 2015). Institutional theory would consider higher education institutions as social organisms working in concert with their environment rather than just being responsive as a technical machine (Cai, 2015). Considering institutions as social organisms, Cai (2015), Curtis & Irving (2017), and Eisenhardt (1989) suggest that within institutional theory, higher education would consider institutional expenditures and student success as connected. Locke (1968) found that budgets and expenditures motivate goal setting for student success in higher education. Applying this to higher education, student success could be correlated with institutional goals, thus motivating institutions to allocate and reallocate budgets to reach institutional goals. Budget-related economic theories focus on producing, distributing, and using goods or services (Curtis & Irvine, 2017). Specifically, it looks at how institutions reach their highest potential and how individual actions create models to understand better how to incentivize overall budget decisions.

The Role of MSPS Administrators

According to Barr (2018), MSPS administrators must “assure that resources are spent in accordance with institutional policies and all applicable statutes” (p.20). Additionally, Barr emphasizes that for institutions to reach their goal, they must master human and fiscal resources (Barr, 2018). Barr (2018) identifies six areas of MSPS administrator responsibility within higher education: decision-making, informed listening, resource gathering, friend-making, and fiscal problem-solving. These approaches to MSPS administrators are necessary, according to Barr (2018), given that budget decisions do not occur in isolation and the ramifications of budget decisions also do not occur in isolation. Therefore, MSPS administrators must have the political acumen to manage budgets and provide appropriate services effectively. MSPS administrators’ appropriate allocation and utilization of funds are key to the long-term and short-term goals of departments, units, and colleges (Adams-Dumford, 2019). The assessment then becomes a key part of MSPS administrators’ appropriate management of institutional funds.

Research has shown that higher education institutions prioritize budget allocations in areas with the highest functionality, particularly student success outcomes. Allocations for budgetary expenditures are crucial in determining positive academic outcomes for students in higher education. The literature is clear that budget decisions are not isolated choices but strategic investments made by higher education institutions to enhance functionality and achieve institutional goals. By strategically allocating resources to areas that enhance student success, higher education institutions can create a supportive and inclusive learning environment that fosters academic achievement and overall student well-being. Effective budget decisions

prioritizing instructional support, academic engagement, and financial aid will benefit students individually and contribute to the institution's overall success and reputation.

Institutional Expenditures and Revenue Impact on Student Success

Current research highlights instruction as a primary area of expenditure for universities that yield positive outcomes related to student success (Dahlvig et al., 2020; Ryan, 2005; Umfress, 2010). However, research offers a variety of examples of what could qualify as instruction and academic support. For instance, Dahlvig (2020) explicitly references the funds allocated for time spent in the classroom. Ryan looks broadly at academic support, including instruction, tutoring, and other services to help support student success. While Umfress (2010) does not reference instruction, there is mention of student engagement taking the form of academic support programs like peer mentors or tutors. More research is needed to correlate institutional expenditures with student success metrics related to retention, GPA, and graduation rates. The research provides several indicators that influence positive outcomes (Dahlvig et al., 2020; Ryan, 2005; Umfress, 2010). However, researchers cite financial aid, instruction, and student engagement/academic support (Dahlvig et al., 2020; Ryan, 2005; Umfress, 2010). Regarding financial aid, Dahlvig's (2020) research showed through regression models that support studies indicating that affordability and access to financial aid significantly impact student success outcomes. assertions of Umfress (2010) are like those of Dahlvig (2020), although Umfress's study centered primarily on the student engagement experience. However, he cites financial aid as a controlling factor in understanding correlations between institutional

expenditures and student success. Throughout all the literature, financial aid and aid allocation always correlate positively to student success outcomes.

Dahlvig (2020) found that “spending on research, academic support, and instruction as a percent of total core expenses were strongly correlated with higher six-year graduation rates and accounted for 23.0 % of the variation. A 1% increase in the percentage of total core expenses allocated to research would increase the six-year graduation rate by 6.1%. Spending on research, instruction, public service, and academic support as a percent of total core expenses was strongly correlated with higher retention rates and accounted for 26.0% of the variation. A 1% increase in the percentage of total core expenses allocated to research would increase the retention rate by 4.3%.” (2020, p 361). Ryan’s (2005) research supports Dahlvig’s findings. They discovered that only instructional expenditures had a positive correlation with student retention. Ryan (2005) also found that non-classroom-related academic support did not significantly relate to retention. That correlation was negative, which contradicts what Umfress (2010) found in their study, given that there was a positive relationship between student engagement. Although Umfress's (2010) study focused on traditional student affairs and student engagement, many of the programs and services provided by MSPS also fall under the traditional definition of academic support, such as tutoring (Ryan, 2005). It argues that student engagement can yield positive outcomes for student success, particularly regarding graduation (Umfress, 2010). Research must be more precise about the correlation between institutional expenditures and student engagement. This is influenced by the varied definitions of what is meant by student engagement and its functionality, in addition to determining which student success outcomes are positively

correlated to institutional expenditures. For instance, using a Pearson correlation, Umfress (2010) found that institutional expenditures for student affairs services can significantly predict positive student success outcomes. In contrast, building upon previous studies, Ryan (2005) found statistically insignificant negative correlations. Although institution type varies from study to study, this suggests that institutional expenditures related to student engagement have varying success, given whether the institution is private or public.

Related to institutional expenditures is institutional revenue. Institutional revenue comprises the various funding sources and expenditures (NCES, 2022). According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2022), there are four primary sources of revenue for higher education institutions: tuition and fees, investments, government grants, contracts, and appropriations, and auxiliary enterprises. The most significant percentage of revenue for public institutions is derived from government sources, including but not limited to federal, state, and local appropriations (NCES, 2022). Investments are considered “returns are aggregate amounts of dividends, interest, royalties, rent, and gains or losses from both fair-value adjustments and trades of institutions' investments and/or endowments” (NCES, 2022). Auxiliary enterprises are “residence halls and food services, “essentially self-supporting operations of institutions serving students, faculty, or staff (NCES, 2022).

Researchers are trying to prove that institutional outputs, like graduation rates, are linked to institutional expenditures (Pikes & Robins, 2020; Webber & Ehrenberg, 2010). However, there are some problems with these connections that make the conclusions they come to less useful. However, though the research is limited, Dougherty Reddy (2011) offers outcomes-based

funding to strengthen the connection between institutional expenditures and institutional outcomes. They suggest outcomes-based funding as a model: (1) provides greater clarity to institutions on state goals and thus improves engagement with those goals, (2) institutions to be better equipped to measure their performance against state-defined goals, and (3) allows institutions to become highly motivated to reach those goals, thereby developing better outcomes (Dougherty & Reddy, 2011). Given that the research on the connections between institutional expenditures and graduation rates is mixed, there needs to be more research connecting institutional expenditures and what they articulate regarding institutional function and productivity.

Theoretical Framework

Tinto's Theory of Institutional Action

Vincent Tinto is a higher education scholar on student persistence and retention (Tinto, 1993; Tinto, 2012). As his research continued to evolve, Tinto began focusing on institutional actions as a primary driver for student retention rather than solely relying on student demographics and attributes (Tinto & Pusser, 2006; Tinto, 2012). The updated framework outlined several institutional actions that factor into student departure (Tinto & Pusser, 2006; Tinto, 2012). The first component of Tinto's model was an institutional commitment to student success, defined as an institution's genuine commitment to student success as demonstrated by its allocation of resources, reward systems, and institutional policies (Tinto & Pusser, 2006; Tinto, 2012). He argued that this approach provided a means for integrating student retention throughout the institutional mission and operation. The second institutional action Tinto focused

on was improving the first-year experience (Tinto & Pusser, 2006; Tinto, 2012). Tinto argued that a practical first-year experience involved institutions prioritizing interventions, specific first-year programming, and overall student support during the first year (Tinto & Pusser, 2006; Tinto, 2012). In the model of institutional action and student departure, Tinto and Pusser (2006) continued to emphasize the role of academic and social integration. However, his updated model focused on the responsibility of institutions to foster positive integration.

Along with integration, Tinto and Pusser (2006) suggest that high expectations, clear feedback, and activeness support integration. Additionally, a supportive campus where students frequently feel that their institutions value them helps to support student retention (Tinto & Pusser, 2006; Tinto, 2012). Variables that support positive campus environments include academic support, social opportunities, and access to resources responsive to students' demographics and backgrounds (Tinto & Pusser, 2006). Lastly, in Tinto's (2012) institutional action model, he suggests systemic interventions and data-informed decision-making to support student retention. Using data to uphold systemic interventions rather than isolated interventions supports students' holistic retention (Tinto & Pusser, 2006; Tinto, 2012). This approach allows institutions to improve interventions, allocate resources, and fine-tune strategies. Tinto's (2006) research on institutional action places the responsibility on institutions to make systemic, data-informed, and intentional changes to promote student success and retention. Compared to previous literature, it removes the onus on students for their departure and emphasizes the institution's role in shaping student experiences that lead to higher retention.

Principal Agent Theory

Meyer and Rowen (1977) were the original proponents of institutional theory, as they believed a range of formal and informal rules, norms, and practices influence organizations. These rules, norms, and practices tend to shape organizational structures, strategies, and behaviors and how organizations conform to these institutional pressures to gain legitimacy in their respective environments. Scott (1987) built upon institutional theory by introducing the idea of coercive, normative, and mimetic isomorphism. Coercive isomorphism is considered when organizations conform to external influences, including laws, policies, donors, etc. (Scott, 1987). Normative isomorphism refers to organizational change due to professional and social norms like professional associations, industry guidelines, and standards (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Scott, 1987). Lastly, mimetic isomorphism considers organizational shaping caused by mimicking similar but aspirational organizations (Scott, 1987; Thornton & Ocasio, 1999). Institutional theory provides a valuable framework for understanding how organizations are influenced by external forces and how they respond and adapt to institutional pressures (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Scott, 1987; Thornton & Ocasio, 1999).

A subset of institutional theory and the second theoretical framework for this study is Principal-Agent Theory (PAT). This theory focuses on the relationship between a principal (an individual or organization with decision-making authority) and an agent (an individual or group entrusted to act on behalf of the principal) (Jensen & Meckling, 1976). This theory suggests that principals create tasks or responsibilities for an agent. The principal seeks to maximize their interests and achieve desired outcomes. At the same time, the agent may have different

preferences, goals, or limited information despite potential conflict of interest arising due to the divergence in goals and information between the principal and the agent (Jensen & Meckling, 1977; Holmstrom, 1979). This conflict arises from the inherent asymmetry in information, effort, and risk-bearing between the two parties. In their research, Jensen and Meckling (1976) highlight agency costs, which are the costs incurred by the principal to align the agent's interests with their own and mitigate the risks associated with information asymmetry. To mitigate agency costs and align interests, principals may implement various mechanisms such as contracts, performance incentives, monitoring, and feedback systems (Holmström, 1979; Jensen & Meckling, 1976). Holmström (1979) introduced the concept of “incomplete contracts” in Principal-Agent Theory, emphasizing the challenges of designing contracts that account for all potential contingencies and information asymmetry. In such cases, performance-based incentives and monitoring mechanisms are crucial in reducing agency costs. Ultimately, PAT provides a framework to understand the challenges and strategies involved in aligning the interests of principals and agents in educational contexts (Holmström, 1979; Jensen & Meckling, 1976).

Conclusion

The literature reviewed in this chapter demonstrates that the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement has served as a national catalyst for promoting diversity within higher education institutions. The subsequent budgetary decision at the state and institutional levels and the significance of MSPS provide compelling evidence for the need to study institutional expenditures for these programs, their relationship to student success for students of color, and how resources are allocated and negotiated for those spaces. As a part of the institutional action,

the research on MSPS demonstrates their indispensable role in supporting students of color's academic success (Egan, 2019; Harper, 2016). These programs provide vital resources and a sense of community, positively impacting student integration, retention, and overall success. Given that institutional budgetary expenditures play a vital role in determining positive academic outcomes for students, adequate funding (Ryan, 2005; Dahlvig et al., 2020; Umfress, 2010) and support for MSPS are vital in promoting diversity, inclusivity, and equity in campuses and ensuring the success and well-being of all students (Strayhorn, 2014). As higher education continues to evolve, recognizing the link between budgetary decisions and student success remains essential for creating equitable and inclusive learning environments that empower students to achieve their academic and social goals. Considering the current literature, it is clear that MSPS employs unique strategies to help support the retention of students of color. The ability of these subunits to negotiate for more significant resources depends on state funding allocations and institutional priorities. Performance metrics around student success, specifically retention, influence institutional resource attainment and allocation. Institutions investing in MSPS spaces can build stronger arguments to demonstrate the positive yields in student success outcomes for students of color (Hurtado et al., 2007). Additionally, as these units receive resources through institutional expenditures, examining their influence on student success outcomes becomes crucial.

CHAPTER 3 - METHODOLOGY

Institutions of higher education navigate a delicate funding framework that mandates they balance the state-wide policy priorities of state legislators (and the subsequent allocation of taxpayer dollars) and factors directly driving student degree attainment. In this context, Multicultural Student Programs and Services (MSPS) units have come under mounting legislative scrutiny, with some critics arguing that channeling institutional funds into these initiatives constitutes an unwise use of resources (Gretzer et al., 2024). It is therefore essential to investigate how MSPS expenditures, combined with MSPS leaders' unit power, influence the academic success of students of color. Although previous research has demonstrated positive associations between classroom instruction, academic support, and overall student achievement (Ryan, 2005; Dahlvig et al., 2020; Umfress, 2010), the specific effects of funding allocations on MSPS remain insufficiently explored.

Meanwhile, many colleges and universities are contending with declining enrollments, constricted budgets, and growing legislative skepticism regarding the value and tangible outcomes associated with MSPS (Bent, 2017; Means, 2020). Considering these challenges, it is prudent to investigate how financial strategies in support of equity initiatives can further institutional objectives centered on student success (like retention). The way in which colleges and universities designate Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) resources and the subsequent impact on the academic outcomes of students of color offers critical insight into how MSPS

leaders secure vital funding. By examining the intersection of resource allocation and negotiation with Student of Color retention within MSPS, the current study seeks to inform institutional decision-making and strengthen DEI policies. Ultimately, this effort addresses recognized knowledge gaps and underscores the significance and effectiveness of DEI initiatives in public higher education to answer the following questions as a guide to this study:

1. Do Institutional Expenditures on MSPS predict retention rates for students of color, and
2. What is the relationship between an MSPS administrator's unit power and institutional expenditures for MSPS?

Data

Criteria

We selected public institutions as the primary population for this study because they frequently make data on student success and financial allocations more accessible. Initially, the target sample consisted of four-year public institutions accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). However, we later broadened the criteria to encompass all four-year public institutions in the United States to enhance statistical power and overall representation. Each institution selected holds accreditation from a U.S. Department of Education–recognized agency—such as the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE), the New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE), the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU), SACSCOC, or the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC).

(U.S. Department of Education, 2024). Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and technical or vocational schools were excluded.

Data Collection Plans

This study gathered information on Multicultural Student Programs and Services (MSPS) expenditures, student of color retention, and MSPS administrator unit power by drawing on multiple sources: the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), state financial audits, state retention reports, and a modified version of Hackman's (1985) Unit Power survey. Each source contributed essential information that, when combined, provided the variables needed for analyses of how MSPS expenditures, MSPS administrator unit power, and student of color retention rates intersect. This was consistent with prior research that approached gaps in data sources to develop complete datasets (Andridge & Little, 2010).

Institutional Characteristics (via IPEDS)

We excluded Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and technical or vocational schools. IPEDS provided institutional characteristic data such as Carnegie classification, enrollment size, average institutional retention rates, selectivity, and student services expenditures for each four-year public institution under consideration. When other data sources presented gaps or inconsistencies, IPEDS data could provide a grounded foundation for imputation (Andridge & Little, 2010). This ensured that comparisons of institutional characteristics remained consistent across all cases.

MSPS Expenditures & Retention Rates by Race

Researchers conducted an extensive search on state higher education websites to identify MSPS-related expenditure data and retention rates disaggregated by race. Keywords such as “retention,” “diversity,” “equity,” “inclusion,” and “multicultural affairs” provided the necessary variable data. Through this method, 48 institutions were found to have publicly accessible MSPS expenditure records, while 23 provided retention reports for students of color. This equity-focused data integration aligns with methods advocated in research aimed at centering underreported areas in higher education (Bensimon et al., 2016).

MSPS Administrator Unit Power Survey

This study distributed a modified Unit Power survey (Hackman, 1985) to individuals responsible for DEI and MSPS efforts at four-year public institutions. Researchers identified potential participants through institutional websites, utilizing similar keywords used in other data sources. Individuals who held the most senior-level roles in MSPS programs (or the equivalent) were the primary target for this study. If a Chief Diversity Officer (CDO) was not identified, the survey was sent to the most senior student affairs officer (CSAO). If neither a CDO nor a CSAO was found, individuals dedicating at least 50% of their time to DEI work were invited to participate. While Chief Business Officers (CBOs) were considered, none were contacted given the number of individuals whose role directly associated them with the management of an MSPS unit. The recruitment email (see Appendix 1) explained this study’s purpose, inviting administrators to reflect on how much decision-making authority and resource oversight they held over MSPS activities. Of the 875 individuals contacted, 80 began the survey, and 32

provided usable responses that included the crucial unit power components. Despite the inclusion of retention and expenditures questions in the survey, inconsistencies and gaps ultimately prevented their use. Respondents who did not complete the entire survey or failed to address the Unit Power section were excluded from further analysis.

Mutual peer institutions

From the initial data sources, 77 institutions emerged as viable cases (see Appendix 5). To strengthen the dataset's representativeness and analytical power, this study referenced The Chronicle of Higher Education's (Elias, 2024) website to identify mutual peer institutions. This approach is aligned with this study's theoretical foundations. Institutional theory explains why organizations adopt similar structures and practices within the same institutional environment and highlights the role of institutions in shaping organizational behavior and outcomes (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Morpew & Huisman, 2002; Scott, 1987; Thornton & Ocasio, 1999), thus strengthening the validity of using mutual peer institutions to expand the dataset. This search yielded 200 additional public four-year colleges and universities, for which this study also collected IPEDS data.

Finalized Dataset

Five different types of data were combined to get a starting list of 277 institutions: IPEDS, state financial audits, state retention reports, the Unit Power survey, and The Chronicle of Higher Education's peer institution references. However, two institutions in Pennsylvania were removed because their categorization of student expenditures in IPEDS differed significantly from that of comparable institutions, leading to 275 institutions in the final dataset.

Where data remained missing, imputation methods helped estimate incomplete variables, thereby preserving as many institutions as possible for this study's analyses.

Settings of the Sample

Public higher education in the Southern United States has evolved within distinct historical and political contexts (Kenny, 2014; Shapiro, 2011). Extended periods of segregation and discrimination still affect how colleges and universities organize themselves (Hinrich, 2022). Given that this study targets students of color retention rates and examines MSPS Units, this historical backdrop is particularly significant because these spaces were originally developed to counteract entrenched marginalization (CAS, 2018). State legislators hold substantial authority over publicly funded higher education, guiding appropriations, governance frameworks, and policy decisions (Kraft & Furlong, 2019). These factors prompt an investigation into how funding converges with political and sociopolitical contexts, especially in regions where states enact anti-DEI legislation (Chronical, 2024). Representative Knight (2021) a Georgia State House of Representatives member, has remarked that public universities must account for how they spend taxpayer money and demonstrate the value provided to society at large. Consequently, the data compiled for this project explain the intersections among institutional expenditures, student performance, and MSPS administrative strategies. For this inquiry, MSPS administrators are defined as those who direct MSPS budgets. Although the phrase "students of color" generally encompasses all non-white populations, the research here specifically examines Asian, Black, Hispanic, and Multiracial (Two or More Races) students. Due to limited data

availability, Native American and Pacific Islander students were initially considered but were later excluded from the final analyses.

Timing

This study's data collection aimed to collect information from all public institutions accredited by recognized agencies under the U.S. Department of Education (i.e., HLC, MSCHE, NECHE, NWCCU, SACSCOC, WSCUC). The bulk of the research activities occurred in August of 2023 through December of 2024 which is essential to this study given that many anti-DEI state laws were enacted at the start of 2023. This study focuses on institutional expenditures and student retention data primarily spanning the 2018–2022 period. The researcher matched each institution's MSPS expenditure data for a given fiscal year (July–June) with the subsequent academic-year retention figures (Fall–to–Fall) to ensure internal consistency. This alignment allowed for a more precise examination of the extent to which MSPS investments correspond to actual student persistence patterns in roughly the same timeframe.

Variable Specification

RQ1: Can Institutional Expenditures on MSPS Predict Retention Rates for Students of Color?

Independent variable

For the first research question, the primary independent variable is institutional spending directed toward Multicultural Student Programs and Services (MSPS). Recognizing that each institution may define MSPS somewhat differently, this study uses a broad framework based on the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) and guidelines

provided in state legislative audits. The CAS standards were selected because they offer an operational definition of MSPS, while the state audit language reflects how such offices or departments are officially evaluated in financial reviews. MSPS entails any funding where at least half of an organization's or individual's salaried job responsibilities are devoted to advancing, promoting, or formally supporting affinity or identity groups centered on race, gender, sexual orientation or identity, or ethnicity (CAS Standards, 2018; Knight, 2022). This includes advocacy for social justice and anti-racism, along with resources dedicated to students, faculty, or staff who primarily identify with racial, gender, or sexual orientation minorities. It also covers policies or recommendations aimed at enhancing diversity, inclusion, and equity (CAS Standards, 2018; Knight, 2022).

Given that MSPS budgets vary substantially, this analysis categorizes MSPS expenditures into five distinct bands. These groupings are based on imputed estimates derived from combined student-services data in IPEDS, which incorporates both programmatic funding and salaries. The amount of allocated funding does not necessarily reflect institutional commitment to MSPS. Instead, it relates to the percentage of overall student-services spending, which often correlates with institutional size at public colleges and universities. The five categories are:

- Minimal Capacity (0 to 50,000 USD). This band may support only a limited range of MSPS activities, possibly including small pilot programs or narrowly focused initiatives with minimal staffing or in-kind resources.

- **Low Capacity (50,001 to 500,000 USD).** Institutions in this band might provide somewhat broader programming and additional staffing, but financial constraints may limit MSPS size and scope.
- **Moderate Capacity (500,001 to 1,000,000 USD).** Organizations at this level usually maintain a more substantial MSPS framework with several ongoing programs, events, and assigned personnel, which allows for a wide range of culturally relevant support services.
- **High Capacity (1,000,001 to 5,000,000 USD).** Allocations in this band offer a strong foundation for MSPS, potentially enabling extensive staffing, cross-unit collaborations, and broad advocacy or community engagement.
- **Exceptional Capacity (Above 5,000,000 USD).** This tier reflects the highest resource levels for MSPS, including comprehensive programming, robust staffing structures, and multiple in-kind services.

Data Code	MSPS Investment (State Audit)	Range (Expenditure)
1	Minimal Investment	0 to 50,000 USD
2	Low Investment	50,001 to 500,000 USD
3	Moderate Investment	500,001 to 1,000,000 USD
4	High Investment	1,000,001 to 5,000,000 USD
5	Exceptional Investment	Above 5,000,000 USD

Dependent Variable

The dependent variable is the one-year retention rate for students of color. Integrated Post-Secondary Education Statistics (IPEDS) defines retention as the percentage of first-time, bachelor's-seeking students from the previous fall who either returned to enroll the next fall or completed their programs within that timeframe. In this study, the retention rate of students of color is examined, with a value of 0 indicating that no first-time, full-time students of color persisted and 100 indicating that all such students returned or graduated. Similarly, this study follows the IPEDS race/ethnicity designations. IPEDS classifies students into mutually exclusive categories, allowing for a standardized way to identify nonwhite student populations across diverse institutions (IPEDS, 2022). Relying on IPEDS definitions ensures alignment with federal and state reporting standards, aiding valid temporal comparisons of student demographics.

RQ2: What is the Relationship Between MSPS Administrators' Unit Power and Institutional Expenditures for MSPS?

This study adapts Hackman's original questionnaire (see Appendix). In terms of environmental power, Hackman (1985) asked, "On each of the following items, how do the contributions of your budgetary unit compare with those of other similar units?" (p. 66). Institutional power was measured using parallel Likert-scale questions, for example, "To the best of your knowledge, please indicate how your unit compares with other similar budgetary units in the institution on each of the following characteristics" (p. 66). Resource negotiation was similarly assessed when Hackman (1985) inquired, "How much do you use each of the following strategies when you prepare your unit's annual budget?" (p. 67). Respondents rated all three

dimensions environmental power, institutional power, and negotiation strategies on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (“Much Lower than Most Similar Units”) to 5 (“Much Higher”). Reflecting RQ1, MSPS institutional expenditures here come from the same four funding sources, are coded 1 through 4, and are organized into six ranges that reflect overall MSPS funding levels.

MSPS Administrator Survey

In the opening section of the survey (see Appendix), MSPS administrators are asked to disclose their total MSPS budgets, which include expenses for personnel, professional travel, programming, and operational supplies. The subsequent section, adapted from Hackman (1985), investigates how administrators negotiate and secure MSPS resources. Hackman verified this survey by comparing questionnaire results with interviews. According to Hackman’s (1985) model, unit power depends on environmental power, institutional power, and resource negotiation strategies, all of which can prompt leadership to provide or withhold specific funding allocations. Furthermore, Hackman (1985) argued that these forms of power can work together to influence institutional leaders’ decisions about how to apportion resources across multiple campus units.

Environmental Power

Environmental power involves external factors beyond the institution that shape discussions or decisions about resource allocation (Hackman, 1985). When a unit provides services or attracts resources that others consider indispensable, it gains environmental power. Reflecting Hackman’s (1985) protocol, administrators were asked to rate: “On each of the following items, how do the contributions of your budgetary unit compare with those of other

similar units?” (p. 66). Participants selected values from 1 (“Much Lower than Most Similar Units”) to 5 (“Much Higher”) based on attributes such as:

- Student Recruitment and Retention
- Capacity to address relevant societal challenges
- Overall external financial support
- Federal government support
- Community support
- Alumni support

Institutional Power

Institutional power represents a subunit’s standing within the university, independent of external contexts (Hackman, 1985). Using the same scale, Hackman (1985) asked, “On each of the following items, how do the contributions of your budgetary unit compare with those of other similar units?” (p. 66). MSPS administrators assessed characteristics including:

- Historical authority on campus
- Length of service within the institution
- Visibility within the institution
- Visibility beyond the institution
- Quantity of students served
- Interaction with central administration
- Number of monthly interactions with senior administrators
- Presidential support

- Ease of direct contact with the president
- Support from the dean or director

Resource Negotiation Strategies

Resource negotiation strategies refer to the approaches MSPS leaders use to obtain or maintain funding (Hackman, 1985). In Hackman's (1985) structure, administrators indicate, on a five-point scale (1 = "Much Lower than Most Similar Units," 5 = "Much Higher"), the extent to which they use each of the following strategies:

- Historical authority within the institution
- Emphasizing total institutional needs
- Emphasizing divisional needs
- Emphasizing specific unit needs
- Requesting innovative programs in budget proposals

Data Analysis

Data Preparation

Necessity of Imputation

A comprehensive examination of how MSPS Unit Power, MSPS Funding, and Student of Color Retention intersect must address the frequent problem of missing data. This study draws on four main data sources: (a) MSPS Administrator Surveys (capturing unit power), (b) State Financial Audits (tracking MSPS allocations), (c) State Higher Education Retention Reports (highlighting retention rates), and (d) selected IPEDS variables (e.g., Carnegie classification, enrollment, selectivity). Despite these formal or recognized sources, incomplete institutional

records are common—often because of policy constraints and socio-political pressures surrounding DEI efforts. These data gaps pose the risk of skewed results and obscuring critical relationships.

Wherever actual data from the listed sources were available, they were used; only missing variables were imputed. Adopting a QuantCrit perspective, this study chooses imputation rather than excluding institutions with incomplete reporting. Missing data in DEI contexts frequently fall under the category “Not Missing at Random” (NMAR) (Little & Rubin, 2019), where omissions may reflect state laws, limited resources, or administrator skepticism toward DEI programs. By imputing these values using verified IPEDS indicators—especially Carnegie classification, institutional size, selectivity, student services spending, and first-time, full-time retention—the analysis remains more inclusive and avoids systematically excluding institutions in anti-DEI states.

Dataset Imputation via Peer Institutions

Initially, fewer than 100 institutions provided complete data across all variables, prompting additional peer-based references to bolster the sample size. Drawing on recognized higher-education benchmarking practices (Morphew & Taylor, 2019; Volkwein, 2010; Elias, 2024), institutions were paired with “mutual peers,” indicating they had each designated the other as comparable in enrollment size, mission, and academic offerings. This mutual selection does not guarantee an exact match but better approximates institutional parity than one-sided peer listings. No institution’s retention rate was replaced with another’s; if Institution Y lacked data on MSPS allocations, those figures were derived from peer institutions that (a) mutually

selected Y as a peer and (b) aligned by Carnegie classification or selectivity. This hierarchical approach (peer → Carnegie → selectivity) preserves consistency in mission, resource capacity, and institutional type. Below is a simplified example illustrating how missing MSPS allocations were derived:

Institution	Known Values	Missing Value	Reference Peer Group	Imputed Calculation
Univ. A	Retention Rate: 85%; MSPS Allocation: \$2M	None (complete)	—	—
Univ. B	Retention Rate: 79%; MSPS Allocation: <i>Missing</i>	MSPS Allocation	Peers: Univ. A, Univ. C (both list B as peer)	Mean of known MSPS from peers ± size/mission adjustment
Univ. C	Retention Rate: 82%; MSPS Allocation: \$1.75M	None (complete)	—	—

This process of referencing similar institutions aligns with nearest neighbor or hot-deck imputation techniques (Enders, 2010; Rubin, 1987), in which “donor” institutions share core characteristics with the target. By applying such a framework, the sample expanded to 277 institutions, culminating in 275 viable cases after data cleaning.

Imputation Strategy for MSPS Expenditures

Where state financial audits provided MSPS allocations, those figures were checked against IPEDS student services expenditures (covering personnel and non-personnel spending). This comparison yielded a proportion of student services funding that typically went to MSPS. For missing MSPS expenditures between 2017 and 2022, a hierarchical approach was applied. First, if an institution’s mutual peers shared similar selectivity, demographics, and mission, the

mean MSPS budget among those peers served as the baseline estimate. If no direct peer match was available, institutional classification (e.g., Doctoral vs. Master's) provided a secondary reference, recognizing research that links mission and spending (Zhao, 2005). In cases where classification alone was insufficient, selectivity measures further refined the spending estimate. If data gaps persisted, a proportional MSPS figure was derived from IPEDS student services budgets based on these hierarchical markers. This ratio was then applied to the institution's total student services allocation, producing an imputed figure. By layering these steps, the method reduces the risk of overstating or understating budgets and acknowledges that institutions failing to report MSPS data may do so for political or financial reasons—precisely the circumstances QuantCrit aims to illuminate (Bensimon, 2005; Kezar, 2014; Stanley, 2006).

Imputation Strategy for Retention Rates by Race

Although IPEDS provides institutional retention data, it does not collect retention rates by race from institutions. Consequently, many institutions were missing disaggregated retention rates for specific racial groups. Even though IPEDS data does not disaggregate retention based on race, including the national race-specific retention rates sourced from the National Student Data Clearing house was included as a weighted factor to highlight the nuances of retention rates of students of color within the context of institutional retention rates. The weighting scheme for student of color retention for cases with unavailable data consisted of an 80/20 split. With institutional retention rates representing 80% of the weighting scheme and national trends by race representing 20%. This method recognizes that local context shapes student success while incorporating the broader patterns found in national data.

Imputation Strategy for Unit Power

Unit Power gauges MSPS administrators' influence on policy and programmatic decision-making. To address the cases without data for the unit power variable, this study used Principal Component Analysis (PCA) to fill data gaps. PCA is a detailed way to deal with missing data because it creates factor scores that can be used as strong replacements for missing observations (Abdi & Williams, 2010; Jolliffe & Cadima, 2016). PCA is especially helpful because the factors associated with unit power are theoretically and empirically interconnected. This interconnectedness is reflected in Hackman's (1985) framework. This interconnectedness is reflected in Hackman's (1985) framework, which emphasizes the requirement for unit leaders to navigate complex relationships with external funders, internal governance structures, and collaborative partners across campus units. PCA merges the differences between these measures that are shared into a smaller group of latent dimensions instead of looking at each one separately (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Thus, PCA identifies how MSPS administrators leverage all factors in Hackman's (1985) Unit Power: environmental power, institutional power, and resource negotiation strategies. Once these commonalities were quantified, the resulting factor scores were used to impute values for administrators who did not report them.

Sample Description and Representativeness

Following the data preparation and imputation steps, the final sample comprised 275 public four-year institutions. To assess how well these institutions represent the broader landscape of public higher education, we examined several institutional characteristics: enrollment size, Carnegie classification, selectivity level, and student-services expenditures. As

illustrated in Appendix A (Tables A2–A5), the dataset includes a balanced range of small, medium, and large institutions, varying tiers of selectivity, and multiple Carnegie classifications. This distribution suggests that the sample is not dominated by a single institution type, enhancing the generalizability of our findings.

Analysis Plans

Sensitivity Testing

Sensitivity tests determine whether results hold up under different analytic choices and dataset changes (Morgan & Winship, 2015; Imbens & Rubin, 2015). By checking how shifts in variables, timeframes, or sampling criteria affect outcomes, researchers can confirm that their findings capture genuine patterns (Rosenbaum, 2002; Freedman, 2009). These tests also validate decisions such as dataset selection and variable definitions (Morgan & Winship, 2015), reflecting methodological transparency and confirming that investigators have examined conditions that could undermine their main conclusions (Freedman, 2009).

Relationship Between MSPS Expenditures and Student Retention

To test the reliability of the association between MSPS expenditures and retention rates, this study performed a sensitivity test using 2022 data from 20 institutions for which both expenditures and retention rates by race were publicly available. The 2022 dataset was chosen because it provides the most comprehensive and accurate state retention reports alongside state MSPS expenditure audits. These 20 institutions formed the anchor for expanding the sample via imputation, adding peer institutions while still basing the core analysis on real-world data.

Sensitivity Test: Correlation Expenditures & Retention

This sensitivity test compared the correlation between state MSPS expenditure values from multiple years (2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, and 2022) and state retention rates across four demographic groups (Asian, Black, Hispanic, and Multiracial). The goal was to see whether relationships in the 2022 dataset generalized over multiple years and across different groups, thereby assessing this study's robustness (Freedman, 2009; Imbens & Rubin, 2015). Consistent correlations suggest that the relationships observed are not simply the result of how the models for expenditures or retention were constructed, thereby increasing the credibility of the findings (Freedman, 2009). Conversely, large swings in correlation would signal the need for further scrutiny (Rosenbaum, 2002). Rooting the sensitivity test in publicly available data and clarifying the imputation process underscores both methodological rigor and a deeper understanding of how MSPS spending might relate to retention.

Sensitivity Test: Regression Expenditures & Retention

This study also used the 2022 dataset for a hierarchical regression sensitivity analysis to see how well the models could predict the rates of institutional retention for people of different races. Like the correlation analysis, the researcher selected the 2022 dataset for its comprehensive collection of state retention reports and state MSPS expenditure audits. A hierarchical regression sensitivity analysis was used in this study to check how stable the models were that predicted the rates of institutional retention for four racial groups: Asian, Black, Hispanic, and Multiracial. In this analysis, three models were estimated for each racial group. Model 1 served as the baseline by incorporating key institutional variables, including Carnegie Grouping, Selectivity Score Range, Student Services Expenditure Tier, and Institutional Size.

Model 2 introduced retention and student services factors (Retention_2022 and 2022_Student Services Combined), thereby allowing for an examination of how these variables affected the predictive value of the baseline model. Model 3 subsequently added the state-level expenditure measure (State_MSPS Expenditure 2022) to assess its incremental effect on institutional retention rates. This stepwise approach facilitated a clearer understanding of how various institutional and state-level factors may interact to influence retention outcomes in the sensitivity test and subsequently the final dataset.

Student Retention Rate by Race Weighting Scheme

To address gaps in available data for retention rates by race, this study first gathered race-specific retention statistics from states (e.g., Georgia and California) that publish such data. Where state- or institution-level data was unavailable, the missing retention rates were estimated by blending the college's overall retention rate with national race-specific data. The final blended value was weighted to an 80/20 ratio (80% institutional data, 20% national data) but capped within the minimum and maximum of institutional retention rate for any given institution between 2018 – 2022 (the timing of this study). By basing the limits on each school's real retention data, the assumed numbers stay in line with real data that is specific to each school's Carnegie classification, enrollment, size, or selectivity. To confirm that the 80/20 choice did not significantly bias results, this study tested 70/30 and 60/40 allocations as well. Making sure that race-based retention never goes beyond a school's known limits improves the analysis's ability to reflect realistic outcomes and makes it more reliable.

Validity of Estimating MSPS Administrator Unit Power

In cases where an administrator's data was absent, the procedure checked for a person in the same or an equivalent role within that institution. If no direct match existed, the analysis turned to peer institutions with comparable settings. As a final improvement, known anti-DEI laws at the state level were added, because these things can actually limit an administrator's power. By imputing these data, we avoid misrepresenting the sociopolitical dynamics tied to DEI leadership (Bensimon, 2005; Kezar, 2014). After final imputation, the dataset underwent checks for outliers and inconsistencies. This clear protocol is in line with the idea that listwise deletion can leave out institutions that help historically underrepresented groups (Enders, 2010; Little & Rubin, 2019). By preserving incomplete but significant cases, our analysis remains more faithful to QuantCrit ideals and promotes a nuanced understanding of DEI complexities in higher education.

Descriptive Statistics

The researcher began by calculating descriptive statistics for all 275 institutions, including frequencies, means, medians, modes, ranges, variances, and standard deviations (Runyon, 1977). These computations helped clarify how each variable was distributed across the dataset.

Correlation Analysis RQ1

To explore whether MSPS funding correlates with students of color retention, this study used correlation analysis. This choice aligns with the broader aim of understanding how resource allocation might support or limit academic outcomes among underrepresented student groups.

Correlation is well suited to identifying linear relationships (Hossler, 2008). The MSPS framework is expected to improve retention by offering culturally relevant support services, community-building opportunities, and resource-based programs (Museus et al., 2017). By examining correlation coefficients, the researcher can determine whether variations in institutional expenditures on MSPS align with shifts in students of color retention.

Multiple Regression Analysis RQ1

A multiple regression model was then applied to assess whether MSPS spending can predict retention rates among students of color. This technique, which minimizes squared residuals, provides coefficients (β) that illustrate how funds derived from state appropriations, student fees, foundation sources, or grants relate to retention (Biddix, 2018; Faraway, 2014; Weisberg, 2005). Symbolically:

$$\text{Retention} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 (\text{Student Activity Expenditures}) + \beta_2 (\text{State Fund Expenditures}) + \beta_3 (\text{Foundation Expenditures}) + \beta_4 (\text{Grant Fund Expenditures}) + \varepsilon$$

In this formulation, β_0 represents the intercept, signifying baseline retention for students of color. Coefficients β_1 through β_4 indicate the degree to which each MSPS funding source correlates with that retention (Biddix, 2018).

Research on student retention consistently emphasizes the multifaceted nature of factors influencing persistence and degree completion (Bean, 2003; Tinto, 1975). Scholars argue that basic institutional characteristics such as institutional classification, selectivity, student services spending, and institutional size play a foundational role in explaining variance in retention rates (Carter, 2020; Kuk, 2012). Including these baseline factors first in a hierarchical framework

(Model 1) follows established best practices in educational research and allows for clearer interpretation of how structural characteristics shape retention outcomes (Creswell, 2014). By controlling for these structural variables, subsequent models can isolate the effects of additional predictors more accurately (Kim & Conrad, 2006).

In the second model (Model 2), the introduction of retention and student services variables sourced by IPEDS grounds the model in real-world data given the necessity of imputation. These variables are also linked to literature that suggests these targeted supports have substantial influence on students' academic and social integration, both of which are integral to retention (Robbins et al., 2004; Tinto, 1975). At this stage, retention metrics, along with student services expenditures, often provide insight into how well an institution fosters engagement and meets learner needs (Astin, 1993). Finally, adding a state-level MSPS expenditures variable (Model 3) was done because there is more and more evidence that policy and funding situations affect how well students do in school, especially at public schools (Baker & Hagedorn, 2015; Li & Zumeta, 2019).

Correlation Analysis RQ2

Research Question 2, "What is the relationship between MSPS administrator Unit Power and Institutional Expenditures for MSPS?," was addressed with a correlation analysis. This phase investigated whether stronger administrator negotiation strategies are associated with higher MSPS expenditures (Mukaka, 2012). Although correlation does not prove causality (Schober et al., 2018), it can highlight significant links between negotiation capabilities and the resources allocated to MSPS. Pearson's r values can range from -1.0 (perfect negative correlation) to $+1.0$

(perfect positive correlation), with 0 indicating no linear relationship. Standard prerequisites for Pearson's r include interval- or ratio-level measures and a linear association (Hauke & Kossowski, 2011).

Multiple Regression Analysis RQ2

The second research question explores how MSPS administrators' unit power, encompassing environmental power, institutional power, and negotiation strategies, relates to MSPS funding. This hierarchical regression model looks at how MSPS units negotiate, get, and use institutional resources in settings that are affected by both inside and outside factors. Its conceptual design derives from principal-agent theory, which posits that subunits (agents) within an organization governed by higher-level leadership (principals) must negotiate resources in ways that can be affected by divergent goals, power structures, and information asymmetries (Jensen & Meckling, 1976). Within this framework, MSPS administrators act as agents who seek funding for diversity-focused initiatives, while institutional leadership represents the principal, allocating resources in alignment with broader organizational priorities and perceived institutional value.

Hackman's (1985) unit power model is used to create the variables that are used to figure out how much power MSPS administrators have over how resources are allocated. According to Hackman, subunits gain power when external or internal stakeholders deem their services or support critical and central to institutional goals. Hackman's framework for examining MSPS Unit Power identifies three key dimensions. First, environmental power captures the extent to which external stakeholders value an MSPS unit's contributions, for instance, when an MSPS

office successfully obtains outside funding or addresses pressing social needs. Second, institutional power reflects a unit's authority and visibility within the college or university, such as by maintaining frequent access to senior administrators or enjoying formal recognition that enhances its profile. Third, resource negotiation strategies refer to specific methods administrators use to highlight their successes and integrate MSPS goals with the institution's broader mission to secure budgetary support.

In the hierarchical regression design, Model 1 incorporates fundamental institutional predictors—Selectivity Score Range, Student Services Expenditure Tier, Institutional Size, and Carnegie Grouping—to account for well-known structural factors shaping resource allocation (Creswell, 2014; Kuk, 2012). Although these variables typically relate to student success and retention in higher education research (Astin, 1993; Tinto, 1975), here they function primarily as baseline measures of institutional budgeting tendencies. Model 2 adds the Anti-State DEI Policy variable to recognize the influence of state-level backing or opposition on institutional spending directed toward diversity programs (Li & Zumeta, 2019). Model 3 includes Hackman's unit power factors to illuminate how MSPS administrators address principal-agent tensions and exert influence over budget decisions.

By gradually integrating these variables, this study highlights how an MSPS unit's power and negotiation approaches affect funding strategies, even after considering institutional traits and state policy contexts. Seen through the principal-agent lens, the final model indicates how MSPS leaders, as subunit representatives, can leverage authority to direct resources toward diversity initiatives. These results underscore the significance of MSPS unit power in guiding

institutional decisions about MSPS expenditures and provide insight into how organizational and political factors intersect to determine budget allocations.

Data Visualization, Reporting, and Findings

SPSS software provided a systematic way to examine data trends and produce visual representations (Brown & Jones, 2018). Because this study relied heavily on surveys, SPSS proved valuable for detecting patterns and ensuring data consistency (Brown & Jones, 2018; Davis, 2016).

Protection of Subjects

This study employed a survey design that maintained the anonymity of participants and followed standard ethical guidelines for human subjects research. Although the nature of the survey questions did not necessitate formal Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval, several measures were put in place to ensure the protection of participants. First, a general (non-individually tracked) survey link was emailed to potential respondents, thereby removing any direct link between an individual's identity and their responses. The list of potential participants—which included names, email addresses, and other publicly available contact information—was stored in a password-protected file and kept separate from the database of survey responses, thus preventing any chance of cross-referencing. Participation was entirely voluntary, and the opening page of the survey contained a concise description of this study's purpose, data handling procedures, and the participants' right to withdraw at any time. Because consent was implied when respondents chose to proceed, no signatures or additional records were required.

All survey data were transmitted via an encrypted platform and stored on a secure server so that any personally identifying information, whether direct or indirect, could not be inadvertently captured. In addition, once the survey was completed, participants received a brief debriefing that reiterated the objectives of this study, explained how their responses would be used, and provided a point of contact for any questions or concerns. Results are reported at an aggregate level to ensure that no individual's identity or institution can be inferred from the findings. Using these careful data management practices—including unlinked survey URLs, secure data storage, and aggregate-only reporting—this study effectively minimized risks to participants and upheld best practices for ethical research.

Validity and Reliability

External validity was bolstered in this study by sampling over 100 public higher education institutions—a diverse set of campuses in terms of Carnegie classification, size, and selectivity. While simply having a large sample does not guarantee broad generalizability, drawing from multiple states and peer-group references (via mutual-peer matching) helped ensure that findings are more representative of the broader landscape of four-year public institutions (Cohen et al., 2013; Morphew & Taylor, 2019).

Additionally, this study addressed potential threats to validity by (a) obtaining authentic MSPS expenditure data from publicly available state audits, (b) using recognized IPEDS variables (selectivity, student services spending, and retention) to guide imputation, and (c) anchoring the dataset in 20 institutions that provided real-world data on both MSPS spending and

retention disaggregated by race. The purposeful use of peer institutions and hierarchical imputation techniques further supported the consistency of estimates across a range of contexts.

Instrument Reliability (Hackman’s Survey)

Hackman’s (1985) original questionnaire, adapted here to measure MSPS administrator unit power, underwent initial validation through interviews in Hackman’s research. While this study did not conduct a separate pilot or Cronbach’s alpha analysis for the adapted items, the underlying survey design draws on a framework that has been previously tested for content validity. Administrators’ responses on environmental power, institutional power, and resource negotiation strategies provided theoretically consistent dimensions, which were subsequently used for factor-based imputation via Principal Component Analysis (PCA). This approach respects Hackman’s conceptual categories while addressing missing item-level data.

Statistical Reliability and Robustness Checks

Rather than relying on traditional “test–retest” or “Cronbach’s alpha” to confirm measurement reliability for each construct, this study focused on robustness and sensitivity analyses to evaluate the consistency of results. Specifically:

Sensitivity Testing with Real-World Data (2022)

A correlation sensitivity test used data from 20 institutions that published both MSPS spending and retention by race. By comparing correlations across multiple years (2018–2022) and diverse demographic groups (Asian, Black, Hispanic, and Multiracial), this study checked whether the observed relationships were stable (Freedman, 2009; Imbens & Rubin, 2015). A hierarchical regression sensitivity test on the same 2022 dataset probed how the incremental

addition of institutional and MSPS-related variables affected the prediction of student-of-color retention rates. The consistent significance and direction of coefficients across different model steps supported the stability of these findings.

Multiple Weighting Schemes for Retention by Race

Because IPEDS does not disaggregate retention rates by race, this study combined each college's known retention data with national race-specific data using an 80/20 weighting. Additional weights of 70/30 and 60/40 were tested to confirm that minor shifts in the weight ratio did not change the main conclusions about MSPS spending and student-of-color retention. Stable results across these variations add further confidence to the findings.

Imputation Strategy for Missing Data

Beyond the sensitivity tests, this study employed a multi-step, hierarchical approach for imputation to address missing MSPS expenditures, retention disaggregated by race, and the Hackman-based administrator survey items. By comparing results using both imputed and non-imputed subsets, this study verified that imputation did not artificially inflate or suppress the primary relationships under investigation (Morgan & Winship, 2015). These robustness checks collectively demonstrated that the link between MSPS spending and student-of-color retention remained largely consistent under different assumptions (e.g., alternative imputation, different weighting schemes). In other words, the results are reliable in the sense that small methodological changes did not materially alter the key findings (Freedman, 2009; Rosenbaum, 2002).

Limitations

Although quantitative research is often perceived as methodologically rigorous (Boslaugh, 2007), it is not without constraints. One challenge lies in depending on self-reported data from surveys, which can introduce response bias, especially in contexts where reputational concerns may be significant. Previous work acknowledges that while institutional expenditures can affect student outcomes (Dahlvig, 2020; Umfress, 2010), results vary widely. Focusing on students of color highlights the importance of understanding how race might shape the success of equity-focused initiatives (Reason, 2009). However, correlation alone does not confirm causation, and survey respondents might struggle to recall data accurately (Groves et al., 2011; Tourangeau et al., 2000). In addition, imputation can unintentionally introduce biases if underlying assumptions are incorrect (Enders, 2010; Schafer & Graham, 2002). Yet, when applied with care, imputation remains a useful strategy to address missing data and ensure comprehensive analyses.

Additionally, the representativeness of the sample and the period studied may limit the generalizability of these findings. Although multiple institutions participated, certain regions or institutional types might be underrepresented. Furthermore, external factors—such as evolving state policies or leadership turnover—may affect how both MSPS allocations and student outcomes unfold, potentially creating confounding variables that were not fully captured in this study. Lastly, while imputation provided a more inclusive dataset, it relies on assumptions that, if imperfect, could bias the resulting estimates. Despite these caveats, this study’s multi-pronged

approach to data collection and analysis offers a robust preliminary understanding of how MSPS resource allocation correlates with student outcomes.

Conclusion

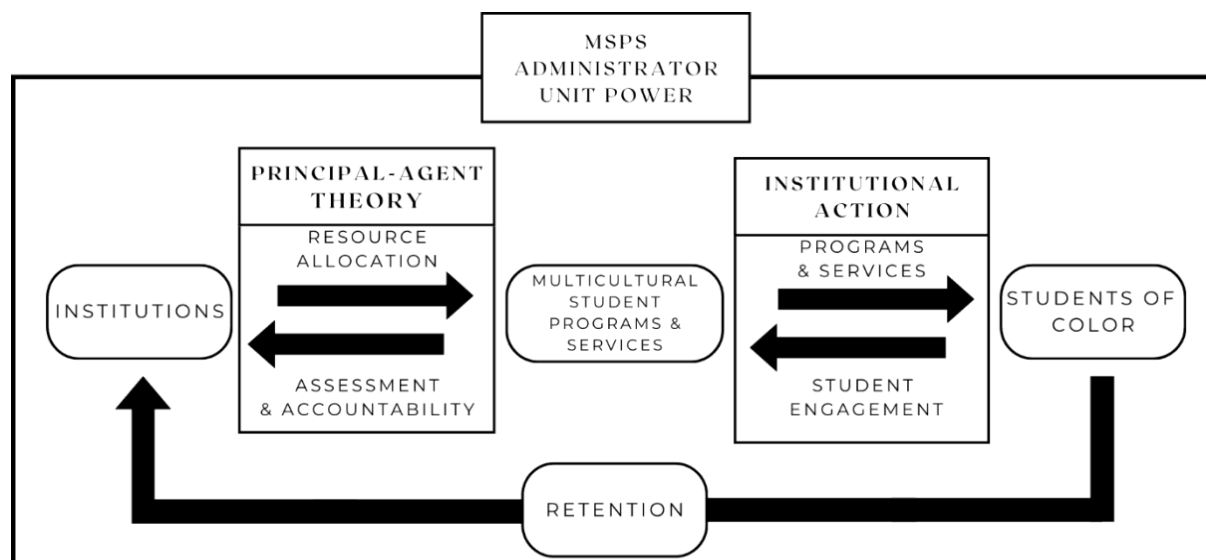
This chapter has described the methodology used to investigate two main questions in higher education. Specifically, it examines whether institutional expenditures for MSPS can predict retention among students of color and considers how MSPS administrators' unit power affects the funding allocated to MSPS. Because little research has explored the intersection of student of color retention, MSPS budgetary decisions, and the negotiation power of administrators, integrating MSPS leaders' perspectives offers direct insights. This study uses linear regression to determine if MSPS funding can predict how well students will do in school and correlation analyses to see if higher Unit Power among MSPS administrators is linked to higher Institutional Expenditures. This helps us understand how financial strategies can be used to support goals related to equity. It further illustrates how MSPS budgets can reinforce student of color retention and how administrators' leadership approaches can shape resource allocation. The findings may guide future policies and practices by clarifying how to maintain DEI initiatives at public higher education institutions through targeted funding and proactive involvement with central administration. Through careful use of multiple quantitative tools—surveys, state financial audits, IPEDS data, and robust imputation techniques—this study ensures comprehensive coverage of the factors affecting Multicultural Student Programs and Services (MSPS). The multi-step regression and correlation analyses offer distinct yet complementary views of how MSPS expenditures align with student-of-color retention and how MSPS

administrator unit power shapes budgetary outcomes. By rigorously cross-verifying data sources, managing missing variables, and testing multiple scenarios (via peer-group matching, weighting schemes, and sensitivity checks), these methods not only reveal patterns in equity-focused spending but also illuminate administrators' influence on resource negotiation. This integrated methodological approach directly sets the stage for the following results chapter, where each analytic step—descriptive, correlational, or inferential—will be shown to converge on a clearer understanding of how targeted DEI investments and leadership strategies can bolster retention for students of color.

CHAPTER 4 - RESULTS

Introduction

Building on the methodological framework set out in Chapter 3, this chapter presents findings that directly address this study's research questions. In doing so, it clarifies how resource management, institutional strategies, and the socio-political dimensions of DEI initiatives in higher education shape the retention of students of color. Specifically, the chapter employs descriptive statistics, multiple regression models, and factor analyses to assess the impact of MSPS unit power and resource allocations on retention rates. The dataset, spanning 2018–2022 and covering multiple racial and ethnic groups, necessitates a series of detailed tables that reveal both year-to-year and subgroup-specific variations. By offering such granularity, this study ensures that important distinctions in student outcomes or funding patterns are not overlooked, which guards against inaccurate conclusions (Kezar, 2014; Tinto, 2012). Prior research has demonstrated that DEI-related funding and policies can shift markedly in response to legislative measures or administrative turnover, making annual assessments crucial for capturing the stability and evolution of retention strategies (Gillborn et al., 2018; Little & Rubin, 2019). Presenting data over multiple years and among different subgroups in table form fosters a richer understanding of how MSPS spending, administrator power, and sociopolitical conditions interact over time. Such organization also supplies a more grounded basis for future policy decisions and administrative actions (Bensimon, 2005; Kezar, 2014). All results appear in alignment with the theoretical framework depicted in Figure 2.

Figure 2

Quantitative findings in this chapter are interpreted through Tinto's Institutional Action Model, Principal-Agent Theory, and QuantCrit. The central aim is to explore how policy settings and administrative practices can either reinforce or challenge inequities. After presenting descriptive findings, this chapter proceeds to detail analyses of inferential tests.

Sensitivity Test: Relationship Between MSPS Expenditures and Retention Rates for Students of Color

Sensitivity Test (MSPS Expenditures & Retention): Correlation Analysis

This correlation analysis focused on the 20 institutions that publicly reported both state MSPS expenditures and race-specific retention rates, forming the anchor for the expanded (imputed) dataset. The correlation coefficients for the Asian student retention varied across years. While 2019, 2021, and 2022 showed moderate to strong statistically significant

correlations (with p-values ranging from 0.002 to 0.017), the correlations for 2018 and 2020 were weaker and not statistically significant. This variation suggests that the relationship between state MSPS expenditures and retention rates for Asian students may be more sensitive to the specific expenditure year used. In contrast, Black, Hispanic, and multiracial retention rates for these groups were consistently strong and statistically significant across all expenditure years. Correlations ranged approximately from 0.598 to 0.749 for Black student retention, 0.613 to 0.787 for Hispanic student retention, and 0.622 to 0.850 for multiracial student retention. Regardless of the expenditure year considered, these robust and stable correlations strongly link higher state MSPS expenditures with higher retention rates. This provides a stable foundation for the imputed dataset.

Sensitivity Test (MSPS Expenditures & Retention): Regression Analysis

Using the same 20 institutions in the previous correlation sensitivity test this study preformed regression analysis to strengthen the validity of the results. For 2022, Asian student retention, Model 1 explained 11.6% of the variance; when retention-related factors were introduced in Model 2, the explained variance rose to 56.3%, with Retention_2022 (IPEDS data) emerging as a key predictor. Adding the State_MSPS Expenditure variable in Model 3 brought the overall model fit to 62.6%, but this expenditure measure was not statistically significant ($p > .05$). In the case of Black student retention, the baseline model accounted for 56.5% of the variance, and incorporating retention and student services factors increased explained variance substantially to 88.8%, with Retention_2022 remaining significant at $p < .01$. Including State_MSPS Expenditure did not further improve the model, and its coefficient lacked statistical

significance ($p > .05$). For Hispanic student retention, institutional predictors initially explained 50.7% of the variance, which rose to 64.1% after adding retention and student services variables; nevertheless, introducing State_MSPS Expenditure did not enhance the model further, leaving the variance explained unchanged and the associated coefficients nonsignificant ($p > .05$).

Regarding multiracial student retention, institutional predictors accounted for 61.1% of the variance initially; the addition of retention and student services variables raised this figure to 78.9%, with Retention_2022 significant at $p < .05$. When the State_MSPS Expenditure measure was added, the model's fit increased to 84.6%, but the variable was not significant at $p < .05$.

These tests serve to validate the imputed results by grounding them in the most complete real-world data available (i.e., campuses that publicly reported both state MSPS expenditures and race-specific retention rates). These findings illustrate those institutional characteristics, including Carnegie Grouping, Selectivity, Student Services Expenditure Tier, and Institutional Size, are critical for understanding baseline retention. Retention-related measures significantly enhance model fit across all demographic groups, underscoring their importance. Although State_MSPS Expenditure holds conceptual value, its incremental influence varies and did not reach statistical significance in a sample of only 20 institutions. To address this limitation, the final imputed dataset expands the sample size to increase statistical power for identifying genuine relationships between state-level funding and retention trends. Nonetheless, institutional and retention-based variables remain the most consistent predictors of student retention in these groups. In the case of Asian student retention for 2022, Model 1 explained only 11.6 % of the

variance, whereas Model 2 increased the explained variance to 56.3 % by incorporating retention-related factors.

Sensitivity Test: Retention Rate by Race

After running correlation analyses using three weighting schemes (80/20, 70/30, and 60/40) to blend institutional and national retention rates by race, all correlation and regression coefficients varied by less than ± 0.02 across these alternative weightings, suggesting that no weighting scenario drastically altered the relationship between MSPS expenditures and race-specific retention outcomes (see Appendix 5 – Table A16). Consequently, the chosen weighting strategy (80/20) can be considered robust for the purposes of this study.

Sensitivity Test: Principal Component Analysis for MSPS Administrator Unit Power

A principal component analysis confirmed that Hackman's (1985) framework—encompassing environmental power, institutional power, and resource negotiation—manifested as multiple factors explaining about 84% of the total variance. Communalities ranged from .601 to .953, indicating a strong shared dimension among items tapping into administrators' unit power. Notably, the factor loadings largely aligned with Hackman's original constructs, suggesting that the adapted survey reliably captured these three conceptual domains. The resulting component scores were used to impute missing unit power data, thereby preserving consistency with Hackman's theoretical structure. Moreover, incorporating additional context-specific variables—such as administrator tenure, analogous professional roles, and the presence of state-level anti-DEI policy—further refined the imputation process, reflecting the diverse institutional landscapes in which MSPS administrators operate.

Descriptive Statistics

The following tables present descriptive measures such as mean, median, standard deviation, minimum, and maximum values for annual retention rates by race, as well as MSPS expenditures, environmental power, institutional power, and resource negotiation variables. These indicators illustrate the extent of variability and typical patterns in the dataset. The analysis sets up a basic view of the data by showing the range and distribution of important metrics like retention rates over several years or total MSPS budgets. Subsequent sections in this chapter will build on these findings, while more thorough interpretations and theoretical discussions are deferred to the next chapter.

Table 1 summarizes descriptive statistics for student retention rates by race and year. Retention rates reflect the proportion of first-time, full-time, first-year students who reenroll in the following academic year. The minimum denotes the lowest retention rate for that race and year, and the maximum marks the highest. The mean represents the average retention rate, whereas the standard deviation shows how much the data points diverge from the mean (Biddix, 2018). Over the five-year period, Asian students record relatively uniform retention rates in the mid- to high 80% range. The lowest mean, 81.9 %, occurred in 2021, whereas 2020 saw the highest mean at 85.7 %. Low standard deviations suggest that these results are fairly consistent across institutions. By contrast, retention rates for Black students are more variable, with means ranging from 73.4 % in 2018 to 67.7 % in 2022 and standard deviations frequently exceeding 7%. This broader range indicates that predicting retention for Black students is less straightforward, likely owing to a mixture of institutional factors or student experiences.

Retention rates for Hispanic students generally lie between 70% and 75%, although some years, such as 2019, show slightly higher figures of 77% to 78 %. Although minimum values sometimes dip below 50%, most fall around 70%, and the maximum values climb near 90%. Meanwhile, multiracial student retention typically stays in the mid-70% range, with mean values moving from about 72.5 % in 2021 to roughly 76.3 % in 2019. Standard deviations of around five to six percent point to moderate variability among institutions.

It is important to note that Native American and Pacific Islander student data are not included because many institutions did not report usable information. White student retention rates and their connection to Research Question 1 are also absent from this discussion, although descriptive, correlation, and regression results for White students are presented in the appendix.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Student Retention Rates by Race/Year

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Asian 2018	275	0.6500	0.9675	0.8338	0.0316
Asian 2019	275	0.7768	0.9493	0.8421	0.0305
Asian 2020	275	0.7135	1.0000	0.8573	0.0257
Asian 2021	275	0.6818	0.9728	0.8190	0.0399
Asian 2022	275	0.6977	0.9733	0.8362	0.0287
Black 2018	275	0.5238	0.9318	0.7343	0.0554
Black 2019	275	0.4523	0.9673	0.7288	0.0675
Black 2020	275	0.4846	0.9472	0.6840	0.0720
Black 2021	275	0.4474	0.9608	0.6773	0.0730
Black 2022	275	0.3721	0.9526	0.6769	0.0724
Hispanic 2018	275	0.5238	0.9563	0.7574	0.0537
Hispanic 2019	275	0.5417	0.9807	0.7732	0.0510
Hispanic 2020	275	0.3871	0.9841	0.7126	0.0756
Hispanic 2021	275	0.5705	0.9675	0.7268	0.0589
Hispanic 2022	275	0.4444	0.9670	0.7519	0.0590
Multiracial 2018	275	0.5962	0.9627	0.7521	0.0512
Multiracial 2019	275	0.5409	0.9500	0.7631	0.0516
Multiracial 2020	275	0.6019	0.9808	0.7306	0.0606
Multiracial 2021	275	0.5265	0.9875	0.7250	0.0607
Multiracial 2022	275	0.6042	0.9811	0.7499	0.0541

Table 2 provides an overview of the imputed State MSPS (Multicultural Student Programs and Services) expenditures from 2018 to 2022, also scaled into millions of U.S.

dollars. The minimum value is consistently 0.00 million each year, indicating some institutions reported no expenditures. Maximum values range from 13.44 million in 2020 to 18.02 million in 2022, reflecting significant variation. These metrics capture the range, average, and spread of institutional patterns over the five years.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics for State MSPS Expenditures (in Millions)

Year	N	Minimum (M)	Maximum (M)	Mean (M)	Std. Deviation (M)
2018	275	0.00	16.81	1.97	2.09
2019	275	0.00	15.42	1.99	2.05
2020	275	0.00	13.44	1.96	1.98
2021	275	0.00	14.03	1.96	1.98
2022	275	0.00	18.02	2.00	2.16

Note: Values rounded and expressed in millions of U.S. dollars.

In the next section, tables display descriptive statistics for variables that capture environmental power, institutional power, and resource negotiation strategies—key dimensions derived from Hackman’s (1985) research and integrated into this study’s conceptual framework. Examining these measures reveals how offices manage and influence the resource allocation process, navigate relationships with central administrators, and respond to both external and internal demands. Although this section focuses primarily on distribution, averages, and variability within these data, later chapters will delve into more detailed analyses, including possible links to retention, MSPS spending, and the effectiveness of anti-racism initiatives.

Table 3.1 provides descriptive statistics for the environmental power (EP) indicators adapted from Hackman’s model, covering student recruitment and retention, responsiveness to societal needs, external financial backing, community support, alumni engagement, and federal government funding. All EP measures were scored on a 1–5 scale, where 1 denotes “Much Lower than Most Similar Units” and 5 signifies “Much Higher than Similar Units.”

Table 3.1 Environmental Power Indicators (2022)

Indicator	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Student Recruitment and Retention	275	1	4	2.04	0.294
Ability to cope with current societal needs and problems	275	1	5	2.07	0.459
Overall, outside financial support	275	1	5	2.03	0.367
Community Support	275	1	4	2.07	0.367
Alumni Support	275	1	4	2.03	0.312
Federal Government Support	275	1	5	2.06	0.414

Table 3.2 summarizes institutional power (IP) measures related to historical authority within the institution, length of time at the institution, visibility (both internal and external), federal support, the number of students served, interactions with central administration, frequency of communication with leadership, presidential support, and ease of access to the president. Again, scaled from 1–5, mean values typically range from about 2.0 to just above 3.0.

Table 3.2 Institutional Power Indicators (2022)

Indicator	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Historical power within institution	275	1	4	2.92	0.432
Length of time at institution	275	1	5	2.91	0.434
Visibility within the institution	275	1	5	3.03	0.447
Visibility outside of the institution	275	1	5	3.00	0.419
Federal government support	275	1	4	2.90	0.393
Number of students served	275	1	4	2.09	0.356
Interaction with central administration	275	1	5	3.09	0.452
Number of times monthly that a unit leader talks with central administration	275	1	5	3.01	0.396
Support of President	275	1	5	3.13	0.441
Ease of access to President	275	1	5	3.06	0.406

In Table 3.3, the focus shifts to resource negotiation (RN) strategies. These strategies look at how well units meet the needs of the institution at different levels (total institution, division, and unit) and how likely they are to include budget requests for new programs. The means are clustered around 3.1 on a 1-5 scale.

Table 3.3 Resource Negotiation Indicators (2022)

Indicator	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Focusing on the needs of the total institution	275	3	5	3.12	0.383
Focusing on the needs of the division	275	1	5	3.13	0.382
Focusing on the needs of the unit	275	1	5	3.13	0.382
Including budget request for innovative programs	275	2	5	3.13	0.365

RQ1: Can institutional expenditures on MSPS predict retention rates for students of color? Correlation

Because this study employed imputation methods to supplement the dataset, it is essential to confirm the validity of the resulting correlations. The imputation process was guided by IPEDS data on student services expenditures and first-time, full-time, first-year retention rates, so demonstrating a strong correlation between these variables helps validate the imputed data. The appendix provides the relevant correlation statistics, as well as comparisons between original and imputed values, to offer transparent evidence of data reliability

Table 4 presents the statistical correlations between state-level expenditures on Multicultural Student Programs and Services (MSPS) from 2018 to 2022 and retention rates for students of color. In each year of this study, a positive and statistically significant relationship emerged between MSPS funding levels and the retention of students of color.

Table 4. Correlations Between State MSPS Expenditures and Students of Color Retention
Asian student retention correlation with MSPS expenditures

Year	MSPS Expenditure 2018	MSPS Expenditure 2019	MSPS Expenditure 2021	MSPS Expenditure 2020	MSPS Expenditure 2022
2018	.176**	.166**	.159**	.162**	.194**
2019	.256**	.250**	.241**	.240**	.283**
2020	.239**	.231**	.226**	.231**	.251**
2021	.236**	.228**	.215**	.218**	.258**
2022	.250**	.242**	.229**	.234**	.268**

Black student retention correlation with MSPS expenditures

Year	MSPS Expenditure 2018	MSPS Expenditure 2019	MSPS Expenditure 2021	MSPS Expenditure 2020	MSPS Expenditure 2022
2018	.280**	.284**	.275**	.272**	.303**
2019	.310**	.310**	.299**	.292**	.346**
2020	.312**	.313**	.301**	.296**	.343**
2021	.314**	.313**	.302**	.297**	.345**
2022	.327**	.326**	.313**	.309**	.360**

Hispanic student retention Correlation with MSPS Expenditures

Year	MSPS Expenditure 2018	MSPS Expenditure 2019	MSPS Expenditure 2021	MSPS Expenditure 2020	MSPS Expenditure 2022
2018	.307**	.307**	.297**	.291**	.341**
2019	.326**	.325**	.313**	.308**	.357**
2020	.311**	.311**	.304**	.299**	.334**
2021	.323**	.318**	.308**	.304**	.355**
2022	.308**	.308**	.297**	.294**	.336**

Multiracial student retention correlation with MSPS expenditures

Year	MSPS Expenditure 2018	MSPS Expenditure 2019	MSPS Expenditure 2021	MSPS Expenditure 2020	MSPS Expenditure 2022
2018	.316**	.315**	.306**	.300**	.345**
2019	.295**	.296**	.291**	.285**	.322**
2020	.327**	.324**	.318**	.313**	.355**
2021	.332**	.328**	.320**	.316**	.359**
2022	.329**	.324**	.317**	.314**	.358**

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Multiple Regression

For each racial subgroup (Asian, Black, Hispanic, and Multiracial), three progressively comprehensive regression models were utilized. Model 1 incorporated demographic and institutional characteristics—Carnegie Grouping, Anti-State DEI Policy, Selectivity Score Range, Student Services Expenditure Tier, and Institutional Size. Model 2 added overall retention rates and combined student services spending, and Model 3 further included state MSPS imputed expenditures. Each subgroup's results are displayed in a separate sub-table, with R^2 and beta values for every step. As additional predictors were introduced, the R and R^2 typically rose, indicating enhanced explanatory power that varied across subgroups. This stepwise progression allowed for careful integration of focused expenditure variables and historical performance indicators, reducing concerns about imputation and ensuring that findings did not rely on any single metric or timeframe. Overall, consistent and positive coefficients for MSPS investment suggest that such financial commitments contribute meaningfully to retaining students of color.

Table 5.1 details the regression outcomes in five sub-tables (one per racial subgroup). Each sub-table shows three models in hierarchical order, and the R^2 values reflect how much of the adjusted retention rate is explained by the predictors. These values grow substantially from Model 1 to Model 2 for all subgroups, while differences between Model 2 and Model 3 are generally modest, implying that once retention and student services metrics are accounted for, further expenditures do not always yield a sizable increase in explained variance. In the final model, Institutional Retention (2018) consistently emerges as the strongest predictor in all subgroups, exhibiting high beta coefficients and strong significance ($p < .001$). Comparing final betas for other predictors reveals that few remain significant in Model 3; however, for Black, Hispanic, and Multiracial subgroups, certain policy indicators (e.g., legally enforceable DEI restrictions) and Selectivity Score Range do achieve statistical significance. Selectivity Score Range stands out as a notable predictor (particularly for Asian, Black, Hispanic, and Multiracial groups), while legally enforceable DEI policy also shows significance in some cases. The marked increase in R^2 from Model 1 to Model 2 confirms that adding prior retention and student services greatly enhances explanatory power, whereas introducing additional expenditures in Model 3 imparts a more limited effect.

Table 5.1. Hierarchical Multiple Regression Predicting Retention Rates by Race (2018)
Hierarchical Regression Results for Adjusted Retention Rate (80/20) – Asian Students

Model 1	β	SE	β (Final)	t	p	R^2
Constant	60.683	2.697	—	22.5	<.001***	0.558
Carnegie Grouping	-0.52	0.814	-0.041	-0.639	0.523	
Institutional Size	4.365	0.513	0.558	8.516	<.001***	
Selectivity Score Range	4.493	0.662	0.291	6.787	<.001***	
Anti-State DEI: Attempted	-5.666	1.011	-0.267	-5.605	<.001***	
Anti-State DEI: Proposed	-3.195	1.171	-0.124	-2.729	0.007**	
Anti-State DEI: Legally	-3.266	0.982	-0.156	-3.326	0.001**	
Model 2	β	SE	β (Final)	t	p	R^2
Constant	13.66	0.824	—	16.573	<.001***	0.983
Carnegie Grouping	0.007	0.159	0.001	0.047	0.963	

Institutional Size	0.182	0.119	0.023	1.535	0.126
Selectivity Score Range	0.381	0.139	0.025	2.735	0.007 **
Anti-State DEI: Attempted	0.036	0.211	0.002	0.17	0.865
Anti-State DEI: Proposed	-0.003	0.233	0	-0.014	0.988
Anti-State DEI: Legally	0.101	0.198	0.005	0.51	0.611
Institutional Retention (2018)	0.825	0.011	0.955	77.506	< .001 ***
2018 Student Services	0.000000003254	0	0.016	1.473	0.142

Model 3	β	SE	β (Final)	t	p	R²
Constant	13.766	0.829	—	16.614	< .001 ***	0.983
Carnegie Grouping	-0.004	0.159	0	-0.025	0.98	
Institutional Size	0.186	0.119	0.024	1.571	0.117	
Selectivity Score Range	0.375	0.139	0.024	2.692	0.008 **	
Anti-State DEI: Attempted	-0.003	0.213	0	-0.014	0.989	
Anti-State DEI: Proposed	-0.004	0.233	0	-0.017	0.986	
Anti-State DEI: Legally	0.088	0.199	0.004	0.443	0.658	
Institutional Retention (2018)	0.824	0.011	0.953	77.041	< .001 ***	
2018 Student Services	0.000000002097	0	0.011	0.868	0.386	
State_MSPS Expenditure	0.00000005107	0	0.012	1.176	0.24	

Hierarchical Regression Results for Adjusted Retention Rate (80/20) – Black Students

Model 1	β	SE	β (Final)	t	p	R²
Constant	58.072	2.823	—	20.573	<.001 ***	0.554
Carnegie Grouping	-0.644	0.852	-0.049	-0.756	0.451	
Institutional Size	4.582	0.536	0.563	8.541	<.001 ***	
Selectivity Score Range	4.709	0.693	0.293	6.795	<.001 ***	
Anti-State DEI: Attempted	-5.731	1.058	-0.26	-5.417	<.001 ***	
Anti-State DEI: Proposed	-3.374	1.225	-0.126	-2.754	0.006 **	
Anti-State DEI: Legally	-3.204	1.028	-0.147	-3.117	0.002 **	

Model 2	β	SE	β (Final)	t	p	R²
Constant	9.279	0.591	—	15.703	<.001 ***	0.992
Carnegie Grouping	-0.083	0.114	-0.006	-0.729	0.467	
Institutional Size	0.035	0.085	0.004	0.407	0.684	
Selectivity Score Range	0.401	0.1	0.025	4.018	<.001 ***	
Anti-State DEI: Attempted	0.369	0.151	0.017	2.44	0.015 *	
Anti-State DEI: Proposed	0.061	0.167	0.002	0.365	0.716	
Anti-State DEI: Legally	0.450	0.142	0.021	3.162	0.002 **	
Institutional Retention (2018)	0.860	0.008	0.956	112.727	<.001 ***	
2018 Student Services	0.00000001087	0	0.053	6.866	<.001 ***	

Model 3	β	SE	B (Final)	t	p	R²
Constant	9.525	0.579	—	16.443	<.001 ***	0.992
Carnegie Grouping	-0.110	0.111	-0.008	-0.983	0.327	
Institutional Size	0.044	0.083	0.005	0.534	0.594	
Selectivity Score Range	0.388	0.097	0.024	3.981	<.001 ***	
Anti-State DEI: Attempted	0.279	0.149	0.013	1.874	0.062	
Anti-State DEI: Proposed	0.059	0.163	0.002	0.365	0.715	
Anti-State DEI: Legally	0.419	0.139	0.019	3.02	0.003 **	
Institutional Retention (2018)	0.857	0.007	0.953	114.693	<.001 ***	
2018 Student Services	0.00000000821	0	0.04	4.859	<.001 ***	
State_MSPS Expenditure	0.00000011770	0	0.026	3.878	<.001 ***	

Hierarchical Regression Results for Adjusted Retention Rate (80/20) – Hispanic Students

Model 1	β	SE	β (Final)	t	p	R²
Constant	59.184	2.756	—	21.476	<.001 ***	0.552
Carnegie Grouping	-0.553	0.832	-0.043	-0.666	0.506	
Institutional Size	4.405	0.524	0.555	8.411	<.001 ***	
Selectivity Score Range	4.573	0.677	0.292	6.76	<.001 ***	
Anti-State DEI: Attempted	-5.703	1.033	-0.265	-5.521	<.001 ***	
Anti-State DEI: Proposed	-3.298	1.196	-0.126	-2.757	0.006 **	

Anti-State DEI: Legally	-3.264	1.004	-0.154	-3.253	0.001 **	
Model 2	β	SE	β(Final)	t	p	R²
Constant	11.192	0.52	—	21.506	<.001***	0.994
Carnegie Grouping	-0.006	0.101	0	-0.061	0.951	
Institutional Size	-0.007	0.075	-0.001	-0.089	0.929	
Selectivity Score Range	0.348	0.088	0.022	3.959	<.001***	
Anti-State DEI: Attempted	0.243	0.133	0.011	1.828	0.069	
Anti-State DEI: Proposed	0.045	0.147	0.002	0.305	0.761	
Anti-State DEI: Legally	0.283	0.125	0.013	2.258	0.025 *	
Institutional Retention (2018)	0.845	0.007	0.964	125.715	<.001***	
2018 Student Services	0.00000000849200	0	0.042	6.09	<.001***	
Model 3	β	SE	β(Final)	t	p	R²
Constant	11.384	0.513	—	22.182	<.001***	0.994
Carnegie Grouping	-0.027	0.099	-0.002	-0.271	0.787	
Institutional Size	0.001	0.073	0	0.012	0.991	
Selectivity Score Range	0.338	0.086	0.022	3.913	<.001***	
Anti-State DEI: Attempted	0.173	0.132	0.008	1.312	0.191	
Anti-State DEI: Proposed	0.044	0.144	0.002	0.303	0.762	
Anti-State DEI: Legally	0.259	0.123	0.012	2.106	0.036 *	
Institutional Retention (2018)	0.842	0.007	0.961	127.236	<.001***	
2018 Student Services	0.00000000640500	0	0.032	4.28	<.001***	
State_MSPS Expenditure	0.00000009216000	0	0.021	3.427	0.001***	
<i>Hierarchical Regression Results for Adjusted Retention Rate (80/20) – Multiracial Students</i>						
Model 1	β	SE	β(Final)	t	p	R²
Constant	59.085	2.761	—	21.401	<.001***	0.552
Carnegie Grouping	-0.56	0.833	-0.043	-0.672	0.502	
Institutional Size	4.418	0.525	0.556	8.42	<.001***	
Selectivity Score Range	4.587	0.678	0.292	6.767	<.001***	
Anti-State DEI: Attempted	-5.704	1.035	-0.265	-5.512	<.001***	
Anti-State DEI: Proposed	-3.307	1.198	-0.126	-2.76	0.006 **	
Anti-State DEI: Legally	-3.261	1.005	-0.153	-3.243	0.001 **	
Model 2	β	SE	β(Final)	t	p	R²
Constant	11.036	0.52	—	21.217	<.001***	0.994
Carnegie Grouping	-0.011	0.1	-0.001	-0.114	0.909	
Institutional Size	-0.006	0.075	-0.001	-0.086	0.931	
Selectivity Score Range	0.355	0.088	0.023	4.042	<.001***	
Anti-State DEI: Attempted	0.255	0.133	0.012	1.92	0.056	
Anti-State DEI: Proposed	0.044	0.147	0.002	0.296	0.767	
Anti-State DEI: Legally	0.296	0.125	0.014	2.363	0.019 *	
Institutional Retention (2018)	0.846	0.007	0.963	125.943	<.001***	
2018 Student Services	0.000000008771	0	0.044	6.293	<.001***	
Model 3	β	SE	β(Final)	t	p	R²
Constant	11.233	0.512	—	21.924	<.001***	0.994
Carnegie Grouping	-0.033	0.099	-0.003	-0.33	0.741	
Institutional Size	0.001	0.073	0	0.018	0.986	
Selectivity Score Range	0.344	0.086	0.022	3.999	<.001***	
Anti-State DEI: Attempted	0.184	0.132	0.009	1.393	0.165	
Anti-State DEI: Proposed	0.042	0.144	0.002	0.295	0.768	
Anti-State DEI: Legally	0.271	0.123	0.013	2.21	0.028 *	
Institutional Retention (2018)	0.844	0.007	0.96	127.603	<.001***	
2018 Student Services	0.000000006632	0	0.033	4.44	<.001***	
State_MSPS Expenditure	0.000000094440	0	0.021	3.518	0.001 ***	

As was the case in the previous year's results, the R^2 values rise sharply from Model 1 to Model 2 once Institutional Retention (2019) and 2019 Student Services are introduced, emphasizing how strongly these factors explain adjusted retention outcomes. Adding State MSPS Expenditure in Model 3 does not markedly increase the overall R^2 , though its standardized beta does highlight how state funding may affect retention variance. In Model 3, Institutional Retention (2019) again proves to be the most influential predictor across all subgroups, consistently yielding large beta coefficients and highly significant p-values ($p < .001$). Other predictors sometimes reach significance—for example, Carnegie Grouping among Asian cohorts or legally enforceable DEI restrictions affecting Black, Hispanic, and Multiracial groups—but these effects are generally more modest compared to Institutional Retention (2019). The substantial increase in explained variance from Model 1 to Model 2 reinforces the importance of existing retention measures and student services in accounting for changes in adjusted 2019 retention rates, whereas the funding variable in the final model contributes only a limited additional effect once these other predictors have been considered.

Table 5.2. Hierarchical Multiple Regression Predicting Retention Rates by Race (2019)
Hierarchical Regression Results for Adjusted Retention Rate (80/20) – Asian Students

Model 1	β	SE	β (Final)	t	p	R^2
Constant	60.534	2.513	—	24.084	<.001***	0.586
Carnegie Grouping	-0.516	0.758	-0.042	-0.681	0.497	
Institutional Size	4.401	0.478	0.585	9.214	<.001***	
Selectivity Score Range	4.411	0.617	0.297	7.148	<.001***	
Anti-State DEI: Attempted	-5.085	0.942	-0.249	-5.397	<.001***	
Anti-State DEI: Proposed	-2.985	1.091	-0.12	-2.736	0.007 **	
Anti-State DEI: Legally	-3.011	0.915	-0.15	-3.29	0.001 **	
Model 2	β	SE	β (Final)	t	p	R^2
Constant	14.573	0.847	—	17.202	<.001***	0.982
Carnegie Grouping	-0.395	0.157	-0.032	-2.516	0.012 *	
Institutional Size	0.4	0.117	0.053	3.415	0.001 **	
Selectivity Score Range	0.14	0.14	0.009	1.004	0.316	
Anti-State DEI: Attempted	0.006	0.207	0	0.027	0.978	
Anti-State DEI: Proposed	-0.154	0.229	-0.006	-0.672	0.502	
Anti-State DEI: Legally	0.076	0.195	0.004	0.388	0.699	
Institutional Retention (2019)	0.834	0.012	0.963	71.966	<.001***	

2019 Student Services	0.000000001101	0	0.006	0.525	0.6	
Model 3	β	SE	B (Final)	t	p	R²
Constant	14.602	0.858	—	17.017	<.001***	0.982
Carnegie Grouping	-0.397	0.158	-0.033	-2.52	0.012 *	
Institutional Size	0.401	0.117	0.053	3.415	0.001 **	
Selectivity Score Range	0.14	0.14	0.009	1.001	0.318	
Anti-State DEI: Attempted	-0.002	0.21	0	-0.012	0.991	
Anti-State DEI: Proposed	-0.154	0.23	-0.006	-0.672	0.502	
Anti-State DEI: Legally	0.073	0.196	0.004	0.373	0.709	
Institutional Retention (2019)	0.833	0.012	0.963	70.982	<.001***	
2019 Student Services	0.000000000891	0	0.005	0.389	0.698	
State_MSPS Expenditure	0.000000010290	0	0.002	0.23	0.818	

Hierarchical Regression Results for Adjusted Retention Rate (80/20) – Black Students

Model 1	β	SE	β (Final)	t	p	R²
Constant	57.438	2.612	—	21.992	<.001***	0.582
Carnegie Grouping	-0.319	0.788	-0.025	-0.405	0.686	
Institutional Size	4.355	0.496	0.559	8.774	<.001***	
Selectivity Score Range	4.749	0.641	0.309	7.406	<.001***	
Anti-State DEI: Attempted	-5.259	0.979	-0.249	-5.372	<.001***	
Anti-State DEI: Proposed	-3.042	1.134	-0.118	-2.683	0.008 **	
Anti-State DEI: Legally	-2.993	0.951	-0.144	-3.147	0.002 **	
Model 2	β	SE	β (Final)	t	p	R²
Constant	10.128	0.556	—	18.208	<.001***	0.993
Carnegie Grouping	-0.179	0.103	-0.014	-1.737	0.084	
Institutional Size	0.024	0.077	0.003	0.311	0.756	
Selectivity Score Range	0.306	0.092	0.02	3.327	0.001 **	
Anti-State DEI: Attempted	0.16	0.136	0.008	1.179	0.239	
Anti-State DEI: Proposed	-0.012	0.151	0	-0.077	0.938	
Anti-State DEI: Legally	0.332	0.128	0.016	2.596	0.010 *	
Institutional Retention (2019)	0.863	0.008	0.964	113.413	<.001***	
2019 Student Services	0.00000000835	0	0.045	6.065	<.001***	
Model 3	β	SE	β (Final)	t	p	R²
Constant	10.248	0.561	—	18.259	<.001***	0.993
Carnegie Grouping	-0.188	0.103	-0.015	-1.823	0.069	
Institutional Size	0.028	0.077	0.004	0.368	0.713	
Selectivity Score Range	0.305	0.092	0.02	3.329	0.001 **	
Anti-State DEI: Attempted	0.127	0.137	0.006	0.923	0.357	
Anti-State DEI: Proposed	-0.012	0.15	0	-0.082	0.935	
Anti-State DEI: Legally	0.322	0.128	0.015	2.514	0.013 *	
Institutional Retention (2019)	0.861	0.008	0.962	112.131	<.001***	
2019 Student Services	0.00000000749	0	0.04	4.995	<.001***	
State_MSPS Expenditure	0.00000004225	0	0.009	1.445	0.15	

Hierarchical Regression Results for Adjusted Retention Rate (80/20) – Hispanic Students

Model 1	β	SE	β (Final)	t	p	R²
Constant	58.753	2.551	—	23.031	<.001***	0.581
Carnegie Grouping	-0.333	0.77	-0.027	-0.432	0.666	
Institutional Size	4.26	0.485	0.561	8.788	<.001***	
Selectivity Score Range	4.577	0.626	0.305	7.308	<.001***	
Anti-State DEI: Attempted	-5.219	0.956	-0.253	-5.459	<.001***	
Anti-State DEI: Proposed	-2.911	1.107	-0.116	-2.629	0.009 **	
Anti-State DEI: Legally	-2.933	0.929	-0.144	-3.158	0.002 **	
Model 2	β	SE	β (Final)	t	p	R²
Constant	12.132	0.539	—	22.528	<.001***	0.993
Carnegie Grouping	-0.2	0.1	-0.016	-2.005	0.046 *	
Institutional Size	0.072	0.074	0.009	0.965	0.335	
Selectivity Score Range	0.216	0.089	0.014	2.43	0.016 *	

Anti-State DEI: Attempted	0.054	0.131	0.003	0.409	0.683	
Anti-State DEI: Proposed	0.031	0.146	0.001	0.216	0.829	
Anti-State DEI: Legally	0.288	0.124	0.014	2.324	0.021 *	
Institutional Retention (2019)	0.848	0.007	0.972	115.21	<.001***	
2019 Student Services	0.000000005539	0	0.031	4.154	<.001***	
Model 3	β	SE	β (Final)	t	p	R²
Constant	12.228	0.544	—	22.476	<.001***	0.993
Carnegie Grouping	-0.207	0.1	-0.017	-2.073	0.039 *	
Institutional Size	0.075	0.074	0.01	1.011	0.313	
Selectivity Score Range	0.216	0.089	0.014	2.428	0.016 *	
Anti-State DEI: Attempted	0.027	0.133	0.001	0.203	0.839	
Anti-State DEI: Proposed	0.031	0.146	0.001	0.212	0.832	
Anti-State DEI: Legally	0.28	0.124	0.014	2.253	0.025 *	
Institutional Retention (2019)	0.847	0.007	0.97	113.806	<.00***	
2019 Student Services	0.000000004845	0	0.027	3.334	0.001**	
State_MSPS Expenditure	0.000000033910	0	0.008	1.196	0.233	

Hierarchical Regression Results for Adjusted Retention Rate (80/20) – Multiracial Students

Model 1	β	SE	β (Final)	t	p	R²
Constant	58.365	2.569	—	22.723	<.001***	0.581
Carnegie Grouping	-0.322	0.775	-0.026	-0.416	0.678	
Institutional Size	4.274	0.488	0.559	8.757	<.001***	
Selectivity Score Range	4.623	0.631	0.306	7.333	<.001***	
Anti-State DEI: Attempted	-5.238	0.963	-0.253	-5.441	<.001***	
Anti-State DEI: Proposed	-2.95	1.115	-0.117	-2.646	0.009 **	
Anti-State DEI: Legally	-2.942	0.935	-0.144	-3.146	0.002 **	
Model 2	β	SE	β (Final)	t	p	R²
Constant	11.572	0.534	—	21.67	<.001***	0.993
Carnegie Grouping	-0.187	0.099	-0.015	-1.891	0.06	
Institutional Size	0.039	0.074	0.005	0.532	0.595	
Selectivity Score Range	0.24	0.088	0.016	2.721	0.007 **	
Anti-State DEI: Attempted	0.081	0.13	0.004	0.625	0.532	
Anti-State DEI: Proposed	0.021	0.145	0.001	0.144	0.886	
Anti-State DEI: Legally	0.313	0.123	0.015	2.546	0.011 *	
Institutional Retention (2019)	0.852	0.007	0.97	116.703	<.001***	
2019 Student Services	0.00000000662	0	0.036	5.007	<.001***	
Model 3	β	SE	β (Final)	t	p	R²
Constant	11.676	0.539	—	21.654	<.001***	0.993
Carnegie Grouping	-0.195	0.099	-0.016	-1.967	0.050 *	
Institutional Size	0.043	0.074	0.006	0.583	0.561	
Selectivity Score Range	0.24	0.088	0.016	2.72	0.007 **	
Anti-State DEI: Attempted	0.053	0.132	0.003	0.399	0.691	
Anti-State DEI: Proposed	0.02	0.144	0.001	0.14	0.889	
Anti-State DEI: Legally	0.304	0.123	0.015	2.47	0.014 *	
Institutional Retention (2019)	0.851	0.007	0.968	115.327	<.001***	
2019 Student Services	0.00000000587	0	0.032	4.076	<.001***	
State_MSPS Expenditure	0.00000003665	0	0.008	1.304	0.193	

Note: The dependent variable in each sub-table is the 2019 Adjusted Retention Rate (80/20) for the indicated racial subgroup. Significance thresholds: $p < .05$ (*), $p < .01$ (**), and $p < .001$ (***).

2020 continues the patterns of previous models in Table 5.3. Model 1's R^2 values show moderate explanatory power across subgroups, but these values escalate substantially when

Model 2 adds Retention_2020 and 2020 Student Services as predictors. The shift from Model 2 to Model 3 remains moderate, suggesting that State MSPS Expenditure offers only a modest incremental contribution to explaining retention rates. In each final (Model 3) equation, Retention_2020 continues to yield large beta coefficients and highly significant p-values ($p < .001$), reflecting the strong impact of an institution's prior-year retention on its 2020 adjusted retention outcomes. Other variables such as Carnegie Grouping, Institutional Size, and specific anti-DEI policy indicators occasionally reach significance, but their standardized coefficients tend to be smaller than those associated with Retention_2020.

Table 5.3. Hierarchical Multiple Regression Predicting Retention Rates by Race (2020)

Hierarchical Regression Results for Adjusted Retention Rate (80/20) – Asian Students

Model 1	β	SE	β (Final)	t	p	R²
Constant	61.129	2.465	—	24.803	< .001 ***	0.588
Carnegie Grouping	-0.662	0.744	-0.055	-0.89	0.374	
Institutional Size	4.389	0.468	0.594	9.371	< .001 ***	
Selectivity Score Range	4.51	0.605	0.309	7.454	< .001 ***	
Anti-State DEI: Attempted	-4.545	0.924	-0.227	-4.92	< .001 ***	
Anti-State DEI: Proposed	-2.765	1.07	-0.113	-2.585	0.010 *	
Anti-State DEI: Legally	-2.282	0.898	-0.115	-2.542	0.012 *	
Model 2	β	SE	β (Final)	t	p	R²
Constant	11.672	0.848	—	13.759	< .001 ***	0.984
Carnegie Grouping	-0.348	0.149	-0.029	-2.332	0.020 *	
Institutional Size	0.334	0.112	0.045	2.993	0.003 **	
Selectivity Score Range	0.452	0.132	0.031	3.416	0.001 **	
Anti-State DEI: Attempted	-0.3	0.194	-0.015	-1.546	0.123	
Anti-State DEI: Proposed	-0.543	0.217	-0.022	-2.501	0.013 *	
Anti-State DEI: Legally	-0.326	0.184	-0.017	-1.773	0.077	
Retention_2020	0.857	0.011	0.946	74.557	< .001 ***	
2020 Student Services	0	0	0.018	1.624	0.105	
Model 3	β	SE	β (Final)	t	p	R²
Constant	11.743	0.857	—	13.699	< .001 ***	0.984
Carnegie Grouping	-0.354	0.15	-0.03	-2.365	0.019 *	
Institutional Size	0.337	0.112	0.046	3.015	0.003 **	
Selectivity Score Range	0.452	0.132	0.031	3.415	0.001 **	
Anti-State DEI: Attempted	-0.316	0.196	-0.016	-1.612	0.108	
Anti-State DEI: Proposed	-0.543	0.217	-0.022	-2.497	0.013 *	
Anti-State DEI: Legally	-0.333	0.185	-0.017	-1.802	0.073	
Retention_2020	0.856	0.012	0.945	73.647	< .001 ***	
2020 Student Services	0	0	0.015	1.198	0.232	
State MSPS Expenditure	0	0	0.006	0.615	0.539	

Hierarchical Regression Results for Adjusted Retention Rate (80/20) – Black Students

Model 1	β	SE	β (Final)	t	p	R²
Constant	58.426	2.541	—	22.996	< .001 ***	0.573

Carnegie Grouping	-0.433	0.767	-0.036	-0.564	0.573	
Institutional Size	4.295	0.483	0.574	8.895	< .001 ***	
Selectivity Score Range	4.541	0.624	0.307	7.28	< .001 ***	
Anti-State DEI: Attempted	-4.368	0.952	-0.215	-4.587	< .001 ***	
Anti-State DEI: Proposed	-2.637	1.103	-0.107	-2.391	0.017 *	
Anti-State DEI: Legally	-2.199	0.925	-0.11	-2.377	0.018 *	
Model 2	β	SE	β (Final)	t	p	R²
Constant	8.348	0.698	—	11.961	< .001 ***	0.989
Carnegie Grouping	-0.095	0.123	-0.008	-0.775	0.439	
Institutional Size	-0.044	0.092	-0.006	-0.481	0.631	
Selectivity Score Range	0.382	0.109	0.026	3.511	< .001 ***	
Anti-State DEI: Attempted	0.128	0.16	0.006	0.801	0.424	
Anti-State DEI: Proposed	-0.254	0.179	-0.01	-1.422	0.156	
Anti-State DEI: Legally	-0.049	0.151	-0.002	-0.322	0.748	
Retention_2020	0.873	0.009	0.951	92.25	< .001 ***	
2020 Student Services	0	0	0.063	7.02	< .001 ***	
Model 3	β	SE	β (Final)	t	p	R²
Constant	8.567	0.699	—	12.262	< .001 ***	0.989
Carnegie Grouping	-0.114	0.122	-0.009	-0.934	0.351	
Institutional Size	-0.034	0.091	-0.005	-0.375	0.708	
Selectivity Score Range	0.383	0.108	0.026	3.551	< .001 ***	
Anti-State DEI: Attempted	0.079	0.16	0.004	0.492	0.623	
Anti-State DEI: Proposed	-0.254	0.177	-0.01	-1.431	0.154	
Anti-State DEI: Legally	-0.068	0.15	-0.003	-0.449	0.654	
Retention_2020	0.87	0.009	0.948	91.764	< .001 ***	
2020 Student Services	0	0	0.053	5.386	< .001 ***	
State MSPS Expenditure	0	0	0.019	2.314	0.021 *	
<i>Hierarchical Regression Results for Adjusted Retention Rate (80/20) – Hispanic Students</i>						
Model 1	β	SE	β (Final)	t	p	R²
Constant	59.437	2.468	—	24.082	< .001 ***	0.575
Carnegie Grouping	-0.367	0.745	-0.031	-0.492	0.623	
Institutional Size	4.199	0.469	0.576	8.953	< .001 ***	
Selectivity Score Range	4.358	0.606	0.302	7.193	< .001 ***	
Anti-State DEI: Attempted	-4.266	0.925	-0.216	-4.612	< .001 ***	
Anti-State DEI: Proposed	-2.546	1.071	-0.106	-2.376	0.018 *	
Anti-State DEI: Legally	-2.206	0.899	-0.113	-2.455	0.015 *	
Model 2	β	SE	β (Final)	t	p	R²
Constant	10.156	0.588	—	17.269	< .001 ***	0.992
Carnegie Grouping	-0.042	0.103	-0.004	-0.404	0.687	
Institutional Size	0.015	0.077	0.002	0.198	0.844	
Selectivity Score Range	0.283	0.092	0.02	3.092	0.002 **	
Anti-State DEI: Attempted	0.085	0.135	0.004	0.632	0.528	
Anti-State DEI: Proposed	-0.25	0.151	-0.01	-1.659	0.098	
Anti-State DEI: Legally	-0.153	0.128	-0.008	-1.199	0.232	
Retention_2020	0.857	0.008	0.959	107.524	< .001 ***	
2020 Student Services	0	0	0.047	6.004	< .001 ***	
Model 3	β	SE	β (Final)	t	p	R²
Constant	10.404	0.584	—	17.818	< .001 ***	0.992
Carnegie Grouping	-0.063	0.102	-0.005	-0.62	0.536	
Institutional Size	0.027	0.076	0.004	0.349	0.728	
Selectivity Score Range	0.285	0.09	0.02	3.158	0.002 **	
Anti-State DEI: Attempted	0.029	0.134	0.001	0.218	0.827	
Anti-State DEI: Proposed	-0.249	0.148	-0.01	-1.682	0.094	
Anti-State DEI: Legally	-0.174	0.126	-0.009	-1.387	0.167	
Retention_2020	0.854	0.008	0.955	107.784	< .001 ***	
2020 Student Services	0	0	0.035	4.154	< .001 ***	

State MSPS Expenditure	0	0	0.022	3.131	0.002 **	
<i>Hierarchical Regression Results for Adjusted Retention Rate (80/20) – Multiracial Students</i>						
Model 1	β	SE	β (Final)	t	p	R²
Constant	59.523	2.463	—	24.166	<.001***	0.576
Carnegie Grouping	-0.367	0.743	-0.031	-0.494	0.622	
Institutional Size	4.196	0.468	0.576	8.966	<.001***	
Selectivity Score Range	4.348	0.605	0.302	7.19	<.001***	
Anti-State DEI: Attempted	-4.265	0.923	-0.216	-4.62	<.001***	
Anti-State DEI: Proposed	-2.546	1.069	-0.106	-2.381	0.018 *	
Anti-State DEI: Legally	-2.208	0.897	-0.113	-2.461	0.014 *	
Model 2	β	SE	β (Final)	t	p	R²
Constant	10.291	0.584	—	17.608	<.001***	0.992
Carnegie Grouping	-0.043	0.103	-0.004	-0.418	0.676	
Institutional Size	0.025	0.077	0.003	0.33	0.742	
Selectivity Score Range	0.279	0.091	0.019	3.065	0.002 **	
Anti-State DEI: Attempted	0.075	0.134	0.004	0.558	0.577	
Anti-State DEI: Proposed	-0.257	0.15	-0.011	-1.717	0.087	
Anti-State DEI: Legally	-0.163	0.127	-0.008	-1.283	0.201	
Retention_2020	0.856	0.008	0.959	108.065	<.001***	
2020 Student Services	0	0	0.045	5.814	<.001***	
Model 3	β	SE	β (Final)	t	p	R²
Constant	10.541	0.58	—	18.176	<.001***	0.992
Carnegie Grouping	-0.065	0.101	-0.005	-0.638	0.524	
Institutional Size	0.037	0.076	0.005	0.486	0.628	
Selectivity Score Range	0.28	0.09	0.019	3.133	0.002 **	
Anti-State DEI: Attempted	0.018	0.133	0.001	0.138	0.891	
Anti-State DEI: Proposed	-0.256	0.147	-0.011	-1.742	0.083	
Anti-State DEI: Legally	-0.184	0.125	-0.009	-1.475	0.141	
Retention_2020	0.853	0.008	0.955	108.386	<.001***	
2020 Student Services	0	0	0.034	3.961	<.001***	
State MSPS Expenditure	0	0	0.022	3.182	0.002 **	

Note: In each table, the dependent variable is the 2020 Adjusted Retention Rate (80/20) for the indicated racial subgroup. Statistical significance is flagged as $p < .05$ (*), $p < .01$ (**), and $p < .001$ (***).

As in previous years, Table 5.4 represents the regression model for 2021 In each model sequence, R² values jump notably from Model 1 to Model 2 after adding Retention_2021 and the 2021 Student Services dollar amount. The final model's incorporation of State MSPS Expenditure in 2021 typically provides only a small additional increase in variance. Once more, Retention_2021 is the most important predictor in all of them, with big, normalized betas and very high significance levels ($p < .001$). Other predictors such as Carnegie Grouping, Institutional Size, and State DEI policy classifications vary in significance across the subgroups and usually exhibit smaller effects compared to Retention_2021.

Table 5.4. Hierarchical Multiple Regression Predicting Retention Rates by Race (2021)*Hierarchical Regression Results for Adjusted Retention Rate (80/20) – Asian Students*

Model 1	β	SE	β (Final)	t	p	R²
Constant	60.282	2.666	—	22.612	< .001 ***	0.588
Carnegie Grouping	-1.239	0.804	-0.096	-1.54	0.125	
Institutional Size	4.962	0.507	0.62	9.793	< .001 ***	
Selectivity Score Range	4.722	0.654	0.299	7.215	< .001 ***	
Anti-State DEI: Attempted	-5.532	0.999	-0.255	-5.537	< .001 ***	
Anti-State DEI: Proposed	-3.193	1.157	-0.121	-2.759	0.006 **	
Anti-State DEI: Legally	-2.892	0.971	-0.135	-2.979	0.003 **	
Model 2	β	SE	β (Final)	t	p	R²
Constant	15.775	0.598	—	26.395	< .001 ***	0.991
Carnegie Grouping	0.183	0.119	0.014	1.537	0.125	
Institutional Size	0.018	0.09	0.002	0.195	0.846	
Selectivity Score Range	0.19	0.105	0.012	1.808	0.072	
Anti-State DEI: Attempted	0.177	0.156	0.008	1.133	0.258	
Anti-State DEI: Proposed	0.037	0.173	0.001	0.212	0.832	
Anti-State DEI: Legally	0.069	0.146	0.003	0.471	0.638	
Retention_2021	0.803	0.008	0.972	103.41	< .001 ***	
2021 Student Services	0.000000004	0	0.019	2.36	0.019 *	
Model 3	β	SE	β (Final)	t	p	R²
Constant	15.878	0.602	—	26.395	< .001 ***	0.991
Carnegie Grouping	0.17	0.119	0.013	1.432	0.153	
Institutional Size	0.023	0.09	0.003	0.259	0.796	
Selectivity Score Range	0.19	0.105	0.012	1.82	0.07	
Anti-State DEI: Attempted	0.147	0.158	0.007	0.931	0.353	
Anti-State DEI: Proposed	0.035	0.172	0.001	0.206	0.837	
Anti-State DEI: Legally	0.058	0.146	0.003	0.394	0.694	
Retention_2021	0.801	0.008	0.97	102.426	< .001 ***	
2021 Student Services	0.000000003	0	0.014	1.56	0.12	
State MSPS Expenditure	0.000000047	0	0.01	1.354	0.177	

Hierarchical Regression Results for Adjusted Retention Rate (80/20) – Black Students

Model 1	β	SE	β (Final)	t	p	R²
Constant	55.396	2.928	—	18.922	< .001 ***	0.592
Carnegie Grouping	-1.307	0.883	-0.091	-1.479	0.14	
Institutional Size	5.431	0.556	0.615	9.761	< .001 ***	
Selectivity Score Range	5.354	0.719	0.307	7.45	< .001 ***	
Anti-State DEI: Attempted	-6.059	1.097	-0.253	-5.521	< .001 ***	
Anti-State DEI: Proposed	-3.65	1.271	-0.125	-2.872	0.004 **	
Anti-State DEI: Legally	-3.095	1.066	-0.131	-2.903	0.004 **	
Model 2	β	SE	β (Final)	t	p	R²
Constant	7.171	0.583	—	12.305	< .001 ***	0.993
Carnegie Grouping	0.253	0.116	0.018	2.186	0.030 *	
Institutional Size	-0.099	0.088	-0.011	-1.121	0.263	
Selectivity Score Range	0.398	0.102	0.023	3.896	< .001 ***	
Anti-State DEI: Attempted	0.275	0.152	0.011	1.808	0.072	
Anti-State DEI: Proposed	-0.049	0.168	-0.002	-0.293	0.77	
Anti-State DEI: Legally	0.236	0.143	0.01	1.654	0.099	
Retention_2021	0.874	0.008	0.958	115.385	< .001 ***	
2021 Student Services	0.00000001	0	0.046	6.438	< .001 ***	
Model 3	β	SE	β (Final)	t	p	R²
Constant	7.208	0.588	—	12.251	< .001 ***	0.993
Carnegie Grouping	0.249	0.116	0.017	2.138	0.033 *	
Institutional Size	-0.097	0.088	-0.011	-1.095	0.274	
Selectivity Score Range	0.398	0.102	0.023	3.893	< .001 ***	

Anti-State DEI: Attempted	0.264	0.154	0.011	1.717	0.087
Anti-State DEI: Proposed	-0.05	0.169	-0.002	-0.295	0.768
Anti-State DEI: Legally	0.232	0.143	0.01	1.621	0.106
Retention_2021	0.873	0.008	0.957	114.082	< .001 ***
2021 Student Services	0.000000009	0	0.044	5.602	< .001 ***
State MSPS Expenditure	0.000000017	0	0.003	0.497	0.62

Hierarchical Regression Results for Adjusted Retention Rate (80/20) – Hispanic Students

Model 1	β	SE	β (Final)	t	p	R²
Constant	57.802	2.808	—	20.588	< .001 ***	0.585
Carnegie Grouping	-1.325	0.847	-0.097	-1.564	0.119	
Institutional Size	5.152	0.534	0.613	9.656	< .001 ***	
Selectivity Score Range	5.035	0.689	0.303	7.305	< .001 ***	
Anti-State DEI: Attempted	-5.919	1.052	-0.26	-5.626	< .001 ***	
Anti-State DEI: Proposed	-3.479	1.219	-0.126	-2.855	0.005 **	
Anti-State DEI: Legally	-3.059	1.022	-0.136	-2.992	0.003 **	
Model 2	β	SE	β (Final)	t	p	R²
Constant	11.398	0.475	—	24.002	< .001 ***	0.995
Carnegie Grouping	0.175	0.094	0.013	1.85	0.065	
Institutional Size	-0.158	0.072	-0.019	-2.205	0.028 *	
Selectivity Score Range	0.268	0.083	0.016	3.224	0.001 **	
Anti-State DEI: Attempted	0.166	0.124	0.007	1.339	0.182	
Anti-State DEI: Proposed	-0.021	0.137	-0.001	-0.15	0.881	
Anti-State DEI: Legally	0.139	0.116	0.006	1.193	0.234	
Retention_2021	0.84	0.006	0.969	136.214	< .001 ***	
2021 Student Services	0.000000009	0	0.045	7.311	< .001 ***	
Model 3	β	SE	β (Final)	t	p	R²
Constant	11.518	0.476	—	24.192	< .001 ***	0.995
Carnegie Grouping	0.16	0.094	0.012	1.704	0.09	
Institutional Size	-0.151	0.071	-0.018	-2.121	0.035 *	
Selectivity Score Range	0.269	0.083	0.016	3.254	0.001 **	
Anti-State DEI: Attempted	0.131	0.125	0.006	1.051	0.294	
Anti-State DEI: Proposed	-0.022	0.137	-0.001	-0.16	0.873	
Anti-State DEI: Legally	0.126	0.116	0.006	1.084	0.279	
Retention_2021	0.839	0.006	0.967	135.427	< .001 ***	
2021 Student Services	0.000000008	0	0.039	5.802	< .001 ***	
State MSPS Expenditure	0.000000055	0	0.011	1.985	0.048 *	

Hierarchical Regression Results for Adjusted Retention Rate (80/20) – Multiracial Students

Model 1	β	SE	β (Final)	t	p	R²
Constant	59.117	2.737	—	21.6	< .001 ***	0.584
Carnegie Grouping	-1.334	0.826	-0.101	-1.615	0.108	
Institutional Size	5.052	0.52	0.618	9.713	< .001 ***	
Selectivity Score Range	4.845	0.672	0.3	7.211	< .001 ***	
Anti-State DEI: Attempted	-5.765	1.026	-0.26	-5.619	< .001 ***	
Anti-State DEI: Proposed	-3.331	1.188	-0.123	-2.804	0.005 **	
Anti-State DEI: Legally	-3.015	0.997	-0.138	-3.025	0.003 **	
Model 2	β	SE	β (Final)	t	p	R²
Constant	13.634	0.454	—	30.032	< .001 ***	0.995
Carnegie Grouping	0.13	0.09	0.01	1.443	0.15	
Institutional Size	-0.099	0.069	-0.012	-1.451	0.148	
Selectivity Score Range	0.187	0.08	0.012	2.355	0.019 *	
Anti-State DEI: Attempted	0.155	0.119	0.007	1.306	0.193	
Anti-State DEI: Proposed	0.027	0.131	0.001	0.208	0.836	

Anti-State DEI: Legally	0.081	0.111	0.004	0.731	0.466	
Retention_2021	0.823	0.006	0.974	139.47	< .001 ***	
2021 Student Services	0.000000007	0	0.036	5.992	< .001 ***	
Model 3	β	SE	β (Final)	t	p	R²
Constant	13.807	0.451	—	30.63	< .001 ***	0.995
Carnegie Grouping	0.11	0.089	0.008	1.23	0.22	
Institutional Size	-0.09	0.068	-0.011	-1.329	0.185	
Selectivity Score Range	0.189	0.078	0.012	2.41	0.017 *	
Anti-State DEI: Attempted	0.104	0.118	0.005	0.884	0.378	
Anti-State DEI: Proposed	0.025	0.129	0.001	0.196	0.845	
Anti-State DEI: Legally	0.062	0.11	0.003	0.568	0.57	
Retention_2021	0.82	0.006	0.972	139.879	< .001 ***	
2021 Student Services	0.000000005	0	0.028	4.212	< .001 ***	
State MSPS Expenditure	0.000000079	0	0.016	3.026	0.003 **	

Note: The dependent variable in each suit is the 2021 Adjusted Retention Rate (80/20) for the specified subgroup. Statistical significance levels: $p < .05$ (*), $p < .01$ (**), and $p < .001$ (***).

Consistent with previous years, Table 5.5 follows the same design and statistical outcomes. Overall, these hierarchical regression analyses display a consistent pattern across each racial/ethnic subgroup (Asian, Black, Hispanic, and Multiracial). In the final model, predictors remain relatively consistent from previous years. However, in some subgroups, state MSPS expenditure also attains significance, signaling that direct investments in multicultural programs or services can meaningfully enhance student outcomes. Although the anti-DEI policy indicators register negative effects in the first model, many of these lose significance in the fully specified models. This shift suggests that once institutional resources and retention climates are accounted for, the direct impact of anti-DEI policies on adjusted retention rates may be mitigated—though these policies still appear detrimental in certain contexts.

Table 5.5. Hierarchical Multiple Regression Predicting Retention Rates by Race (2022)
Hierarchical Regression Results for Adjusted Retention Rate (80/20) – Asian Students

Model 1	β	SE	β (Final)	t	p	R²
Constant	57.717	2.557	—	22.571	< .001 ***	0.591
Carnegie Grouping	-0.056	0.772	-0.005	-0.073	0.942	
Institutional Size	4.186	0.486	0.544	8.615	< .001 ***	
Selectivity Score Range	4.872	0.628	0.32	7.761	< .001 ***	
Anti-State DEI: Attempted	-4.956	0.958	-0.237	-5.171	< .001 ***	
Anti-State DEI: Proposed	-3.369	1.11	-0.133	-3.035	0.003 **	
Anti-State DEI: Legally	-2.433	0.931	-0.118	-2.613	0.009 **	
Model 2	β	SE	β (Final)	t	p	R²
Constant	15.358	0.719	—	21.369	< .001 ***	0.986
Carnegie Grouping	-0.262	0.142	-0.021	-1.848	0.066	
Institutional Size	0.24	0.105	0.031	2.291	0.023 *	
Selectivity Score Range	0.342	0.127	0.022	2.691	0.008 **	
Anti-State DEI: Attempted	-0.097	0.186	-0.005	-0.521	0.603	
Anti-State DEI: Proposed	-0.18	0.207	-0.007	-0.87	0.385	
Anti-State DEI: Legally	-0.292	0.175	-0.014	-1.67	0.096	
Retention_2022	0.819	0.01	0.958	81.656	< .001 ***	
2022 Student Services	0.000000004	0	0.022	2.168	0.031 *	
Model 3	β	SE	β (Final)	t	p	R²
Constant	15.547	0.72	—	21.603	< .001 ***	0.987
Carnegie Grouping	-0.277	0.141	-0.022	-1.965	0.050 *	
Institutional Size	0.243	0.104	0.032	2.331	0.020 *	
Selectivity Score Range	0.334	0.126	0.022	2.641	0.009 **	
Anti-State DEI: Attempted	-0.158	0.187	-0.008	-0.845	0.399	
Anti-State DEI: Proposed	-0.18	0.206	-0.007	-0.873	0.383	
Anti-State DEI: Legally	-0.297	0.174	-0.014	-1.71	0.088	
Retention_2022	0.817	0.01	0.955	81.39	< .001 ***	
2022 Student Services	0.000000002	0	0.013	1.193	0.234	
State MSPS Expenditure	0.000000079	0	0.019	2.108	0.036 *	

Hierarchical Regression Results for Adjusted Retention Rate (80/20) – Black Students

Model 1	β	SE	β (Final)	t	p	R²
Constant	54.044	2.754	—	19.625	0.000	0.583
Carnegie Grouping	0.024	0.831	0.002	0.028	0.977	
Institutional Size	4.396	0.523	0.535	8.400	0.000	
Selectivity Score Range	5.163	0.676	0.318	7.638	0.000	
Anti-State DEI: Attempted	-5.218	1.032	-0.234	-5.055	0.000	
Anti-State DEI: Proposed	-3.426	1.195	-0.126	-2.866	0.004	
Anti-State DEI: Legally	-2.408	1.003	-0.110	-2.401	0.017	
Model 2	β	SE	β (Final)	t	p	R²
Constant	8.933	0.583	—	15.326	0.000	0.992
Carnegie Grouping	-0.183	0.115	-0.014	-1.592	0.113	
Institutional Size	0.012	0.085	0.001	0.142	0.887	
Selectivity Score Range	0.297	0.103	0.018	2.881	0.004	
Anti-State DEI: Attempted	0.117	0.151	0.005	0.778	0.437	
Anti-State DEI: Proposed	0.071	0.168	0.003	0.423	0.673	
Anti-State DEI: Legally	0.007	0.142	0.000	0.049	0.961	
Retention_2022	0.877	0.008	0.961	107.714	0.000	
2022 Student Services	0.0000000095549	0.000	0.054	6.990	0.000	
Model 3	β	SE	β (Final)	t	p	R²
Constant	9.118	0.582	—	15.680	0.000	0.992
Carnegie Grouping	-0.198	0.114	-0.015	-1.736	0.084	
Institutional Size	0.015	0.084	0.002	0.175	0.862	
Selectivity Score Range	0.289	0.102	0.018	2.830	0.005**	

Anti-State DEI: Attempted	0.058	0.151	0.003	0.382	0.703
Anti-State DEI: Proposed	0.072	0.166	0.003	0.431	0.667
Anti-State DEI: Legally	0.002	0.141	0.000	0.014	0.989
Retention_2022	0.874	0.008	0.958	107.796	0.000
2022 Student Services	0.000000008108	0.000	0.046	5.523	0.000
State MSPS Expenditure	0.000000076582	0.000	0.017	2.542	0.012**

Hierarchical Regression Results for Adjusted Retention Rate (80/20) – Hispanic Students

Model 1	β	SE	β (Final)	t	p	R ²
Constant	55.432	2.663	—	20.812	<.001***	0.581
Carnegie Grouping	0.065	0.804	0.005	0.081	0.936	
Institutional Size	4.209	0.506	0.531	8.316	<.001***	
Selectivity Score Range	4.988	0.654	0.318	7.629	<.001***	
Anti-State DEI: Attempted	-5.041	0.998	-0.234	-5.050	<.001***	
Anti-State DEI: Proposed	-3.330	1.156	-0.127	-2.881	0.004**	
Anti-State DEI: Legally	-2.356	0.970	-0.111	-2.429	0.016*	
Model 2	β	SE	β (Final)	t	p	R ²
Constant	11.608	0.495	—	23.468	<.001***	0.994
Carnegie Grouping	-0.137	0.098	-0.011	-1.406	0.161	
Institutional Size	-0.029	0.072	-0.004	-0.399	0.690	
Selectivity Score Range	0.265	0.087	0.017	3.034	0.003**	
Anti-State DEI: Attempted	0.123	0.128	0.006	0.963	0.337	
Anti-State DEI: Proposed	0.056	0.143	0.002	0.390	0.697	
Anti-State DEI: Legally	-0.025	0.120	-0.001	-0.211	0.833	
Retention_2022	0.851	0.007	0.967	123.248	<.001***	
2022 Student Services	0.000000008644	0.000	0.050	7.452	<.001***	
Model 3	β	SE	β (Final)	t	p	R ²
Constant	11.806	0.490	—	24.105	<.001***	0.994
Carnegie Grouping	-0.153	0.096	-0.012	-1.595	0.112	
Institutional Size	-0.026	0.071	-0.003	-0.366	0.714	
Selectivity Score Range	0.257	0.086	0.016	2.986	0.003**	
Anti-State DEI: Attempted	0.059	0.127	0.003	0.465	0.642	
Anti-State DEI: Proposed	0.056	0.140	0.002	0.401	0.689	
Anti-State DEI: Legally	-0.031	0.118	-0.001	-0.260	0.795	
Retention_2022	0.849	0.007	0.964	124.227	<.001***	
2022 Student Services	0.000000007090	0.000	0.041	5.735	<.001***	
State MSPS Expenditure	0.000000008224	0.000	0.019	3.240	0.001**	

Hierarchical Regression Results for Adjusted Retention Rate (80/20) – Multiracial Students

Model 1	β	SE	B (Final)	t	p	R ²
Constant	55.318	2.670	—	20.715	<.001***	0.581
Carnegie Grouping	0.065	0.806	0.005	0.080	0.936	
Institutional Size	4.221	0.507	0.531	8.318	<.001***	
Selectivity Score Range	5.000	0.656	0.318	7.627	<.001***	
Anti-State DEI: Attempted	-5.053	1.001	-0.234	-5.049	<.001***	
Anti-State DEI: Proposed	-3.336	1.159	-0.127	-2.878	0.004**	
Anti-State DEI: Legally	-2.359	0.972	-0.111	-2.426	0.016*	
Model 2	β	SE	β (Final)	t	p	R ²
Constant	11.399	0.499	—	22.857	<.001***	0.994
Carnegie Grouping	-0.138	0.098	-0.011	-1.400	0.163	
Institutional Size	-0.030	0.073	-0.004	-0.409	0.683	
Selectivity Score Range	0.266	0.088	0.017	3.014	0.003**	
Anti-State DEI: Attempted	0.126	0.129	0.006	0.975	0.330	
Anti-State DEI: Proposed	0.059	0.144	0.002	0.411	0.682	
Anti-State DEI: Legally	-0.021	0.121	-0.001	-0.171	0.864	
Retention_2022	0.853	0.007	0.966	122.510	<.001***	
2022 Student Services	0.000000008771	0.000	0.051	7.499	<.001***	
Model 3	β	SE	β (Final)	t	p	R ²

Constant	11.597	0.494	—	23.471	<.001***	0.994
Carnegie Grouping	-0.153	0.097	-0.012	-1.585	0.114	
Institutional Size	-0.027	0.072	-0.003	-0.377	0.706	
Selectivity Score Range	0.257	0.087	0.016	2.964	0.003**	
Anti-State DEI: Attempted	0.062	0.128	0.003	0.484	0.629	
Anti-State DEI: Proposed	0.060	0.141	0.002	0.422	0.673	
Anti-State DEI: Legally	-0.026	0.119	-0.001	-0.219	0.827	
Retention_2022	0.850	0.007	0.963	123.428	<.001***	
2022 Student Services	0.000000007223	0.000	0.042	5.791	<.001***	
State MSPS Expenditure	0.00000008194	0.000	0.019	3.201	0.002**	

RQ2: What is the relationship between MSPS administrator's unit power and institutional expenditures for MSPS?

Correlations

Table 6.1 shows the Pearson correlation coefficients between MSPS spending (using assumed state funding values from 2018 to 2022) and different environmental power indicators, such as the ability to attract and keep students, the school's relevance in society, outside funding, community support, alumni support, and support from the federal government. Across all these environmental power dimensions, the correlation coefficients are generally small and statistically nonsignificant. For instance, the highest observed correlation, associated with the ability to cope with societal needs and problems, reaches only about 0.113 and does not attain the conventional significance threshold ($p > 0.05$). This pattern suggests that, within the sample examined, there is little evidence of a linear relationship between MSPS expenditures and the measured aspects of environmental power.

Table 6.1: Correlation Analysis MSPS Expenditures & Environmental Power (2018-2022)

Indicator	MSPS Expenditures 2018	MSPS Expenditures 2019	MSPS Expenditures 2020	MSPS Expenditures 2021	MSPS Expenditures 2022
Student Recruitment and Retention	0.032	0.033	0.039	0.038	0.031
Ability to cope with current societal needs and problems	0.100	0.103	0.113	0.111	0.101
Overall outside financial support	0.038	0.038	0.040	0.042	0.038
Community Support	0.055	0.056	0.063	0.064	0.055
Alumni Support	0.106	0.109	0.115	0.116	0.109
Federal Government Support	-0.034	-0.036	-0.034	-0.033	-0.032

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 6.2 presents correlations linking MSPS expenditures and institutional power variables such as historical influence, tenure at the institution, visibility inside and outside the institution, federal government support, number of students served, interaction frequency with central administration, and support and access to presidential leadership. Most of these institutional power measures exhibit weak and statistically nonsignificant relationships with MSPS expenditures, with one notable exception: variables related to “Interaction with central administration” and “Support of President” show moderate, statistically significant positive correlations. For example, “Interaction with central administration” yields correlation coefficients above 0.30 ($p < 0.01$) consistently across expenditure years, indicating that as MSPS administrators report more frequent and interactive engagement with central administration, MSPS expenditures tend to be higher. Similarly, “Support of President” correlates in the range of about 0.183 to 0.225 ($p < 0.01$), suggesting that greater perceived presidential support aligns with increased MSPS funding levels.

Table 6.2: Correlation Analysis MSPS Expenditures & Institutional Power (2018-2022)

Indicator	MSPS Expenditure 2018	MSPS Expenditure 2019	MSPS Expenditure 2021	MSPS Expenditure 2020	MSPS Expenditure 2022
Historical power within institution	0.064	0.067	0.068	0.066	0.070
Length of time at institution	0.110	0.113	0.115	0.114	0.114
Visibility within the institution	0.040	0.040	0.045	0.044	0.040
Visibility outside of the institution	0.037	0.037	0.040	0.039	0.040
Federal government support	-0.037	-0.039	-0.043	-0.045	-0.034
Number of students served	0.093	0.095	0.102	0.103	0.091
Interaction with central administration	.305**	.314**	.329**	.328**	.282**
Number of times monthly that a unit leader talks with central administration	-0.015	-0.016	-0.014	-0.015	-0.016
Support of President	.205**	.212**	.225**	.224**	.183**
Ease of access to President	0.028	0.028	0.034	0.033	0.021

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 6.3 examines the association between MSPS expenditures and resource negotiation strategies, specifically how much unit leaders focus on overall institutional needs, divisional needs, their own unit's needs, and the inclusion of innovative programs in their budget requests. In contrast to the environmental and most institutional power indicators, all correlation coefficients here are positive, moderate in magnitude, and statistically significant at the 0.01 level. For instance, concentrating on the needs of the total institution or the division consistently shows correlation values around 0.23 to 0.28, while including requests for innovative programs reaches as high as approximately 0.29. These results suggest that MSPS administrators who engage more proactively and creatively in resource negotiations, either by addressing broader institutional priorities, emphasizing their unit's demands, or proposing innovative initiatives, are more likely to secure higher expenditure levels for their MSPS units.

Table 6.3: Correlation Analysis MSPS Expenditures & Resource Negotiation (2018-2022)

	MSPS Expenditure 2018	MSPS Expenditure 2019	MSPS Expenditure 2021	MSPS Expenditure 2020	MSPS Expenditure 2022
Focusing on the needs of the total institution	.232**	.229**	.227**	.226**	.242**
Focusing on the needs of the division	.262**	.259**	.258**	.256**	.277**
Focusing on the needs of the unit	.262**	.259**	.258**	.256**	.277**
Including budget request for innovative programs	.278**	.275**	.274**	.272**	.293**

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Multiple Regression

Table 7.1 displays regression analyses predicting imputed state MSPS expenditure over 2018–2022 using environmental power indicators. In 2018, Model 1 explains 20.0% of the variance, with Student Services Expenditure Tier emerging as a significant positive predictor ($\beta = 594,467.977$, $p < .01$), whereas predictors such as Selectivity Score Range and Anti-State DEI Policy are not significant. In Model 2, which adds the combined student services measure (2018_Student Services Combined), R^2 rises to 32.4%. Finally, with Model 3 incorporating environmental support variables—Retention_2018, Student Recruitment and Retention, Ability to Cope with Societal Needs, Outside Financial Support, Community Support, Alumni Support, and Federal Government Support— R^2 increases to 34.0%. The final beta coefficients indicate that the contribution of Student Services Expenditure Tier remains consistently strong across all models, while other predictors (e.g., Anti-State DEI Policy and Carnegie Grouping) exhibit only limited or non-significant effects. These findings suggest that institutional spending on student services is a primary driver of state MSPS expenditure when accounting for environmental power. Comparable trends from 2019 to 2022 reinforce the conclusion that environmental

factors—particularly those tied to student services and retention—play a substantial role in shaping institutional spending behaviors.

Table 7.1 – Hierarchical Multiple Regression Predicting State MSPS Expenditure Using Environmental Power (2018–2022)

Regression Results for 2018 – Environmental Power

Model	Predictor	β	SE	β (Final)	t	p	R ²
1	(Constant)	-781,262.54	802,689.32	—	-0.973	0.331	0.200
	Selectivity Score Range	253,315.17	201,618.49	0.072	1.256	0.21	
	Anti-State DEI Policy	-52,679.14	73,705.16	-0.04	-0.715	0.475	
	Student Services Expenditure Tier	594,467.98	187,497.98	0.318	3.171	.002**	
	Institutional Size	161,169.49	209,612.50	0.091	0.769	0.443	
	Carnegie Grouping	95,298.09	246,008.12	0.033	0.387	0.699	
Model	Predictor	β	SE	β (Final)	t	p	R ²
2	(Constant)	-160,859.35	744,628.43	—	-0.216	0.829	0.324
	Selectivity Score Range	224,440.10	185,744.28	0.064	1.208	0.228	
	Anti-State DEI Policy	5,669.25	68,397.74	0.004	0.083	0.934	
	Student Services Expenditure Tier	-64,278.39	196,787.88	-0.034	-0.327	0.744	
	Institutional Size	52,911.33	193,682.72	0.03	0.273	0.785	
	Carnegie Grouping	156,656.75	226,753.13	0.055	0.691	0.49	
	2018_Student Services Combined	0.024	0.003	0.528	6.982	<.001***	
Model	Predictor	β	SE	β (Final)	t	p	R ²
3	(Constant)	-847,760.08	1,133,717.13	—	-0.748	0.455	0.340
	Selectivity Score Range	252,980.64	189,715.61	0.072	1.333	0.184	
	Anti-State DEI Policy	-0.001	0.001	-0.069	-1.151	0.251	
	Student Services Expenditure Tier	0.001	0.004	0.029	0.233	0.816	
	Institutional Size	-0.004	0.003	-0.137	-1.077	0.283	
	Carnegie Grouping	-0.004	0.004	-0.095	-1.048	0.296	
	2018_Student Services Combined	0.00000000136	0	0.203	2.265	.024*	
	Retention_2018	0.001	0	0.183	2.094	.037*	
	Student Recruitment and Retention	-292,464.66	551,699.05	-0.041	-0.53	0.596	
	Ability to cope with societal needs	501,029.64	418,665.59	0.11	1.197	0.233	
	Overall outside financial support	-301,407.09	474,962.96	-0.053	-0.635	0.526	
	Community Support	175,160.95	568,693.71	0.031	0.308	0.758	
	Alumni Support	604,913.60	518,628.91	0.091	1.166	0.245	
	Federal Government Support	-449,860.33	416,470.79	-0.089	-1.08	0.281	

Regression Results for 2019 Environmental Power

Model	Predictor	β	SE	β (Final)	t	p	R ²
1	(Constant)	-766,347.10	781,323.34	—	-0.981	0.328	0.213
	Selectivity Score Range	237,609.60	196,251.81	0.069	1.211	0.227	
	Anti-State DEI Policy	-50,630.29	71,743.27	-0.039	-0.706	0.481	
	Student Services Expenditure Tier	592,211.09	182,507.16	0.323	3.245	.001**	
	Institutional Size	185,070.63	204,033.04	0.106	0.907	0.365	
	Carnegie Grouping	81,405.45	239,459.88	0.029	0.34	0.734	
Model	Predictor	β	SE	β (Final)	t	p	R ²
2	(Constant)	-112,832.50	720,619.17	—	-0.157	0.876	0.343
	Selectivity Score Range	192,380.08	179,697.84	0.056	1.071	0.285	
	Anti-State DEI Policy	-1,407.22	66,000.58	-0.001	-0.021	0.983	
	Student Services Expenditure Tier	-29,632.11	187,646.27	-0.016	-0.158	0.875	
	Institutional Size	50,647.10	187,624.22	0.029	0.27	0.787	
	Carnegie Grouping	152,220.83	219,346.24	0.054	0.694	0.488	
	2019_Student Services Combined	0.022	0.003	0.534	7.269	<.001***	
Model	Predictor	β	SE	β (Final)	t	p	R ²

3	(Constant)	-799,718.78	1,095,955.59	—	-0.73	0.466	0.360
	Selectivity Score Range	220,327.08	183,450.23	0.064	1.201	0.231	
	Anti-State DEI Policy	-2,903.52	67,001.19	-0.002	-0.043	0.965	
	Student Services Expenditure Tier	6,530.95	189,864.06	0.004	0.034	0.973	
	Institutional Size	-2,677.01	189,993.95	-0.002	-0.014	0.989	
	Carnegie Grouping	219,482.85	228,637.94	0.078	0.96	0.338	
	2019_Student Services Combined	0.021	0.003	0.512	6.902	<.001***	
	Student Recruitment and Retention	-283,837.34	533,244.04	-0.041	-0.532	0.595	
	Ability to cope with societal needs	489,019.20	404,672.48	0.11	1.208	0.228	
	Overall outside financial support	-283,268.31	459,412.92	-0.051	-0.617	0.538	
	Community Support	190,753.11	549,431.10	0.034	0.347	0.729	
	Alumni Support	590,232.40	501,473.27	0.09	1.177	0.24	
	Federal Government Support	-465,430.35	402,291.22	-0.094	-1.157	0.248	

Regression Results for 2020 – Environmental Power

Model	Predictor	β	SE	B (Final)	t	p	R ²
1	(Constant)	-743,476.52	752,289.69	—	-0.988	0.324	0.218
	Selectivity Score Range	190,378.25	188,959.18	0.057	1.008	0.315	
	Anti-State DEI Policy	-43,916.89	69,077.32	-0.035	-0.636	0.525	
	Student Services Expenditure Tier	595,454.52	175,725.27	0.336	3.389	.001**	
	Institutional Size	163,690.59	196,451.26	0.098	0.833	0.405	
	Carnegie Grouping	98,016.53	230,561.65	0.036	0.425	0.671	
Model	Predictor	β	SE	B (Final)	t	p	R ²
2	(Constant)	-111,344.96	682,199.49	—	-0.163	0.87	0.368
	Selectivity Score Range	141,552.60	170,296.13	0.043	0.831	0.407	
	Anti-State DEI Policy	16,207.15	62,672.50	0.013	0.259	0.796	
	Student Services Expenditure Tier	-20,151.73	176,206.23	-0.011	-0.114	0.909	
	Institutional Size	19,425.56	177,861.78	0.012	0.109	0.913	
	Carnegie Grouping	172,473.16	207,865.61	0.063	0.83	0.407	
	2020_Student Services Combined	0.022	0.003	0.563	7.947	<.001***	
Model	Predictor	β	SE	B (Final)	t	p	R ²
3	(Constant)	-808,063.72	1,037,473.82	—	-0.779	0.437	0.385
	Selectivity Score Range	169,859.37	173,626.82	0.051	0.978	0.329	
	Anti-State DEI Policy	14,584.89	63,549.26	0.012	0.23	0.819	
	Student Services Expenditure Tier	15,651.63	178,040.85	0.009	0.088	0.93	
	Institutional Size	-32,073.46	179,860.25	-0.019	-0.178	0.859	
	Carnegie Grouping	239,080.00	216,385.70	0.088	1.105	0.27	
	2020_Student Services Combined	0.021	0.003	0.539	7.543	<.001***	
	Student Recruitment and Retention	-288,343.36	504,784.78	-0.043	-0.571	0.568	
	Ability to cope with societal needs	500,997.04	383,055.12	0.116	1.308	0.192	
	Overall outside financial support	-294,357.53	434,684.84	-0.055	-0.677	0.499	
	Community Support	171,471.61	520,410.67	0.032	0.329	0.742	
	Alumni Support	589,488.25	474,225.75	0.093	1.243	0.215	
	Federal Government Support	-438,033.78	380,868.97	-0.092	-1.15	0.251	

Regression Results for 2021 – Environmental Power

Model	Predictor	β	SE	B (Final)	t	p	R ²
1	(Constant)	-739,582.24	751,290.31	—	-0.984	0.326	0.217
	Selectivity Score Range	202,190.67	188,708.15	0.061	1.071	0.285	
	Anti-State DEI Policy	-43,876.11	68,985.56	-0.035	-0.636	0.525	
	Student Services Expenditure Tier	584,491.95	175,491.82	0.33	3.331	.001**	
	Institutional Size	175,093.08	196,190.28	0.104	0.892	0.373	
	Carnegie Grouping	89,113.18	230,255.36	0.033	0.387	0.699	
Model	Predictor	β	SE	B (Final)	t	p	R ²
2	(Constant)	-76,641.05	685,340.84	—	-0.112	0.911	0.361
	Selectivity Score Range	133,444.96	171,024.91	0.04	0.78	0.436	
	Anti-State DEI Policy	11,590.00	62,846.47	0.009	0.184	0.854	
	Student Services Expenditure Tier	10,139.53	175,301.81	0.006	0.058	0.954	

	Institutional Size	17,421.17	178,730.09	0.01	0.097	0.922	
	Carnegie Grouping	162,287.41	208,611.64	0.06	0.778	0.437	
	2021_Student Services Combined	0.022	0.003	0.548	7.742	<.001***	
Model	Predictor	β	SE	B (Final)	t	p	R ²
3	(Constant)	-742,151.45	1,042,797.80	—	-0.712	0.477	0.378
	Selectivity Score Range	162,551.76	174,502.07	0.049	0.932	0.352	
	Anti-State DEI Policy	10,267.50	63,763.17	0.008	0.161	0.872	
	Student Services Expenditure Tier	2,465.25	177,205.08	0.044	0.359	0.72	
	Institutional Size	-6,014.32	180,759.90	-0.176	-1.37	0.172	
	Carnegie Grouping	-2,209.00	217,247.12	-0.029	-0.318	0.751	
	2021_Student Services Combined	0.0000000021170	0	0.267	3.084	.002**	
	State_MSPS_2021 Expenditures	0.071	0.034	0.132	2.073	.039**	
	Ability to cope with societal needs	486,076.01	384,726.05	0.113	1.263	0.208	
	Overall outside financial support	-280,042.90	436,915.13	-0.052	-0.641	0.522	
	Community Support	194,919.14	522,205.37	0.036	0.373	0.709	
	Alumni Support	583,707.75	476,455.02	0.092	1.225	0.222	
	Federal Government Support	-447,096.10	382,341.95	-0.094	-1.169	0.243	
<i>Regression Results for 2022 – Environmental Power</i>							
Model	Predictor	β	SE	B (Final)	t	p	R ²
1	(Constant)	-774,131.24	822,064.20	—	-0.942	0.347	0.214
	Selectivity Score Range	296,674.56	206,485.05	0.082	1.437	0.152	
	Anti-State DEI Policy	-90,203.27	75,484.21	-0.066	-1.195	0.233	
	Student Services Expenditure Tier	648,077.67	192,023.70	0.335	3.375	.001**	
	Institutional Size	164,447.15	214,672.02	0.09	0.766	0.444	
	Carnegie Grouping	72,751.11	251,946.13	0.025	0.289	0.773	
Model	Predictor	β	SE	B (Final)	t	p	R ²
2	(Constant)	-170,767.11	769,083.23	—	-0.222	0.824	0.325
	Selectivity Score Range	253,601.59	191,915.20	0.07	1.321	0.187	
	Anti-State DEI Policy	-33,450.16	70,644.04	-0.024	-0.474	0.636	
	Student Services Expenditure Tier	100,850.47	196,748.66	0.052	0.513	0.609	
	Institutional Size	18,108.97	200,641.11	0.01	0.09	0.928	
	Carnegie Grouping	136,867.72	234,234.79	0.046	0.584	0.56	
	2022_Student Services Combined	0.019	0.003	0.477	6.591	<.001***	
Model	Predictor	β	SE	B (Final)	t	p	R ²
3	(Constant)	-767,265.44	1,173,177.47	—	-0.654	0.514	0.340
	Selectivity Score Range	286,700.39	196,199.64	0.079	1.461	0.145	
	Anti-State DEI Policy	-35,028.98	71,831.08	-0.026	-0.488	0.626	
	Student Services Expenditure Tier	142,021.48	199,356.94	0.073	0.712	0.477	
	Institutional Size	-34,852.86	203,384.29	-0.019	-0.171	0.864	
	Carnegie Grouping	200,869.28	244,498.80	0.068	0.822	0.412	
	2022_Student Services Combined	0.018	0.003	0.452	6.168	<.001***	
	Student Recruitment and Retention	-328,603.66	570,175.42	-0.045	-0.576	0.565	
	Ability to cope with societal needs	499,040.91	432,917.65	0.106	1.153	0.25	
	Overall outside financial support	-326,284.86	491,566.09	-0.056	-0.664	0.507	
	Community Support	170,975.92	587,864.41	0.029	0.291	0.771	
	Alumni Support	641,657.89	536,432.28	0.093	1.196	0.233	
	Federal Government Support	-464,043.88	430,479.65	-0.089	-1.078	0.282	

Table 7.2 presents regression models incorporating institutional power indicators (e.g., Historical Power, Visibility Inside/Outside, Interaction with Central Administration) to predict state MSPS Expenditures from 2018 through 2022. Across all five years, Model 1 typically

includes foundational institutional and policy predictors (e.g., Anti-State DEI Policy, Carnegie Grouping, Selectivity Score Range, Student Services Expenditure Tier). Model 3 then adds the institutional power variables.

In 2018, for example, Model 1 starts with an R^2 of 0.209, where Student Services Expenditure Tier emerges as a significant positive predictor ($\beta \approx 0.318$, $p < .01$). By Model 3, the R^2 increases to 0.403, indicating that incorporating institutional power measures (especially Interaction with Central Administration) modestly enhances the model's explanatory power. Although many of the newly introduced institutional power variables do not individually reach statistical significance, their collective inclusion often coincides with higher overall R^2 values—suggesting that these power dimensions, while not always highlighted by single coefficients, help clarify how MSPS funding is shaped.

A similar trend appears each year: Student Services Expenditure Tier typically stands out in the earlier models, and institutional power factors (e.g., frequent interactions with central leaders) grow in importance as additional variables are introduced. These results reinforce the notion that, while baseline institutional characteristics explain much of the variance in MSPS Expenditures, strategic engagement with central administration and other dimensions of institutional power add further insight into how allocations ultimately evolve over time.

Table 7.2 – Hierarchical Multiple Regression Predicting State MSPS Expenditure Using Institutional Power (2018–2022)

Regression Results for 2018 – Institutional Power

Model	Predictor	B	SE	β	t	p	R^2
1	(Constant)	-781,262.54	802,689.32	—	-0.973	0.331	0.209
	Selectivity Score Range	253,315.17	201,618.49	0.072	1.256	0.21	
	Anti-State DEI Policy	-52,679.14	73,705.16	-0.04	-0.715	0.475	
	Student Services Expenditure Tier	594,467.98	187,497.98	0.318	3.171	0.002	
	Institutional Size	161,169.49	209,612.50	0.091	0.769	0.443	
	Carnegie Grouping	95,298.09	246,008.12	0.033	0.387	0.699	

Model	Predictor	B	SE	β	t	p	R ²
2	(Constant)	-160,859.35	744,628.43	—	-0.216	0.829	0.345
	Selectivity Score Range	224,440.10	185,744.28	0.064	1.208	0.228	
	Anti-State DEI Policy	5,669.25	68,397.74	0.004	0.083	0.934	
	Student Services Expenditure Tier	-64,278.39	196,787.88	-0.034	-0.327	0.744	
	Institutional Size	52,911.33	193,682.72	0.03	0.273	0.785	
	Carnegie Grouping	156,656.75	226,753.13	0.055	0.691	0.49	
	2018_Student Services Combined	0.024	0.003	0.528	6.982	<.001	
Model	Predictor	B	SE	β	t	p	R ²
3	(Constant)	-2,456,715.16	1,742,762.51	—	-1.41	0.16	0.403
	Selectivity Score Range	434,708.49	189,260.75	0.124	2.297	0.022	
	Anti-State DEI Policy	-22,258.73	68,370.77	-0.017	-0.326	0.745	
	Student Services Expenditure Tier	-13,687.07	193,227.71	-0.007	-0.071	0.944	
	Institutional Size	-39,598.94	190,619.80	-0.022	-0.208	0.836	
	Carnegie Grouping	224,051.24	232,489.56	0.078	0.964	0.336	
	2018_Student Services Combined	0.019	0.003	0.434	5.603	<.001	
	Historical power within institution	-217,649.75	415,009.72	-0.045	-0.524	0.6	
	Length of time at institution	102,728.94	450,372.40	0.021	0.228	0.82	
	Visibility within the institution	-928,919.99	713,320.51	-0.199	-1.302	0.194	
	Visibility outside of the institution	525,160.78	639,662.34	0.105	0.821	0.412	
	Federal government support	-25,416.92	445,762.37	-0.005	-0.057	0.955	
	Number of students served	232,229.75	385,132.92	0.04	0.603	0.547	
	Interaction with central administration	1,933,905.07	544,571.35	0.419	3.551	<.001	
	# of meetings w/ central administration	-955,618.77	524,502.33	-0.182	-1.822	0.07	
	Support of President	-625,332.93	516,264.50	-0.132	-1.211	0.227	
	Ease of access to President	709,156.72	394,230.57	0.138	1.799	0.073	

Regression Results for 2019 – Institutional Power

Model	Predictor	B	SE	β	t	p	R ²
1	(Constant)	-766,347.10	781,323.34	—	-0.981	0.328	0.221
	Selectivity Score Range	237,609.60	196,251.81	0.069	1.211	0.227	
	Anti-State DEI Policy	-50,630.29	71,743.27	-0.039	-0.706	0.481	
	Student Services Expenditure Tier	592,211.09	182,507.16	0.323	3.245	0.001	
	Institutional Size	185,070.63	204,033.04	0.106	0.907	0.365	
	Carnegie Grouping	81,405.45	239,459.88	0.029	0.34	0.734	
Model	Predictor	B	SE	β	t	p	R ²
2	(Constant)	-112,832.50	720,619.17	—	-0.157	0.876	0.373
	Selectivity Score Range	192,380.08	179,697.84	0.056	1.071	0.285	
	Anti-State DEI Policy	-1,407.22	66,000.58	-0.001	-0.021	0.983	
	Student Services Expenditure Tier	-29,632.11	187,646.27	-0.016	-0.158	0.875	
	Institutional Size	50,647.10	187,624.22	0.029	0.27	0.787	
	Carnegie Grouping	152,220.83	219,346.24	0.054	0.694	0.488	
	2019_Student Services Combined	0.022	0.003	0.534	7.269	<.001	
Model	Predictor	B	SE	β	t	p	R ²
3	(Constant)	-2,417,264.14	1,676,299.26	—	-1.442	0.151	0.437
	Selectivity Score Range	407,547.64	182,219.31	0.119	2.237	0.026	
	Anti-State DEI Policy	-27,365.96	65,619.99	-0.021	-0.417	0.677	
	Student Services Expenditure Tier	11,143.57	183,026.55	0.006	0.061	0.951	
	Institutional Size	-39,984.82	183,544.52	-0.023	-0.218	0.828	
	Carnegie Grouping	219,934.39	223,661.66	0.078	0.983	0.326	
	2019_Student Services Combined	0.018	0.003	0.441	5.912	<.001	

Historical power within institution	-224,431.32	399,307.16	-0.047	-0.562	0.575
Length of time at institution	93,680.19	433,079.93	0.02	0.216	0.829
Visibility within the institution	-938,877.64	686,048.07	-0.205	-1.369	0.172
Visibility outside of the institution	540,892.27	615,108.96	0.111	0.879	0.38
Federal government support	-27,444.39	428,869.77	-0.005	-0.064	0.949
Number of students served	229,042.20	370,469.00	0.04	0.618	0.537
Interaction with central administration	1,965,711.67	522,666.19	0.434	3.761	<.001
# of meetings w/ central administration	-962,771.56	504,502.86	-0.186	-1.908	0.057
Support of President	-624,875.07	496,531.77	-0.135	-1.258	0.209
Ease of access to President	698,640.78	379,118.93	0.139	1.843	0.067

Regression Results for 2020 – Institutional Power

Model	Predictor	B	SE	β	t	p	R ²
1	(Constant)	-743,476.52	752,289.69	—	-0.988	0.324	0.222
	Selectivity Score Range	190,378.25	188,959.18	0.057	1.008	0.315	
	Anti-State DEI Policy	-43,916.89	69,077.32	-0.035	-0.636	0.525	
	Student Services Expenditure Tier	595,454.52	175,725.27	0.336	3.389	0.001	
	Institutional Size	163,690.59	196,451.26	0.098	0.833	0.405	
	Carnegie Grouping	98,016.53	230,561.65	0.036	0.425	0.671	
2	(Constant)	-111,344.96	682,199.49	—	-0.163	0.87	0.389
	Selectivity Score Range	141,552.60	170,296.13	0.043	0.831	0.407	
	Anti-State DEI Policy	16,207.15	62,672.50	0.013	0.259	0.796	
	Student Services Expenditure Tier	-20,151.73	176,206.23	-0.011	-0.114	0.909	
	Institutional Size	19,425.56	177,861.78	0.012	0.109	0.913	
	Carnegie Grouping	172,473.16	207,865.61	0.063	0.83	0.407	
	2020_Student Services Combined	0.022	0.003	0.563	7.947	<.001	
Model	Predictor	B	SE	β	t	p	R ²
3	(Constant)	-2,435,142.50	1,578,550.65	—	-1.543	0.124	0.458
	Selectivity Score Range	353,427.12	171,648.41	0.107	2.059	0.041	
	Anti-State DEI Policy	-10,237.33	61,942.27	-0.008	-0.165	0.869	
	Student Services Expenditure Tier	15,417.58	170,734.16	0.009	0.09	0.928	
	Institutional Size	-71,146.15	172,939.70	-0.042	-0.411	0.681	
	Carnegie Grouping	244,035.51	210,691.64	0.09	1.158	0.248	
	2020_Student Services Combined	0.018	0.003	0.469	6.562	<.001	
	Historical power within institution	-225,426.76	375,887.01	-0.049	-0.6	0.549	
	Length of time at institution	87,682.44	407,636.70	0.019	0.215	0.83	
	Visibility within the institution	-933,014.27	646,006.20	-0.211	-1.444	0.15	
	Visibility outside of the institution	532,727.83	579,538.12	0.113	0.919	0.359	
	Federal government support	-31,440.25	404,368.19	-0.006	-0.078	0.938	
	Number of students served	273,187.75	348,677.56	0.049	0.783	0.434	
	Interaction with central administration	1,947,605.34	491,495.48	0.445	3.963	<.001	
	# of meetings w/ central administration	-943,729.63	475,222.97	-0.189	-1.986	0.048	
	Support of President	-618,596.95	467,656.34	-0.138	-1.323	0.187	
	Ease of access to President	679,244.26	356,919.28	0.139	1.903	0.058	

Regression Results for 2021 – Institutional Power

Model	Predictor	B	SE	β	t	p	R ²
1	(Constant)	-739,582.24	751,290.31	—	-0.984	0.326	0.222
	Selectivity Score Range	202,190.67	188,708.15	0.061	1.071	0.285	
	Anti-State DEI Policy	-43,876.11	68,985.56	-0.035	-0.636	0.525	
	Student Services Expenditure Tier	584,491.95	175,491.82	0.33	3.331	0.001	
	Institutional Size	175,093.08	196,190.28	0.104	0.892	0.373	
	Carnegie Grouping	89,113.18	230,255.36	0.033	0.387	0.699	
Model	Predictor	B	SE	β	t	p	R ²
2	(Constant)	-76,641.05	685,340.84	—	-0.112	0.911	0.382
	Selectivity Score Range	133,444.96	171,024.91	0.04	0.78	0.436	
	Anti-State DEI Policy	11,590.00	62,846.47	0.009	0.184	0.854	
	Student Services Expenditure Tier	10,139.53	175,301.81	0.006	0.058	0.954	
	Institutional Size	17,421.17	178,730.09	0.01	0.097	0.922	
	Carnegie Grouping	162,287.41	208,611.64	0.06	0.778	0.437	
	2021_Student Services Combined	0.022	0.003	0.548	7.742	<.001	
Model	Predictor	B	SE	β	t	p	R ²
3	(Constant)	-2,361,582.39	1,583,525.71	—	-1.491	0.137	0.452
	Selectivity Score Range	352,409.68	172,351.20	0.106	2.045	0.042	
	Anti-State DEI Policy	-14,317.57	62,043.43	-0.011	-0.231	0.818	
	Student Services Expenditure Tier	41,722.92	169,506.22	0.024	0.246	0.806	
	Institutional Size	-71,691.23	173,527.17	-0.043	-0.413	0.68	
	Carnegie Grouping	233,876.09	211,213.01	0.086	1.107	0.269	
	2021_Student Services Combined	0.018	0.003	0.452	6.362	<.001	
	Historical power within institution	-224,028.13	376,909.50	-0.049	-0.594	0.553	
	Length of time at institution	77,498.55	408,560.57	0.017	0.19	0.85	
	Visibility within the institution	-955,869.28	647,508.80	-0.217	-1.476	0.141	
	Visibility outside of the institution	546,294.99	580,910.29	0.116	0.94	0.348	
	Federal government support	-38,423.11	405,269.26	-0.008	-0.095	0.925	
	Number of students served	265,182.96	349,587.13	0.048	0.759	0.449	
	Interaction with central administration	1,976,838.73	492,306.51	0.453	4.015	<.001	
	# of meetings w/ central administration	-952,081.77	476,382.77	-0.191	-1.999	0.047	
	Support of President	-615,604.21	468,791.67	-0.138	-1.313	0.19	
	Ease of access to President	669,475.26	357,633.26	0.138	1.872	0.062	

Regression Results for 2022 – Institutional Power

Model	Predictor	B	SE	β	t	p	R ²
1	(Constant)	-774,131.24	822,064.20	—	-0.942	0.347	0.224
	Selectivity Score Range	296,674.56	206,485.05	0.082	1.437	0.152	
	Anti-State DEI Policy	-90,203.27	75,484.21	-0.066	-1.195	0.233	
	Student Services Expenditure Tier	648,077.67	192,023.70	0.335	3.375	0.001	
	Institutional Size	164,447.15	214,672.02	0.09	0.766	0.444	
	Carnegie Grouping	72,751.11	251,946.13	0.025	0.289	0.773	
Model	Predictor	B	SE	β	t	p	R ²
2	(Constant)	-170,767.11	769,083.23	—	-0.222	0.824	0.349
	Selectivity Score Range	253,601.59	191,915.20	0.07	1.321	0.187	
	Anti-State DEI Policy	-33,450.16	70,644.04	-0.024	-0.474	0.636	

	Student Services Expenditure Tier	100,850.47	196,748.66	0.052	0.513	0.609	
	Institutional Size	18,108.97	200,641.11	0.01	0.09	0.928	
	Carnegie Grouping	136,867.72	234,234.79	0.046	0.584	0.56	
	2022_Student Services Combined	0.019	0.003	0.477	6.591	<.001	
Model	Predictor	B	SE	β	t	p	R ²
3	(Constant)	-2,265,042.75	1,815,272.87	—	-1.248	0.213	0.400
	Selectivity Score Range	452,945.82	197,216.50	0.125	2.297	0.022	
	Anti-State DEI Policy	-61,339.20	71,174.54	-0.045	-0.862	0.39	
	Student Services Expenditure Tier	130,116.74	194,253.60	0.067	0.67	0.504	
	Institutional Size	-63,023.59	198,866.60	-0.034	-0.317	0.752	
	Carnegie Grouping	198,585.76	242,097.67	0.067	0.82	0.413	
	2022_Student Services Combined	0.016	0.003	0.4	5.383	<.001	
	Historical power within institution	-173,327.18	432,133.51	-0.035	-0.401	0.689	
	Length of time at institution	58,080.99	468,548.90	0.012	0.124	0.901	
	Visibility within the institution	-906,547.12	742,029.69	-0.188	-1.222	0.223	
	Visibility outside of the institution	494,881.04	665,931.97	0.096	0.743	0.458	
	Federal government support	-12,981.72	464,248.33	-0.002	-0.028	0.978	
	Number of students served	244,345.10	400,882.48	0.04	0.61	0.543	
	Interaction with central administration	1,906,489.30	565,159.94	0.4	3.373	0.001	
	# of meetings w/ central administration	-893,595.87	546,095.69	-0.164	-1.636	0.103	
	Support of President	-736,486.49	537,445.34	-0.151	-1.37	0.172	
	Ease of access to President	717,369.52	410,252.65	0.135	1.749	0.082	

Table 7.3 presents regression models incorporating resource negotiation indicators (e.g., focusing on unit needs, overall institutional needs, and including budget requests for innovative programs) to predict state MSPS expenditures from 2018 through 2022. Across all five years, Model 1 typically includes foundational institutional and policy predictors (e.g., Anti-State DEI Policy, Carnegie Grouping, Selectivity Score Range, Student Services Expenditure Tier), and Model 3 adds the Resource Negotiation variables. In 2018, for instance, Model 1 starts with an R² of 0.209 and shows that Student Services Expenditure Tier has a significant positive coefficient ($\beta = 650,662.788$, $p < .01$). By Model 3, the R² rises to 0.374, indicating that adding resource negotiation variables and updated student services measures collectively improves the model's explanatory power. Although many of the newly introduced resource negotiation

coefficients do not reach statistical significance, their inclusion often coincides with a higher overall R^2 , suggesting that these nuanced budgetary negotiations—while not always individually significant—help clarify how institutional expenditures are shaped. A similar pattern emerges each year, with Student Services Expenditure Tier typically remaining an influential predictor in early models, while certain policy indicators (e.g., Anti-State DEI Policy – Attempted but no impact on DEI) become significant once additional negotiation or updated Student Services variables enter the model. These results reinforce the idea that strategic resource negotiation (particularly around unit-level and institution-wide needs) contributes meaningfully to explaining State MSPS expenditure outcomes over time.

Table 7.3 – Hierarchical Multiple Regression Predicting State MSPS Expenditure Using Resource Negotiation (2018–2022)

Regression Results for 2018 – Resource Negotiation

Model	Predictor	B	SE	β	t	p	R ²
1	(Constant)	-781,262.54	802,689.32	—	-0.973	0.331	0.209
	Selectivity Score Range	253,315.17	201,618.49	0.072	1.256	0.21	
	Anti-State DEI Policy	-52,679.14	73,705.16	-0.04	-0.715	0.475	
	Student Services Expend. Tier	594,467.98	187,497.98	0.318	3.171	0.002	
	Institutional Size	161,169.49	209,612.50	0.091	0.769	0.443	
	Carnegie Grouping	95,298.09	246,008.12	0.033	0.387	0.699	
Model	Predictor	B	SE	β	t	p	R ²
2	(Constant)	-160,859.35	744,628.43	—	-0.216	0.829	0.338
	Selectivity Score Range	224,440.10	185,744.28	0.064	1.208	0.228	
	Anti-State DEI Policy	5,669.25	68,397.74	0.004	0.083	0.934	
	Student Services Expend. Tier	-64,278.39	196,787.88	-0.034	-0.327	0.744	
	Institutional Size	52,911.33	193,682.72	0.03	0.273	0.785	
	Carnegie Grouping	156,656.75	226,753.13	0.055	0.691	0.49	
	2018_Student Services Combined	0.024	0.003	0.528	6.982	<.001	
Model	Predictor	B	SE	β	t	p	R ²
3	(Constant)	-4,290,772.41	1,308,269.13	—	-3.28	0.001	0.374
	Selectivity Score Range	-33,306.53	194,815.98	-0.01	-0.171	0.864	
	Anti-State DEI Policy	-5,772.77	68,870.32	-0.004	-0.084	0.933	
	Student Services Expend. Tier	-46,858.62	193,017.29	-0.025	-0.243	0.808	
	Institutional Size	45,402.83	191,149.44	0.026	0.238	0.812	
	Carnegie Grouping	294,732.16	225,921.41	0.103	1.305	0.193	
	2018_Student Services Combined	0.022	0.003	0.482	6.417	<.001	
	Focusing on needs of the total institution	597,237.01	397,800.72	0.109	1.501	0.134	
	Focusing on needs of the unit	510,018.32	556,122.63	0.093	0.917	0.36	
	Request for innovative programs	182,534.59	683,605.02	0.032	0.267	0.79	

Regression Results for 2019 – Resource Negotiation

Model	Predictor	B	SE	β	t	p	R ²
1	(Constant)	-766,347.10	781,323.34	—	-0.981	0.328	0.221
	Selectivity Score Range	237,609.60	196,251.81	0.069	1.211	0.227	
	Anti-State DEI Policy	-50,630.29	71,743.27	-0.039	-0.706	0.481	
	Student Services Expend. Tier	592,211.09	182,507.16	0.323	3.245	0.001	
	Institutional Size	185,070.63	204,033.04	0.106	0.907	0.365	
	Carnegie Grouping	81,405.45	239,459.88	0.029	0.34	0.734	
Model	Predictor	B	SE	β	t	p	R ²
2	(Constant)	-112,832.50	720,619.17	—	-0.157	0.876	0.373
	Selectivity Score Range	192,380.08	179,697.84	0.056	1.071	0.285	
	Anti-State DEI Policy	-1,407.22	66,000.58	-0.001	-0.021	0.983	
	Student Services Expend. Tier	-29,632.11	187,646.27	-0.016	-0.158	0.875	
	Institutional Size	50,647.10	187,624.22	0.029	0.27	0.787	
	Carnegie Grouping	152,220.83	219,346.24	0.054	0.694	0.488	
	2019_Student Services Combined	0.022	0.003	0.534	7.269	<.001	
Model	Predictor	B	SE	β	t	p	R ²
3	(Constant)	-4,065,046.09	1,266,610.34	—	-3.209	0.001	0.405
	Selectivity Score Range	-53,163.23	188,445.95	-0.015	-0.282	0.778	
	Anti-State DEI Policy	-11,192.77	66,513.44	-0.009	-0.168	0.866	
	Student Services Expend. Tier	-16,930.02	184,179.15	-0.009	-0.092	0.927	
	Institutional Size	46,163.15	185,283.85	0.027	0.249	0.803	
	Carnegie Grouping	282,918.32	218,643.46	0.1	1.294	0.197	
	2019_Student Services Combined	0.02	0.003	0.49	6.712	<.001	
	Focusing on needs of the total institution	561,944.47	384,985.79	0.104	1.46	0.146	
	Focusing on needs of the unit	477,727.00	538,157.70	0.088	0.888	0.376	
	Request for innovative programs	194,278.39	661,363.38	0.034	0.294	0.769	

Regression Results for 2020 – Resource Negotiation

Model	Predictor	B	SE	β	t	p	R ²
1	(Constant)	-743,476.52	752,289.69	—	-0.988	0.324	0.222
	Selectivity Score Range	190,378.25	188,959.18	0.057	1.008	0.315	
	Anti-State DEI Policy	-43,916.89	69,077.32	-0.035	-0.636	0.525	
	Student Services Expend. Tier	595,454.52	175,725.27	0.336	3.389	0.001	
	Institutional Size	163,690.59	196,451.26	0.098	0.833	0.405	
	Carnegie Grouping	98,016.53	230,561.65	0.036	0.425	0.671	
Model	Predictor	B	SE	β	t	p	R ²
2	(Constant)	-111,344.96	682,199.49	—	-0.163	0.87	0.389
	Selectivity Score Range	141,552.60	170,296.13	0.043	0.831	0.407	
	Anti-State DEI Policy	16,207.15	62,672.50	0.013	0.259	0.796	
	Student Services Expend. Tier	-20,151.73	176,206.23	-0.011	-0.114	0.909	
	Institutional Size	19,425.56	177,861.78	0.012	0.109	0.913	
	Carnegie Grouping	172,473.16	207,865.61	0.063	0.83	0.407	
	2020_Student Services Combined	0.022	0.003	0.563	7.947	<.001	

Model	Predictor	B	SE	β	t	p	R ²
3	(Constant)	-3,845,184.53	1,198,717.02	—	-3.208	0.002	0.420
	Selectivity Score Range	-90,277.89	178,576.74	-0.027	-0.506	0.614	
	Anti-State DEI Policy	8,258.55	63,188.79	0.007	0.131	0.896	
	Student Services Expend. Tier	-11,463.39	172,998.46	-0.006	-0.066	0.947	
	Institutional Size	15,882.52	175,640.06	0.009	0.09	0.928	
	Carnegie Grouping	294,651.20	207,203.51	0.108	1.422	0.156	
	2020_Student Services Combined	0.02	0.003	0.521	7.41	<.001	
	Focusing on needs of the total institution	488,859.74	365,077.88	0.094	1.339	0.182	
	Focusing on needs of the unit	467,517.20	509,992.25	0.09	0.917	0.36	
	Request for innovative programs	210,598.78	626,451.91	0.039	0.336	0.737	

Regression Results for 2021 – Resource Negotiation

Model	Predictor	B	SE	β	t	p	R ²
1	(Constant)	-739,582.24	751,290.31	—	-0.984	0.326	0.222
	Selectivity Score Range	202,190.67	188,708.15	0.061	1.071	0.285	
	Anti-State DEI Policy	-43,876.11	68,985.56	-0.035	-0.636	0.525	
	Student Services Expend. Tier	584,491.95	175,491.82	0.33	3.331	0.001	
	Institutional Size	175,093.08	196,190.28	0.104	0.892	0.373	
	Carnegie Grouping	89,113.18	230,255.36	0.033	0.387	0.699	

Model	Predictor	B	SE	β	t	p	R ²
2	(Constant)	-76,641.05	685,340.84	—	-0.112	0.911	0.382
	Selectivity Score Range	133,444.96	171,024.91	0.04	0.78	0.436	
	Anti-State DEI Policy	11,590.00	62,846.47	0.009	0.184	0.854	
	Student Services Expend. Tier	10,139.53	175,301.81	0.006	0.058	0.954	
	Institutional Size	17,421.17	178,730.09	0.01	0.097	0.922	
	Carnegie Grouping	162,287.41	208,611.64	0.06	0.778	0.437	
	2021_Student Services Combined	0.022	0.003	0.548	7.742	<.001	

Model	Predictor	B	SE	β	t	p	R ²
3	(Constant)	-3,801,375.65	1,205,866.72	—	-3.152	0.002	0.413
	Selectivity Score Range	-95,927.91	179,258.00	-0.029	-0.535	0.593	
	Anti-State DEI Policy	2,755.60	63,372.60	0.002	0.043	0.965	
	Student Services Expend. Tier	18,510.18	172,178.00	0.01	0.108	0.914	
	Institutional Size	15,387.45	176,594.45	0.009	0.087	0.931	
	Carnegie Grouping	284,481.81	208,043.37	0.105	1.367	0.173	
	2021_Student Services Combined	0.02	0.003	0.505	7.175	<.001	
	Focusing on needs of the total institution	509,288.94	366,393.78	0.098	1.39	0.166	
	Focusing on needs of the unit	455,979.03	512,070.22	0.088	0.89	0.374	
	Request for innovative programs	197,311.39	629,203.56	0.036	0.314	0.754	

Regression Results for 2022 – Resource Negotiation

Model	Predictor	B	SE	β	t	p	R ²
1	(Constant)	-774,131.24	822,064.20	—	-0.942	0.347	0.224
	Selectivity Score Range	296,674.56	206,485.05	0.082	1.437	0.152	
	Anti-State DEI Policy	-90,203.27	75,484.21	-0.066	-1.195	0.233	

	Student Services Expend. Tier	648,077.67	192,023.70	0.335	3.375	0.001	
	Institutional Size	164,447.15	214,672.02	0.09	0.766	0.444	
	Carnegie Grouping	72,751.11	251,946.13	0.025	0.289	0.773	
Model	Predictor	B	SE	β	t	p	R²
2	(Constant)	-170,767.11	769,083.23	—	-0.222	0.824	0.349
	Selectivity Score Range	253,601.59	191,915.20	0.07	1.321	0.187	
	Anti-State DEI Policy	-33,450.16	70,644.04	-0.024	-0.474	0.636	
	Student Services Expend. Tier	100,850.47	196,748.66	0.052	0.513	0.609	
	Institutional Size	18,108.97	200,641.11	0.01	0.09	0.928	
	Carnegie Grouping	136,867.72	234,234.79	0.046	0.584	0.56	
	2022_Student Services Combined	0.019	0.003	0.477	6.591	<.001	
Model	Predictor	B	SE	β	t	p	R²
3	(Constant)	-4,802,570.72	1,344,015.02	—	-3.573	<.001	0.390
	Selectivity Score Range	-34,231.06	200,143.83	-0.009	-0.171	0.864	
	Anti-State DEI Policy	-46,323.54	70,769.98	-0.034	-0.655	0.513	
	Student Services Expend. Tier	110,052.08	192,015.73	0.057	0.573	0.567	
	Institutional Size	13,669.34	197,063.29	0.007	0.069	0.945	
	Carnegie Grouping	291,419.59	232,204.61	0.098	1.255	0.211	
	2022_Student Services Combined	0.017	0.003	0.43	6.01	<.001	
	Focusing on needs of the total institution	672,545.48	408,792.91	0.119	1.645	0.101	
	Focusing on needs of the unit	567,538.64	571,541.07	0.1	0.993	0.322	
	Request for innovative programs	206,869.08	702,765.00	0.035	0.294	0.769	

Unit Power & MSPS Administrator Role Correlations

Although role type is not specifically addressed in RQ2, incorporating MSPS administrator roles is important for understanding how Hackman's (1987) model of unit authority structures plays out in practice, given the multifaceted responsibilities and leadership dynamics involved in institutional governance. Academic DEI leaders, directors of DEI programs, and chief diversity officers, among other DEI leadership roles, show different abilities to get funding, gain recognition, and secure resources. This research highlights the need to analyze various DEI roles to comprehend the use or limitation of unit power (Hackman, 1987). There are noteworthy patterns in the types of roles and how they influence the relationship between the unit power of the MSPS administrator and the total expenditures allocated to the MSPS units. Correlations

between DEI leadership roles and unit power yield additional explanatory insight into the research question. For instance, academic DEI leaders demonstrate significant positive correlations with external financial support ($r = .284, p < 0.01$) and community support ($r = .146, p < 0.05$), while the director of DEI programs shows negative correlations with alumni support ($r = -.143, p < 0.05$) and federal government support ($r = -.133, p < 0.05$). In relation to institutional power, this study reveals significant correlations between leadership roles and dimensions such as historical influence, visibility, and interactions with central administration. For example, academic DEI leaders exhibit a strong positive correlation with the number of students served ($r = .321, p < 0.01$), while chief diversity officers are positively correlated with interactions with central administration ($r = .158, p < 0.01$). Finally, when it comes to the unit power aspect of resource negotiation strategies, academic DEI leaders really shine when they focus on divisional and unit needs ($r = .166, p < 0.01$) and include budget requests for new programs ($r = .177, p < 0.01$). These patterns emphasize how DEI leadership roles vary in their effectiveness across different institutional and financial dimensions and merit further research. MSP administrators use their leadership roles to gain institutional backing, obtain funding, and influence campus policies in a multitude of ways influenced by their positionality of their role. The complex relationship between certain administrator roles and the effectiveness of MSPS units requires further research.

Theoretical Framework Regression Model

Table 8 integrates Tinto's Institutional Action Model, Principal–Agent Theory, and Hackman's Unit Power theory to highlight how institutional conditions, MSPS administrators'

roles, and the distribution of authority and resources shape student of color retention in 2022.

The basic regression model accounts for about 30% of the variance (R^2), which increases to over 70% in the fully specified models.

In Model 1, which includes fundamental institutional characteristics, Selectivity Score Range (positive, $p < 0.001$) and Student Services Expenditure Tier (positive, $p = 0.008$) stand out as significant predictors of retention. When additional variables such as overall retention metrics and expanded student services enter Models 2 and 3, the explanatory power rises modestly, with Selectivity Score Range remaining highly significant (positive, $p < 0.001$) and a newly added retention variable also showing significance (positive, $p \approx 0.019$ – 0.029).

In Models 4 and 5, where R^2 reaches approximately 73%, the ability to cope with societal needs has a positive relationship with retention ($p = 0.041$). Community support, by contrast, shows a strong negative association ($p < 0.001$), implying that an overreliance on external resources may signal weaker internal supports. Historical power within the institution also negatively predicts retention ($p \approx 0.017$ – 0.019), while the longer existence of DEI or student support units exerts a positive effect ($p = 0.002$ – 0.004). Federal Government Support emerges as a positive predictor ($p < 0.001$), whereas Interaction with Central Administration is negative ($p = 0.003$). The Support of President is positively linked to retention ($p = 0.013$ – 0.017), whereas Ease of Access to President is negative ($p < 0.001$). Additionally, a focus on addressing the broader institutional mission (positive, $p < 0.001$) and incorporating budget requests for new programs (positive, $p = 0.001$) both emerge as highly significant influences on student of color retention.

In summary, while basic institutional factors explain a modest portion of the variance in student-of-color retention, the integration of variables capturing internal power dynamics and resource negotiation markedly enhances the model's predictive power. These results underscore the importance of strategic investments and robust organizational structures in driving retention outcomes.

Table 8. Theoretical Framework Regression Analysis Retention, MSPS Expenditures, & MSPS Unit Power

Model	Predictor	β	Std. Error	β (Final)	t	p	R ²
1	(Constant)	52.485	2.68		19.587	<.001	0.541
	Selectivity Score Range (simple)	5.094	0.678	0.325	7.519	<.001	
	Anti-State DEI Policy	-0.402	0.246	-0.068	-1.635	0.103	
	Institutional Size	4.505	0.521	0.567	8.645	<.001	
	Carnegie Grouping	0.186	0.827	0.014	0.225	0.822	
Model	Predictor	β	Std. Error	β (Final)	t	p	R ²
2	(Constant)	46.574	1.789		26.035	<.001	0.811
	Selectivity Score Range (simple)	2.504	0.456	0.16	5.497	<.001	
	Anti-State DEI Policy	0.064	0.16	0.011	0.401	0.688	
	Institutional Size	0.604	0.457	0.076	1.322	0.187	
	Carnegie Grouping	-0.454	0.531	-0.035	-0.855	0.393	
	Student Services Expenditure Tier	1.719	0.419	0.205	4.106	<.001	
	Average Institution Retention Teir	5.453	0.312	0.644	17.499	<.001	
Model	Predictor	β	Std. Error	β (Final)	t	p	R ²
3	(Constant)	46.491	1.872		24.838	<.001	0.813
	Selectivity Score Range (simple)	2.606	0.456	0.166	5.711	<.001	
	Anti-State DEI Policy	0.07	0.161	0.012	0.439	0.661	
	Institutional Size	0.575	0.459	0.072	1.254	0.211	
	Carnegie Grouping	-0.515	0.53	-0.04	-0.972	0.332	
	Student Services Expenditure Tier	1.73	0.419	0.206	4.126	<.001	
	Average Institution Retention Teir	5.456	0.315	0.644	17.304	<.001	
	Student Affairs Leadership	0.479	0.656	0.023	0.73	0.466	
	Director of DEI Programs	-0.885	0.796	-0.033	-1.112	0.267	
	Academic DEI Leader	-0.75	1.511	-0.014	-0.497	0.62	
	Senior University Administrator w/ DEI	1.187	0.695	0.052	1.708	0.089	
Model	Predictor	β	Std. Error	β (Final)	t	p	R ²
4	(Constant)	37.524	5.982		6.273	<.001	0.840
	Selectivity Score Range (simple)	1.501	0.496	0.096	3.023	0.003	
	Anti-State DEI Policy	0.228	0.159	0.038	1.438	0.152	
	Institutional Size	0.263	0.441	0.033	0.596	0.552	

	Carnegie Grouping	-0.044	0.535	-0.003	-0.083	0.934	
	Student Services Expenditure Tier	1.451	0.404	0.173	3.595	<.001	
	Average Institution Retention Tier	5.552	0.31	0.656	17.882	<.001	
	Student Affairs Leadership	0.047	0.63	0.002	0.074	0.941	
	Director of DEI Programs	-1.198	0.781	-0.045	-1.534	0.126	
	Academic DEI Leader	-0.133	1.747	-0.002	-0.076	0.94	
	Senior University Administrator w/ DEI	1.076	0.662	0.047	1.626	0.105	
	EP - Student Recruitment and Retention	-2.446	1.7	-0.077	-1.438	0.152	
	EP - Cope with current societal needs	2.089	1.475	0.103	1.416	0.158	
	EP - Overall outside financial support	-4.854	2.644	-0.19	-1.835	0.068	
	EP - Community Support	-0.134	1.95	-0.005	-0.069	0.945	
	EP - Alumni Support	-0.324	2.008	-0.011	-0.161	0.872	
	EP - Federal Government Support	3.816	2.671	0.169	1.429	0.154	
	IP - Historical power within institution	-4.082	2.242	-0.189	-1.821	0.07	
	IP - Length of time at institution	4.794	2.011	0.223	2.384	0.018	
	IP - Visibility within the institution	0.26	2.45	0.012	0.106	0.916	
	IP - Visibility outside of the institution	1.922	2.087	0.086	0.921	0.358	
	IP - Federal government support	-0.696	1.555	-0.029	-0.448	0.655	
	IP - Number of students served	-0.74	1.298	-0.028	-0.57	0.569	
	IP - Interaction with central administration	0.991	2.407	0.048	0.412	0.681	
	IP - # of meetings w/ central administration	-0.757	2.149	-0.032	-0.352	0.725	
	IP - Support of President	1.26	2.335	0.059	0.539	0.59	
	IP - Ease of access to President	-5.391	1.358	-0.234	-3.968	<.001	
	RN - Focusing on the needs of the total institution	5.377	1.884	0.218	2.854	0.005	
	RN - Focusing on the needs of the unit	-0.474	2.336	-0.019	-0.203	0.839	
	RN - Request for innovative programs	1.572	2.574	0.061	0.611	0.542	
Model	Predictor	β	Std. Error	β (Final)	t	p	R ²
5	(Constant)	42.815	6.188		6.919	<.001	0.844
	Selectivity Score Range (simple)	1.514	0.489	0.097	3.094	0.002	
	Anti-State DEI Policy	0.243	0.157	0.041	1.55	0.123	
	Institutional Size	0.282	0.434	0.035	0.648	0.517	
	Carnegie Grouping	-0.156	0.529	-0.012	-0.295	0.768	
	Student Services Expenditure Tier	1.293	0.402	0.154	3.217	0.001	
	Average Institution Retention Tier	5.497	0.307	0.649	17.921	<.001	
	Student Affairs Leadership	0.057	0.621	0.003	0.092	0.927	
	Director of DEI Programs	-1.276	0.771	-0.048	-1.655	0.099	
	Academic DEI Leader	0.182	1.726	0.003	0.105	0.916	
	Senior University Administrator w/ DEI	1.193	0.654	0.052	1.824	0.069	
	EP - Student Recruitment and Retention	-2.171	1.679	-0.068	-1.293	0.197	
	EP - Cope with current societal needs	2.002	1.455	0.098	1.376	0.17	
	EP - Overall outside financial support	-4.21	2.617	-0.165	-1.608	0.109	
	EP - Community Support	-0.508	1.927	-0.02	-0.264	0.792	
	EP - Alumni Support	-0.348	1.98	-0.012	-0.176	0.861	

EP - Federal Government Support	4.088	2.635	0.181	1.551	0.122
IP - Historical power within institution	-3.871	2.211	-0.179	-1.751	0.081
IP - Length of time at institution	3.884	2.009	0.18	1.934	0.054
IP - Visibility within the institution	1.199	2.438	0.057	0.492	0.623
IP - Visibility outside of the institution	1.316	2.069	0.059	0.636	0.526
IP - Federal government support	-0.728	1.533	-0.031	-0.475	0.635
IP - Number of students served	-0.59	1.281	-0.022	-0.461	0.645
IP - Interaction with central administration	0.958	2.374	0.046	0.404	0.687
IP - # of meetings w/ central administration	-0.245	2.127	-0.01	-0.115	0.908
IP - Support of President	0.47	2.32	0.022	0.202	0.84
IP - Ease of access to President	-5.377	1.339	-0.233	-4.014	<.001
RN - Focusing on the needs of the total institution	5.14	1.859	0.209	2.765	0.006
RN - Focusing on the needs of the unit	-0.779	2.306	-0.032	-0.338	0.736
RN – Request for innovative programs	0.586	2.562	0.023	0.229	0.819
State_MSPS Expenditure 2022	0.0000003924	0	0.09	2.824	0.005

Chapter 4 presented a detailed account of MSPS expenditures, retention rates for students of color, and the unit power of MSPS administrators. Correlation and regression analyses revealed that while some measures repeatedly showed positive ties to retention rates, the strength of those relationships varied across different racial and ethnic groups. Regarding research question two, certain facets of unit power—most notably institutional power and strategic resource negotiation—proved to be significant in explaining how MSPS funds are allocated. Although not all environmental and institutional power measures strongly correlated with MSPS funding, several did align with higher expenditure levels. Overall, these results underscore the multifaceted and context-dependent connections among resource allocation, student outcomes, and administrative power within higher education institutions.

CHAPTER 5 - DISCUSSION

Chapter 4 provided a detailed quantitative exploration of how institutional spending on Multicultural Student Programs and Services (MSPS) relates to the retention of historically underrepresented students, as well as the ways MSPS administrators' Unit Power influences resource allocation (see Table 4 in Chapter 4 for a summary of correlational findings). Guided by QuantCrit (Gillborn et al., 2018), Principal-Agent Theory (Lane & Kivistö, 2008), Tinto's (2012) Institutional Action Model, and Hackman's (1985) Unit Power framework, this study tackles long-standing inequalities in student retention by focusing on equity-based funding, administrative leadership strategies, and the sociopolitical forces surrounding them. Although many institutions espouse diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), the frequent underfunding of MSPS reveals a gap between stated priorities and actual financial support. At the heart of this inquiry lies the discrepancy between institutional DEI rhetoric and the budgetary practices intended to benefit historically marginalized populations. By analyzing whether MSPS funding supports retention goals and how MSPS administrators negotiate political and organizational constraints, this research examines the extent to which institutional actions align with their public DEI promises. Guided by two research questions, this study sought to:

- RQ 1: Can institutional expenditures on MSPS predict retention rates for students of color?
- RQ 2: What is the relationship between MSPS administrators' unit power and institutional expenditures for MSPS?

This chapter brings together this study’s findings—derived from correlation analyses and regression analysis models covering 2018–2022 (Chapter 4, Tables 5.1–5.5)—and situates them within the broader scholarly context. It then offers targeted implications and practical recommendations for both MSPS administrators and policymakers, illustrating how funding mechanisms and leadership practices can advance or impede equity objectives. The chapter proceeds by discussing the wider ramifications for institutional decision-makers, MSPS leaders, and higher education. Case vignettes demonstrate how internal and external pressures can yield merely performative equity strategies, providing concrete examples of how MSPS administrators can respond to political and structural challenges. The chapter concludes by acknowledging limitations, suggesting avenues for future inquiry, and underscoring the urgency of moving beyond superficial DEI commitments toward tangible, transformative initiatives. By merging empirical results, theoretical perspectives, and real-world application, this synthesis highlights the critical gap between institutional rhetoric and substantive resource investment in higher education.

Summary of Key Findings

MSPS Expenditures and Student Retention

Institutional spending on Multicultural Student Programs and Services (MSPS) and the retention of students of color are consistently and statistically positively linked (Chapter 4, Table 4). Correlation coefficients for Black student retention often exceed 0.30, while Hispanic correlations range around 0.29 to 0.36. Even though the correlations between Asian students are smaller (about 0.16 to 0.27), they are still statistically significant. This shows that culturally

targeted programming helps all groups, even those with higher retention rates in the past. The associations for multiracial students frequently exceed 0.32, underscoring that MSPS funds hold value across diverse subpopulations. Hierarchical regression models (Chapter 4, Tables 5.1–5.5) reinforce these trends. When MSPS-related variables are added, the explained variance (R^2) commonly increases by 2 to 5 percentage points. While this might seem modest numerically, institutions serving large student bodies may retain hundreds of additional students annually, signifying meaningful real-world impacts.

Variations Across Groups and Contexts

Although MSPS expenditures consistently predict improved retention, the degree of impact varies by demographic subgroups and external contexts. Notably, Black and Hispanic students often show higher gains relative to Asian students, revealing the importance of targeted DEI efforts that address diverse historical and sociopolitical realities. Also, these connections seem stronger in years like 2020, when national political movements made people more aware of racial injustices (Chapter 4, Table 5.3). Sustained investment over time can embed diversity efforts within institutional culture, leading to more substantial and long-term improvements in retention outcomes.

The Role of Administrative Leadership and Unit Power

A recurring theme is that funding alone does not guarantee successful retention outcomes. Instead, the strategic positioning of MSPS administrators—and their “unit power”—emerges as a critical factor. Indicators of robust unit power—such as direct access to senior administrators and explicit presidential endorsement—are moderately linked to increases in

MSPS budgets and enhanced retention outcomes (Chapter 4, Tables 6.2 and 7.2). Chief Diversity Officers and senior DEI administrators can strengthen MSPS initiatives by demonstrating how gains in retention further institutional objectives, which in turn helps them secure sustained or additional funding. In contrast, where administrators have limited influence or operate in politically adversarial conditions, positive effects of MSPS spending can be notably constrained.

Sociopolitical Pressures and the Policy Environment

Finally, the broader policy climate significantly shapes MSPS funding and its benefits. In states where emerging anti-DEI legislation casts diversity initiatives as “divisive,” colleges may curtail or dismantle MSPS budgets to comply with shifting regulations. These retrenchments can quickly erase the gains observed in correlation and regression analyses, especially when MSPS leaders lack the political capital or institutional backing to protect their units. Still, strategies for incremental funding and strong leadership alliances can help with these problems. This shows that even in politically unstable situations, consistent advocacy and the allocation of resources can lead to measurable improvements in the retention of students of color.

Limitations

Although quantitative methods can accurately measure validity, reliability, and credibility (Boslaugh, 2007), this study has limitations because of the political and social climate surrounding DEI in higher education, as well as the fact that it relies on self-reported data and imputation. The following subsections outline key limitations affecting the interpretation, transferability, and broader applicability of these findings. Despite these constraints, this study establishes an exploratory basis for examining the relationships among MSPS expenditures, unit power, and student retention.

Methodological and Data Constraints

This study draws upon secondary and self-reported data from IPEDS, the National Student Clearinghouse, assorted state-level reports, and institutional surveys. Although quantitative methods effectively reveal correlations and predictions (Biddix, 2018), self-reported data may be skewed by recall errors, social desirability bias, or selective non-participation (Groves et al., 2011; Tourangeau et al., 2000). In some cases, MSPS administrators withheld full information due to concerns about how disclosures might be used, particularly in states with anti-DEI legislation—conditions that can introduce gaps or distortions, potentially concealing the real impact of MSPS funding. Furthermore, the imputation techniques used to address missing information assume that data are missing at random, and that existing data appropriately approximate the missing values (Enders, 2010; Schafer & Graham, 2002). Yet missingness may correlate with unmeasured factors or reflect entrenched inequities, complicating the identification of distinct patterns in institutional spending and retention. Consequently, imputed values serve as approximations rather than definitive representations, calling for judicious interpretation of the results.

Conceptual and Contextual Limitations

The core constructs of this study—MSPS expenditures and administrative power—unfold in intricate political, social, and economic contexts. Rising anti-DEI sentiment, fluctuating state appropriations, and shifting policy directives can blur the link between funding levels and retention outcomes. Furthermore, inconsistent or limited race-disaggregated retention data and the scarcity of publicly accessible MSPS information hinder in-depth subgroup analyses. Events

such as the COVID-19 pandemic and the heightened national awareness of racial inequities in 2020 may also have impacted institutional policies in ways that quantitative data cannot fully capture. These temporal and contextual variables introduce considerable variability, complicating efforts to isolate the specific influence of MSPS expenditures amid broader institutional and societal changes.

Generalizability and External Validity

Because student persistence and resource allocation practices differ widely across higher education contexts, the trends observed in this study may not apply universally to all public institutions. Moreover, anti-racism and social justice initiatives manifest differently, shaped by each campus's unique history, culture, and community ties. Because MSPS data are self-reported, funding coherence or program effectiveness could be overstated, and imputation introduces uncertainty that may reduce confidence in smaller effects. In a fluid sociopolitical climate, these findings should be interpreted as evidence-informed rather than definitive causal statements. Recognizing these limitations helps stakeholders and scholars more accurately assess how institutional spending and administrative power influence student retention—especially within ongoing and sometimes contested debates about diversity, equity, and inclusion in higher education.

Discussion and Interpretation

Historical Continuities and the Present-Day Marginalization of MSPS

American higher education originated within colonial frameworks that served white, land-owning elites, resulting in systemic inequities that persist (Thelin, 2019; Wilder, 2013).

Despite institutional commitments to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), these inequities remain evident in the under resourcing of Multicultural Student Programs and Services (MSPS) (Patton, 2010, 2016). MSPS often delivers tangible benefits—such as increased student-of-color retention and more inclusive campus climates—yet these contributions are frequently overlooked and underfunded, paralleling the historical disregard of enslaved individuals’ labor and Indigenous dispossession (Brayboy, 2005; Patton, 2006). This contrast underscores a core contradiction: institutions may project an image of inclusivity while upholding internal structures that impede meaningful equity (Ahmed, 2012; Harper & Hurtado, 2007).

Fostering substantive change requires more than surface-level DEI statements; it necessitates consistent MSPS support and a direct reckoning with higher education’s historical legacies (Bensimon, 2005; Wilder, 2013). Acknowledging these longstanding barriers helps explain why, even when quantitative evidence highlights MSPS-driven gains in student-of-color retention, institutions often downplay such progress (Bensimon, 2018; Gillborn et al., 2018). In the sections that follow, these findings are interpreted through multiple theoretical lenses, demonstrating how administrators and policymakers can navigate systemic challenges to promote more equitable outcomes.

QuantCrit: Emphasizing Small Gains Amid Structural Barriers

QuantCrit reminds researchers that quantitative data never stand apart from historical and structural inequities (Gillborn et al., 2018). Even modest effect sizes, there are statistically significant correlations between MSPS expenditures and student-of-color retention (Chapter 4, Table 4). These links show that culturally relevant programs can still lead to improvements,

which is like Brooms's (2018) earlier qualitative findings and shows that programs beneficial even when budgets are tight, and politics are tough.

Importantly, QuantCrit cautions against dismissing small coefficients (e.g., 0.02 or 0.03) as trivial, given the entrenched inequities shaping these outcomes. By situating these data within a broader sociohistorical critique, we see that even incremental resource increases can be transformative for hundreds of students each year. However, ongoing challenges such as preemptive adherence to anti-DEI legislation underscore how external forces can potentially undermine MSPS efforts. Ultimately, the QuantCrit perspective reinterprets “objective” metrics as partial indicators of deeper structural dilemmas, reinforcing the need for sustained, equity-focused investments.

Principal–Agent Theory and the Contingencies of MSPS Funding

Principal–Agent Theory shows how differing agendas among major stakeholders—such as university leaders, state legislators, and governing boards—determine where resources go (Lane & Kivistö, 2008). In this study, MSPS units benefit most when presidents openly endorse them, which leads to larger budgets and improved retention (Chapter 4, Table 5.2). However, these gains can be short-lived in politically volatile environments, where changing legislative goals or the perceived “political risk” of DEI can reduce funding. Not because anti-DEI policy influences equate to reduction of funds directly, rather, the perception of campus administrators of a more hostile environment does. In such settings, MSPS administrators may tailor their requests to fit institutional or financial interests, a strategy that may help them maintain resources but does not necessarily bring about deep reform.

Principal–Agent Theory also clarifies why strong retention data alone cannot guarantee steady support. Hostile legislation, pushback from donors, or indifference at the board level can quickly change support for robust MSPS budgets by institutional leaders. To protect or grow MSPS funding, administrators must build alliances, highlight the institution’s public image benefits from DEI, and present equity outcomes in ways that resonate with influential stakeholders (Means & Pyne, 2020). While these strategies can keep MSPS programs afloat, they often do not dismantle longstanding barriers, showing the limited and sometimes conditional nature of such successes.

Tinto’s Retention Theory: Resource Allocation as Institutional Action

Tinto’s (2012) scholarship posits that colleges boost persistence when they intentionally create conditions for academic and social integration. This study’s findings—particularly the significant share of variance in retention explained by MSPS investments—support Tinto’s view that targeted, equity-oriented spending fosters a sense of community for students of color (Museus et al., 2017). While money alone cannot ensure transformative change, the findings of this study suggest that sustained resource allocation for MSPS units does indeed enhance student success.

Crucially, Tinto’s Institutional Action Model places institutional commitment at the core of retention strategies. Evidence here shows that MSPS leadership—especially when embedded in decision-making processes and granted regular access to central administration—amplifies the effect of MSPS budgets on student-of-color retention. Anti-DEI pressures, however, can undermine this positive cycle, demonstrating how external policies impede Tinto’s vision for

inclusive, data-driven institutional reforms. Still, the partial lag effect in retention gains indicates that consistent funding can yield long-term improvements, reinforcing Tinto's principle that institutional actions require continuity to succeed.

Hackman's Unit Power Framework: Negotiation, Authority, and Institutional Politics

Hackman's (1985) Unit Power framework suggests MSPS leaders secure resources more effectively when they occupy strategic positions and forge alliances with senior administrators. Three types of Unit Power—Environmental Power, Institutional Power, and Resource Negotiation—are all linked to higher funding allocations. For instance, MSPS offices that have access to the president or explicit presidential support further bolsters a unit's standing, illustrating Hackman's contention that internal credibility and authority can overcome some external constraints.

Yet entrenched norms and anti-DEI legislation can still derail even well-connected MSPS units. The framework highlights that power, though crucial, is not absolute; external policies may restrict budgets or limit administrative autonomy. Nevertheless, this study's findings confirm Hackman's assertion that MSPS administrators who present data-driven proposals, build strategic partnerships, and clearly demonstrate the social significance of their programs can mitigate many of these challenges and improve outcomes for students of color.

Extended Theoretical Integration: Reconciling CRT with Institutional Models

This study employed Tinto's Institutional Action Model, Principal-Agent Theory, and Hackman's Unit Power framework to understand why certain MSPS offices secure resources that support students of color. Yet none of these models alone fully addresses how systemic racism

undergirds higher education. Critical Race Theory (CRT) helps illuminate the ways that even “rational” organizational processes often mirror broader racial power hierarchies (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). Although our data showed positive associations between MSPS spending and retention among students of color, these gains must be interpreted in light of potential racialized dynamics that shape institutional decision-making—dynamics not captured solely by Tinto’s or Principal–Agent lenses.

Systems vs. Systemic Racism

Higher education systems often presume race-neutral or “universal” principles. CRT (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017) calls attention to how seemingly objective institutional norms can perpetuate racial inequities. Ladson-Billings (1998) argues that structural racism becomes almost invisible in the day-to-day policies of schools and colleges, thus preserving inequitable power relations. Gillborn (2005) likewise demonstrates that standard policymaking can disproportionately disadvantage students of color.

Our results reflect this complexity: while MSPS budgets remained relatively stable at about 4% of student services from 2018 to 2022, the strength of correlations between MSPS expenditures and student-of-color retention varied from year to year. This fluctuation suggests that even if no direct link emerged between, say, anti-DEI legislation and MSPS allocations, shifts in the broader racial or political climate might still affect how institutional leaders interpret DEI spending. Tinto’s and Hackman’s models guide us in seeing how resources flow, but they generally assume a neutral system—one that CRT shows is, in practice, deeply shaped by racialized assumptions and power structures.

Interest Convergence vs. Transformational Change

Tinto's (2012) Institutional Action Model highlights commitment and stakeholder alignment for promoting student success. Principal-Agent Theory (Lane & Kivistö, 2008) sees institutional leaders and MSPS administrators as negotiators within rational frameworks. Our data indeed confirm that MSPS leaders with strong "institutional power"—like frequent interaction with central administration—can garner modest budget boosts or maintain stable funding, especially when their DEI goals align with broader institutional priorities.

CRT's concept of "interest convergence" (Bell, 1980) adds a cautionary note: institutional support for DEI may endure only as long as it benefits those in power. Delgado and Stefancic (2017) emphasize that such support can vanish if dominant groups cease to see direct advantages. Our findings on stable MSPS budgets (around 4%) illustrate how institutions can sustain a baseline level of DEI spending—but that stability doesn't necessarily signal a deep transformation. Budgets might not plummet in an anti-DEI climate, yet expansions or risk-taking initiatives could be quietly curtailed when administrators sense political volatility.

Objectivity vs. Indirect Anti-DEI Influence

Although Tinto's (2012) student integration framework, Principal-Agent Theory (Lane & Kivistö, 2008), and Hackman's (1985) unit power perspective all emphasize data-driven decision-making, QuantCrit highlights that the limited availability of race-disaggregated information and irregular DEI reporting can distort supposedly "neutral" evidence (Gillborn et al., 2018). In our study, we saw no direct correlation between anti-DEI state policy and MSPS allocations, nor did environmental power measures correlate strongly with MSPS spending. That

might suggest these policies or external hostilities “don’t matter.” But administrators themselves described “preemptive obedience”—an anticipatory stance when they sense anti-DEI backlash looming. In other words, the effect may be indirect: central administration or presidents, worried about potential legislative scrutiny, maintain or freeze existing MSPS funds rather than risk major expansions.

Hence the official budgets for MSPS might look stable, yet the correlation strengths between MSPS spending and retention shift each year—implying that the climate of DEI suspicion can alter how effectively MSPS invests or how leadership fosters new initiatives. CRT helps explain why: fear of racialized backlash can distort how “objective” data are gathered or how new proposals get approved, even if the raw funding lines remain flat.

Minor Gains vs. Transformative Equity

Bringing CRT to bear on Tinto’s retention theory clarifies why even promising findings—like the 2–5% improvements in retention models when MSPS expenditures are included—may not overhaul entrenched inequities. Bensimon (2018) underscores that any positive movement is valuable, but without deeper, race-conscious strategies, institutions can default to superficial DEI gestures that quell short-term demands. Our results showing stable budgets and no direct negative impact from anti-DEI laws do not prove the system is racially neutral; rather, they expose that budget lines can stay the same while the quality and ambition of DEI work adjust to external threats.

QuantCrit therefore reminds us that focusing solely on partial or stable budget data may overlook how “anticipatory compliance” can stifle transformative changes. In other words, even

if anti-DEI policies haven't slashed MSPS allocations outright, they may deter administrators from pushing more assertive or innovative initiatives. Tinto's model might identify successful "institutional actions," but CRT recognizes that these successes are precarious if they hinge on cyclical, interest-convergent support rather than an authentic dismantling of racial hierarchies.

Integrating CRT's Race Consciousness

By pairing CRT's emphasis on systemic oppression (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017; Ladson-Billings, 1998) with Tinto, Principal-Agent, and Hackman's organizational frameworks, we see that strong institutional leadership can maintain or slightly increase MSPS allocations even under potential anti-DEI threats. But those threats still shape how leaders perceive the risk of supporting expanded DEI work. Our data reveal no direct correlation between anti-DEI policies and MSPS budgets—indeed, the share of MSPS within student services remained roughly 4%—yet that macro-level steadiness does not negate the indirect influence of a hostile climate, nor does it indicate a fundamental reshaping of racial hierarchies.

Ultimately, Tinto's and Principal-Agent theories show how rational actors and mission-aligned negotiation can yield partial wins for MSPS. CRT shows why those wins remain vulnerable if the underlying racial order is not confronted. True equity depends on more than stable budget lines: it demands a race-conscious reevaluation of institutional power, accountability, and the political contexts that undergird them (Gillborn et al., 2018).

Predictors of Retention for Students of Color

Quantitative analyses from this study affirm that enhanced spending on Multicultural Student Programs and Services (MSPS) significantly correlates with better retention rates for students of color. Such findings echo prior work showing that well-funded cultural support services can bolster the reported academic and social integration of marginalized students (Patton, 2006). Notably, in this study's Black student retention models, the explained variance (R^2) rose from .583 to .992 once MSPS funding was included, and similar upticks appear for Hispanic and multiracial students (Chapter 4, Tables 5.1–5.5). These percentage gains reinforce evidence that MSPS can play a pivotal role in student success (Strayhorn, 2012). Over the 2018–2022 period, consistent positive correlations further underscore that maintaining or expanding MSPS resources is integral to promoting equity in college outcomes, particularly when combined with broader campus supports (Crisp & Nora, 2010).

Variation Across Subgroups and Contexts

Data also reveal subgroup-specific patterns: Black and Hispanic students often show more pronounced retention improvements than Asian students once MSPS variables are factored in, indicating that each community faces unique challenges and might benefit from specialized programming (Museus, 2014). Temporal factors appear to matter as well; correlations were especially strong in 2020 when national attention to racial justice issues was heightened (Chapter 4 Table 5.3). These findings highlight how shifting sociopolitical climates can amplify the impact of MSPS funding (Harper & Hurtado, 2007). Thus, institutions may need to prioritize or increase MSPS expenditures during times of heightened public focus on equity.

MSPS Expenditures as a Key Predictor in Retention Models

When MSPS-specific indicators are incorporated into regression equations, model accuracy often improves substantially (Freedman, 2009). For instance, in the 2018 analyses, accounting for MSPS expenditures boosted predictive power for Black and Hispanic student retention, moving R^2 from 0.782** to 0.800** and from 0.684** to 0.703**, respectively (Chapter 4, Table 5.1). These results align with Gasman (2020), who stresses that deliberate, well-supported campus programs enhance inclusive excellence. Even on campuses with only moderate backing at the community or external levels, strong administrative advocacy—especially at the presidential level—can elevate the positive influence of MSPS spending.

Unit Power and Resource Negotiation

Hackman's (1985) Unit Power framework becomes evident in the consistent link between senior-level support—such as direct presidential endorsement—and larger MSPS budgets (Chapter 4, Table 6.2). Gayle et. al, (2011) observe that governance structures can profoundly affect how resources are allocated, a finding mirrored here in the moderate positive correlations between “Interaction with Central Administration” or “Support of President” and MSPS expenditures. Beyond leadership support, the way MSPS leaders present budget requests also prove crucial: proposals that stress innovation or campus-wide impact correlate with stronger annual funding gains (Bensimon, 2005). While external resources, including philanthropy, can enhance MSPS budgets, these data indicate that internal negotiations often carry more weight—particularly in politically charged contexts, where “political risk” to DEI can undermine the stability of external partnerships (Means & Pyne, 2020).

Sociopolitical Pressures and Historical Underinvestment

Despite clear connections between MSPS spending and retention, longstanding racial inequities and shifting legislative priorities may erode even the strongest administrative backing. In some of this study's models, the "Anti-State DEI Policy" variable (Chapter 4, Tables 5.1–5.5) has a negative or borderline-significant effect, suggesting that hostility toward DEI can stall or reverse previously secure budgets (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). As a result, while Black or Hispanic students in this dataset frequently show notable improvements, Asian students sometimes see less pronounced effects, underscoring the uneven impact of underinvestment on different groups (Museus, 2014). Although according to this study's findings, robust unit power and shrewd budget negotiations typically boost MSPS allocations, they cannot fully overcome the implications of restrictive state policies or deeply rooted disparities if central administrations lose confidence in the viability of MSPS units.

Role of Campus Leadership and Unit Centralization

Several models reveal that adding factors like "Ease of Access to President" or "Focusing on Total Institution" raises the explanatory power of MSPS variables by 10–15 percentage points beyond what traditional predictors—such as institutional size or selectivity—can explain (Freedman, 2009). By weaving MSPS priorities into broader campus planning, leaders can strengthen resource flows and support stronger retention gains (Hackman, 1985). Nonetheless, sociopolitical settings remain a powerful external force in the ways that campus administrators view the utility (interest convergence) of MSPS units. Anti-DEI sentiment can limit fiscal investment or impose legal constraints that block MSPS expansion by increasing campus

leadership's risk aversion (Harper & Hurtado, 2007). As Hackman (1985) argues, a unit's capacity to secure long-term resources depends not only on its position within the institution, but also on the surrounding environment, which can either amplify or undermine equity-based initiatives.

Integrating Empirical Insights with Theoretical Frameworks

MSPS Expenditures and Institutional Action

Regression analyses indicate that increased allocations to Multicultural Student Programs and Services (MSPS) are strongly associated with higher retention rates among students of color. This conclusion aligns with Tinto's (2012) Institutional Action Model, which underscores the importance of deliberate, institution-wide commitments to improving persistence outcomes. Compared with earlier analyses that reported a smaller share of explained variance, the current models demonstrate that even a limited number of institutional predictors account for a substantial proportion of retention-related variance, and that introducing resource negotiation variables considerably enhances each model's explanatory power.

In Model 1 ($R^2=0.541$) four predictors—Selectivity Score Range, Anti-State DEI Policy, Institutional Size, and Carnegie Grouping—collectively account for more than half of the observed variance. Institutional Size and Selectivity Score Range emerge as significant predictors, whereas Anti-State DEI Policy shows a negative coefficient that is not statistically significant ($p=0.103$). Building on this framework, Model 2 includes two additional predictors—Student Services Expenditure Tier and Average Institution Retention Tier—which raises R^2 to 0.811. This marked increase underscores the importance of both targeted spending and overall

campus retention strategies for minoritized student populations (Harper & Hurtado, 2007; Museus, 2014).

Subsequent expansions—Model 3 ($R^2=0.813$) through Model 5 ($R^2=0.844$)—incorporate leadership roles (e.g., Director of DEI Programs, Senior University Administrator with DEI responsibilities) and resource negotiation factors (e.g., “Focusing on the needs of the total institution,” “Ease of access to President,” and “Including budget request for innovative programs”). Although some of these additional predictors (for example, “Senior University Administrator w/ DEI”) hover just below statistical significance, the most consistent and influential predictors remain Selectivity Score Range, Student Services Expenditure Tier, and Average Institution Retention Tier. In the final model, State MSPS Expenditure shows a small but statistically significant positive effect, reinforcing the importance of focused financial investment in equity initiatives (Harper & Quaye, 2007; Baber, 2021).

Interestingly, although the coefficient for Anti-State DEI Policy is negative in the simplest model, its influence diminishes or reverses in subsequent models that include additional institutional and resource-related variables. This finding suggests that any initial dampening effect of a hostile policy environment may be overshadowed by other factors, such as institutional size, spending patterns, or leadership structures (Worthington, 2020). Moreover, “Ease of access to President” is negatively associated with retention in Models 4 and 5. One possible interpretation is that frequent high-level engagement could introduce administrative complexities in larger institutions, thereby partially offsetting the anticipated benefits of strong DEI advocacy (Squire & Mobley, 2020).

Overall, these results emphasize that institutional action—manifested through adequate funding, proactive leadership, and deliberate resource negotiation—plays a critical role in retention among underrepresented populations (Hurtado et al., 2012; Tinto, 2012). From a theoretical standpoint, the synergy between institutional attributes, intentional resource deployment, and committed DEI leadership is more predictive than demographic or policy factors alone. The sizable gains in R^2 across the models illustrate that when higher education leaders combine structural approaches (such as student service expenditures) with relational strategies (e.g., collaborating to secure budgets for innovative programs), they enhance their capacity to support equitable student success.

Theoretical Validation: Tinto, Principal–Agent, and Hackman

Empirical findings from this study align with three key frameworks—Tinto’s Institutional Action Model, Principal–Agent Theory, and Hackman’s Unit Power Framework—to illuminate how organizational structures and decision-making processes can either bolster or hinder Multicultural Student Programs and Services (MSPS). Taken together, these theories demonstrate that both internal governance dynamics and external pressures shape institutional support for DEI-related initiatives.

Tinto’s Institutional Action Model

Central to Tinto’s (2012) theory of student persistence is the idea that colleges and universities must create academically and socially supportive contexts to enhance student success. The data presented in Chapter 4 confirm this claim: sustained MSPS funding—allocated toward culturally responsive programming—correlates with improved retention rates among

students of color. By purposefully investing in MSPS, institutions operationalize Tinto's emphasis on community-building and inclusion as pathways to persistence. Moreover, these findings align with research suggesting that when minoritized students feel validated on campus—through targeted resources, cultural centers, and peer networks—they are more likely to persist toward graduation (Harper & Quaye, 2007; Hurtado et al., 2012). The consistency of this effect across subgroups in this study underscores MSPS offices as vital contributors to reducing opportunity gaps and improving overall campus climate, thereby confirming Tinto's assertion that strategic, proactive commitment from institutional leaders fosters meaningful gains in student retention.

Principal-Agent Theory

Principal-Agent Theory offers further insight into why some MSPS offices receive steadier funding than others. According to Gayle et al. (2011), when organizational “agents” (in this case, MSPS administrators) align their proposals with the priorities of “principals” (senior leaders, boards, or legislators), they tend to secure greater institutional support. This study's results support this view: MSPS leaders who explicitly link their budget requests to broader institutional objectives—such as raising overall retention or enhancing the university's public profile—tend to experience fewer funding cuts, even in regions with heightened anti-DEI sentiments. Casting MSPS as an investment in the institution's competitiveness reduces principal-agent friction by framing DEI efforts as essential, rather than ancillary, to the academic mission. This strategic approach resonates with stakeholders who emphasize performance

metrics and reputational gains, thereby mitigating political or financial risks associated with supporting identity-focused initiatives (Squire & Mobley, 2020; Worthington, 2020).

Hackman's Unit Power Framework

Hackman's (1985) Unit Power Framework helps explain why certain MSPS administrators can effectively negotiate resources while others struggle. This study identifies factors such as "Ease of Access to President," "Length of time at institution," and "Historical Power" as significant drivers of resource allocation. Consistent with Hackman's proposition that organizational alliances, tenure, and visibility enhance one's bargaining position, MSPS leaders who regularly interact with senior executives and have long-standing credibility within their campuses often secure larger and more stable budgets. Chapter 4, Table 6.3 illustrates that these administrators can advocate for MSPS in high-level discussions, linking their work to broader institutional priorities and tapping into established networks for support (Bensimon, 2007).

However, the data also indicate that entrenched traditions at older institutions can create barriers to DEI-related funding, reflecting Hackman's contention that power structures become more rigid over time. In these environments, MSPS professionals may need to mobilize additional coalitions—such as faculty allies or key trustees—to overcome resistance and demonstrate the relevance of DEI initiatives to institutional innovation. By showcasing how MSPS fosters interdisciplinary collaboration or addresses institution-wide goals (e.g., community partnerships, national rankings), these administrators effectively reframe MSPS as a strategic asset rather than a marginal endeavor (Hurtado et al., 2012).

Role of Unit Power and Resource Negotiation

Findings throughout this study show that collaborative, campus-wide strategies significantly bolster MSPS budgets. Budget requests highlighting interdisciplinary benefits or institution-level gains—for example, improved overall retention or greater capacity to respond to societal challenges—receive more favorable evaluations. This outcome aligns with Hackman’s (1985) core argument that unit power derives not only from formal authority but also from the extent to which a unit contributes to and aligns with organizational goals. Conversely, narrowly focused requests appear less compelling to senior administrators, as they do not clearly advance broader institutional objectives (Gayle et al., 2011; Tinto, 2012).

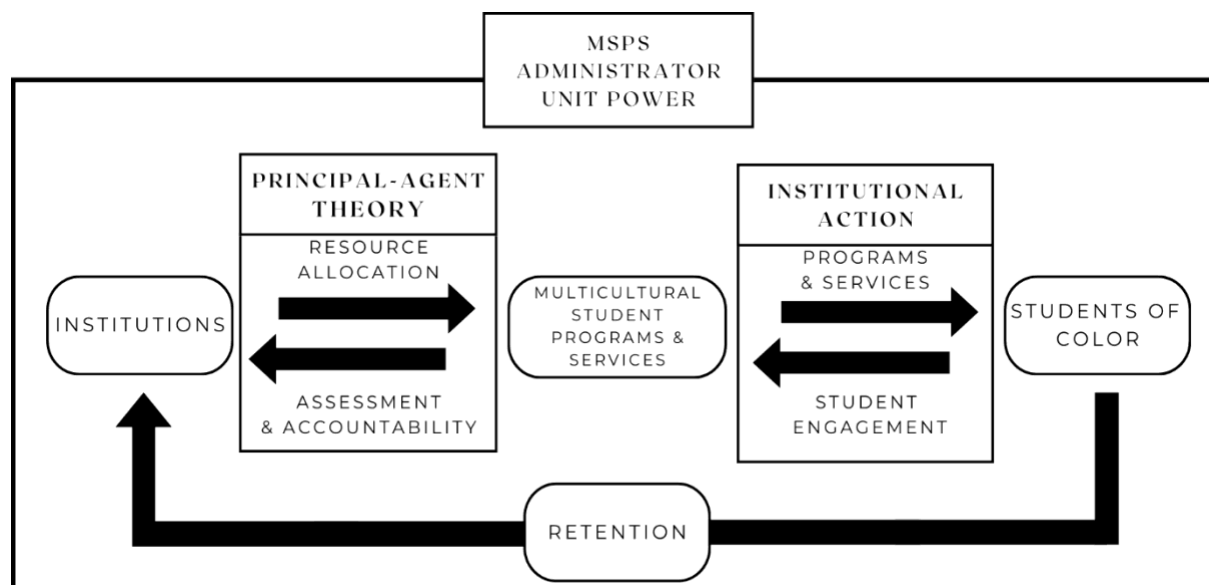
Constraints and Opportunities in Environmental Power

Contrary to some assumptions, community support variables occasionally show weak or even negative correlations with MSPS funding (see Chapter 4, Table 6.1). One explanation is that excessive reliance on external alliances may lead institutional leaders to question the extent of on-campus backing for MSPS, thus weakening internal advocacy (Harper & Hurtado, 2007). Furthermore, the modest positive effects for “Ability to Cope with Societal Needs” rarely achieve high significance in the regression models, suggesting that while external political and social climates matter, they cannot substitute for robust internal leadership structures and commitment (Squire & Mobley, 2020). In heavily politicized settings, especially where anti-DEI legislation exists, MSPS leaders must leverage both the internal power (Hackman, 1985) and strategic framing (Gayle et al., 2011) discussed above to sustain their programs over time.

Ultimately, these findings reinforce that successful MSPS initiatives rest on a delicate balance: while partnerships beyond campus can provide essential resources, internal alliances, strong leadership channels, and skillful negotiation remain indispensable for preserving and expanding DEI programs. By aligning MSPS efforts with overarching institutional strategies, demonstrating tangible outcomes, and actively cultivating relationships with executive decision-makers, administrators create an enduring foundation for equity-focused interventions. In this way, this study's results verify the combined value of Tinto's Institutional Action Model, Principal-Agent Theory, and Hackman's Unit Power Framework in understanding and strengthening MSPS within complex higher education ecosystems.

Theoretical Integration and the Centrality of MSPS

The results support Tinto's focus on proactive institutional investments, Principal-Agent's focus on aligned interests, and Hackman's insistence on internal power. This highlights the important role of MSPS in promoting retention, as shown in Figure 3. QuantCrit adds to these points of view by reminding us that racially separated data is often still incomplete because of systemic biases, and that any positive correlations need to be understood in the context of structural inequalities. While increased MSPS spending creates measurable retention gains and a reinforcing feedback loop, external threats—like anti-DEI policies—underscore the fragility of these advances. In the end, strategic resource allocation, strong advocacy, and reporting based on evidence can make MSPS units an important part of institutional strategy, which will lead to long-lasting improvements in the success of students of color.

Figure 3:

Implications

Contextual Influences: Pandemic, Racial Turmoil, and Anti-DEI Pressures

The global pandemic and heightened awareness of racial injustices profoundly shaped this study's backdrop. Students faced instructional disruptions, remote-learning stress, and emotional trauma from racially charged violence—making even minimal MSPS funding vital. Although such expenditures might appear small in quantitative models, their real-world importance escalates during crises, underscoring the need for stable DEI-focused retention efforts. Simultaneously, the rise in anti-DEI legislation, or even proposals thereof, creates what policy analysts describe as “anticipatory compliance,” where institutions curtail or rename DEI programs to avoid penalties. In 2023 alone, more than 45 bills targeting DEI were introduced nationwide, prompting many institutions to adopt neutral terminology or shutter entire offices.

These reactions reveal how volatile political environments can overshadow robust retention data, as policymakers or governing boards remain wary of explicitly race-conscious initiatives. Taken together, these pandemic- and legislation-driven pressures highlight a climate where MSPS investments are at once more necessary and more vulnerable.

Institutional Gatekeeping and External Funding

Regarding institutional budget allocation processes, one might assume that external funding support could drive internal budget decisions. For example, if an MSPS unit secures a federal grant, the institution might be required to provide matching funds. Despite this possibility, the data reveal no statistically significant correlation between “Environmental Power” factors—such as alumni backing or community partnerships—and actual institutional allocations (Chapter 4, Table 6.1). This pattern holds even for MSPS leaders who report low external influence, meaning there is no “penalty” when outside alliances are weak. From a purely rational viewpoint, we might predict a negative correlation (i.e., low external standing → lower budgets) or a positive correlation (i.e., high external standing → higher budgets). Yet neither emerges, indicating that environmental factors simply do not predict how an MSPS office is funded.

By contrast, “Institutional Power” factors—particularly “Interaction with Central Administration” and “Support of President” (Chapter 4, Table 6.2)—show moderate, consistent correlations with MSPS budgets. Combined with the positive correlations for “Resource Negotiation” (e.g., prioritizing “total institutional needs”), these results underscore how internal gatekeeping far outweighs external forces in shaping final allocations. Even when MSPS leaders

rate themselves highly on “Ability to Cope with Societal Needs,” that external advantage does not produce larger MSPS budgets unless the leaders also have strong ties to top-level decision-makers (Hackman, 1985).

Furthermore, institutions may view robust external resources (e.g., alumni donations) as a basis to reduce or reallocate internal funds, negating any positive effect from outside support. Similarly, units with weak external backing do not automatically receive compensatory funding. Thus, “Environmental Power” exerts a neutral effect overall. The data therefore suggest that institutional gatekeeping—the willingness (or unwillingness) of executive leadership to invest in MSPS—ultimately drives resource outcomes. One might interpret limited engagement with central administration as “MSPS unit leader failure.” However, organizational scholars emphasize that institutions themselves define how accessible key budget channels are for MSPS (Hackman, 1985; O’Meara et al., 2011; Tinto, 2012). If leaders are structurally kept away from top executives or if campus culture rarely includes them in budget negotiations, an individual’s efforts alone may be insufficient. Thus, even where MSPS administrators show external traction, substantial budget gains still hinge on forging relationships with central administration and aligning resource requests with broader institutional aims.

In essence, the findings confirm classic institutional gatekeeping: rather than responding to external endorsements or an MSPS office’s “Environmental Power,” an institution’s budgeting depends on whether senior leadership actively prioritizes MSPS. Even administrators who cultivate outside alliances see negligible impact unless they meet internal criteria, such as frequent contact with the president or alignment with campus-wide goals. This gatekeeping

dynamic puts the onus on a small number of top-level decision-makers to regard MSPS as vital, rather than expecting external goodwill to naturally yield more resources internal to the institution. The near-zero effect of “Environmental Power” reflects a tendency to ignore, override, or minimize outside endorsements when internal leaders do not view MSPS as mission-critical. Likewise, top administrators can restrict opportunities to leverage environmental alliances, effectively containing MSPS budgets unless executives deem them a priority.

These results also align with research indicating that the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement did not generate long-lasting changes to institutional behaviors—such as increasing MSPS funds—at most colleges (Brown, 2022; Slagle et al., 2022). In parallel, offices often remain intact despite anti-DEI legislation because institutions either rename or quietly preserve small MSPS budgets, facing negligible backlash or cost savings. Because MSPS funding typically comprises only a small share of student-services expenditures, administrators see minimal financial or political benefit in slashing these units outright—or significantly expanding them. Ultimately, it is internal leadership priorities, rather than BLM or anti-DEI mandates, that dictate whether MSPS receives sustained support or lingers on the periphery. By preserving the status quo for MSPS’s modest budget share, campus leaders face minimal accountability for either dramatic cuts or major investments. Consequently, MSPS offices thrive only if—and when—campus executives offer stable, mission-driven backing, reinforcing Hackman’s (1985) contention that resource flows in higher education depend more on internal alliances than on external visibility or outside demand.

Reinterpreting Small Effect Sizes Through a Critical Race Lens

In conventional statistical discourse, correlations hovering around 0.02 or 0.03 are often dismissed as trivial (Cohen, 1988). From a purely quantitative perspective, such effect sizes may appear too small to warrant serious consideration. However, a Critical Race Theory (CRT) lens invites a more nuanced interpretation by foregrounding the systemic disadvantages faced by communities of color (Ladson-Billings, 1998; Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001). When Multicultural Student Programs and Services (MSPS) units operate under constrained budgets—commonly representing less than five percent of overall student services allocations—any measurable uptick in retention or student engagement can be exceptionally consequential for historically marginalized groups (Zambrana et al., 2015). A correlation of 0.02, for instance, might signal incremental but meaningful improvements in the persistence of Black, Hispanic, or Native American students, who often lack adequate institutional support. Consequently, “small” effects can translate into a disproportionately large impact for the very populations that higher education has historically underserved.

Moreover, conventional statistical reporting often relies on broad aggregates that obscure racially disaggregated outcomes. The full meaning of even small correlations might be missed if the methods used to collect the data don't consider the complex situations of different groups of students (Huber & Solórzano, 2015). Finding that a 4% budget share consistently has twice the effect on retention compared to other student services in situations where MSPS only makes up a small part of the budget suggests a strategic investment with huge returns (McNair et al., 2020). Rather than viewing these correlations as negligible, CRT scholars argue that such findings

underscore both the transformative potential of targeted funding and the urgent need for more granular data collection to unmask the cumulative benefits (Ladson-Billings, 1998). In other words, when minimal but consistent investments in MSPS enhance retention among underserved students, the practical significance can far exceed the nominal statistic—reminding institutions that “small” effect sizes, interpreted through a critical race framework, can constitute a vital step toward educational equity.

Implications for Public and External Stakeholders

Reinforcing the Value of MSPS Investments

The findings from this study counter prevailing narratives that label spending on Multicultural Student Programs and Services (MSPS) as superfluous or incongruent with principles of “fairness.” According to Gansemer-Topf and Schuh (2006), the information in Chapter 4 (Tables 5.1–5.5) shows that even small investments by MSPS can make a big difference in keeping students, getting them involved in their culture, and their ability to communicate with people of other cultures, especially for Black, Hispanic, and mixed-race students. These results align with Gasman’s (2020) argument that well-designed diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) efforts yield both campus-wide and societal benefits. By documenting gains in areas such as student persistence and holistic engagement, MSPS leaders underscore the broader utility of equity-focused initiatives for all stakeholders—including those who might otherwise perceive such programs as narrowly serving a limited demographic.

Strengthening Public Accountability

A growing body of research confirms that increasing budgets for Multicultural Student Programs and Services (MSPS) correlates with higher rates of student satisfaction, especially among students of color (Harper & Hurtado, 2007; Hurtado et al., 2012). These findings reflect an emerging consensus that equitable learning environments are integral to the broader missions of colleges and universities. By disaggregating satisfaction and retention metrics by race, institutions can more precisely illustrate how relatively small but targeted investments in MSPS translate into improved campus climate and persistence outcomes (Tinto, 2012). This evidence serves as a compelling argument in regions where diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) face skepticism or political resistance, as it reframes DEI not as an ideological concern but as a data-driven strategy for enhancing both institutional performance and public trust (Squire & Mobley, 2020).

In debates over performance-based funding, the measurable returns on MSPS expenditures—such as increased graduation rates and a stronger sense of belonging for underrepresented groups—allow higher education leaders to counter partisan resistance with concrete data on the benefits of equity-minded spending (Gasman, 2020). Rather than assigning funds solely based on broad institutional indicators, policymakers and accrediting bodies can tailor these funding formulas to reward retention gains among minoritized students, thereby incentivizing institutions to pursue more robust DEI programming (Harper, 2012). By emphasizing evidence-based outcomes, advocates shift public and legislative discussions away

from abstract critiques of DEI toward focused evaluations of resource efficiency and social impact (Worthington, 2020).

Study results further indicate that MSPS offices achieve noteworthy improvements in student-of-color retention when they leverage internal power structures, collaborate with senior administration, and align their budget proposals with core institutional goals (Chapter 4, Table 6.2). This alignment underlines calls for embedding DEI work at the highest levels of governance, ensuring that diversity considerations inform strategic planning and financial decision-making across the university (Gasman, 2020; Harper, 2012). While sudden spikes in racial-justice activism can lead to immediate funding boosts, sustained progress ultimately depends on the institution's ability to navigate external sociopolitical pressures (e.g., anti-DEI legislation) that threaten program continuity (Squire & Mobley, 2020). By maintaining long-term commitments—supported by transparent reporting, performance incentives, and strong leadership—colleges and universities can better safeguard the gains achieved through MSPS and solidify equitable practices as a core dimension of higher education.

Implications for MSPS Administrators and DEI Practitioners

The findings from this study offer clear guidance for Multicultural Student Programs and Services (MSPS) professionals and higher education leaders committed to fostering equitable learning environments. By integrating insights from established theories (Hackman, 1985; Tinto, 2012) and recent scholarship (Gasman, 2020; Harper, 2012; Gillborn, Warmington, & Demack, 2018), institutions can enhance their strategic positioning of MSPS, solidify resource allocation, and mitigate political and financial risks.

Positioning MSPS as a Core Institutional Strategy

Regression analyses in this study (Chapter 4, Tables 5.1–5.5) indicate that incorporating MSPS expenditures and leadership variables into institutional models raises the explained variance in student-of-color retention outcomes to over 90%. This jump supports the view that MSPS units function as integral drivers of overall student success, rather than as peripheral or optional services (Tinto, 2012). Demonstrating that MSPS investments directly affect institutional performance metrics, such as retention rates and graduation rates, helps dispel the notion that these programs are secondary. Further, aligning MSPS work with campus-wide objectives ensures that DEI initiatives remain visible and are not deprioritized during leadership transitions or budget revisions (Harper & Hurtado, 2007; Hurtado et al., 2012).

Enhancing Unit Power and Negotiation

In keeping with Hackman's (1985) Unit Power Framework, the ability of MSPS administrators to negotiate sufficient funding often depends on their capacity to link retention gains and credit-hour generation to MSPS activities (Gasman, 2020). The moderate positive correlation ($r \approx .305$) between MSPS investments and frequent interactions with executive leadership (Chapter 4, Table 5.2) indicates that data-driven engagement with top administrators can improve the perceived value of MSPS. In politically or financially constrained settings, demonstrating tangible, disaggregated outcomes (e.g., higher retention among Black and Latino students) fosters credibility (Museus & Quaye, 2009). This approach reduces resistance to DEI spending by emphasizing the measurable returns these programs provide, thus lowering the risk

that MSPS units will be targeted for cuts during times of fiscal retrenchment (Gillborn et al., 2018).

Recommended Actions for MSPS Administrators

MSPS administrators can adopt several strategies to strengthen both their impact and sustainability. Showing improvements in persistence among underserved student groups underscores the specificity and effectiveness of MSPS spending, a tactic that resonates with decision-makers who evaluate financial outlays against clear outcomes (Harper, 2012). Where race-conscious programs face scrutiny or legal barriers, temporarily reframing MSPS activities under broader terminology—such as “Student Engagement” or “At-Risk Student Support”—can protect core equity efforts while maintaining compliance (Worthington, 2020). Collaboration with faculty senates, student affairs divisions, and community organizations expands MSPS influence beyond a single office (Harper & Hurtado, 2007). This collective advocacy also fosters institutional buy-in, a critical factor for enduring DEI support. Securing grants, philanthropic gifts, and alumni contributions creates a financial buffer in unstable political or budgetary climates (Museus & Quaye, 2009). This diversification reduces overreliance on any single funding source, thus ensuring program continuity. Defending DEI work can be psychologically demanding; consequently, maintaining robust peer support networks and personal wellness resources is vital for administrators to sustain their efforts over the long term (Squire & Mobley, 2020).

Implications for Institutional Leaders, Policymakers, and Governance

Resource Allocation and Accountability

Senior administrators and policymakers can reinforce MSPS by embedding these expenditures in core budget processes (Gayle et al., 2011). Rather than treating MSPS as an optional line item, leaders should tie allocations to documented improvements in student success (Tinto, 2012). This study's findings (Chapter 4, selected tables) show that including MSPS expenditures increases the variance explained in retention models by 36.2% to 40.9% for specific subpopulations, signifying a substantial return on investment. Instituting regular reporting cycles on MSPS outcomes promotes transparency and underscores how these initiatives support broader institutional missions (Harper, 2012).

Administrator Role Configuration

Formalizing high-level DEI leadership roles—such as Chief Diversity Officers or Vice Presidents for Equity and Inclusion—can significantly elevate MSPS visibility and resource support (Gasman, 2020). Placing these roles near the apex of governance structures allows equity-focused leaders to advocate for policy changes and budget allocations at the highest decision-making levels (Hackman, 1985). Offices with direct presidential support typically report larger baseline budgets, demonstrating how consistent executive commitment protects MSPS against shifting administrative priorities (Chapter 4, Table 6.2).

Policy Considerations and Legislative Environments

In states or regions where anti-DEI legislation hinders equitable initiatives, leaders must adopt proactive measures to defend MSPS funding (Gillborn et al., 2018). Evidence from this

study shows negative coefficients where anti-DEI policies prevail, reflecting the potential for program rollbacks. Publicly highlighting improved graduation rates and expanded economic contributions counters narratives that position DEI as solely ideological, grounding its value in data-driven outcomes that benefit both students and broader communities (Squire & Mobley, 2020).

Building Unit Power and Coalitions

Hackman's (1985) perspective indicates that alliances with faculty governance, staff councils, and community organizations can stabilize resource flows and legitimize DEI objectives (Harper & Hurtado, 2007). Institutions that integrate MSPS priorities within standing committees and leadership councils often exhibit greater resilience against external pressures, affirming Gasman's (2020) contention that high-visibility DEI work, backed by robust internal networks, remains a cornerstone of effective diversity strategy.

Long-Term Strategic Investments and Innovations

Prioritizing Multiyear Funding and Accountability

Tinto (2012) contends that sustained commitment—rather than sporadic budget injections—underpins meaningful retention gains. The “positive feedback loop” observed in this study indicates that initial MSPS success can justify additional resource allocations, perpetuating an upward cycle of student engagement and institutional support (Harper, 2012). Embedding multiyear DEI objectives in strategic plans, accreditation criteria, and annual reporting fosters institution-wide accountability, ensuring that MSPS remains central to student success metrics (Gayle et al., 2011).

Resource-Constrained Institutions and External Partnerships

Even institutions with limited resources can enhance MSPS by seeking external collaborations (Museus & Quaye, 2009). Pairing modest internal funds with grants, philanthropic contributions, or community-based initiatives can yield significant retention gains for historically underserved groups (Harper & Hurtado, 2007). Linking MSPS outcomes—such as improved student success and career readiness—to philanthropic priorities often expands the pool of potential donors, further diversifying and stabilizing funding sources (Squire & Mobley, 2020).

Recommended Actions for Institutions Facing Budget Shortfalls

In fiscally challenging times, institutions can safeguard MSPS through multifaceted strategies. Grants, endowments, and private donations can help offset shortfalls in state or institutional funding (Museus & Quaye, 2009). Incorporating equity measures into institutional performance metrics ensures MSPS remains a priority at the highest governance levels (Tinto, 2012). Preparing alternate budgets or scaled implementations protects essential programming when funding cuts appear likely (Gillborn et al., 2018).

This study's results confirm that MSPS investments significantly enhance student-of-color retention, even under constrained budgets or adverse political conditions. By anchoring MSPS within core governance structures, forging alliances across campus and in the community, and meticulously documenting outcomes, higher education institutions move from superficial support to long-lasting, data-informed commitments that strengthen equity. In so doing, they not only protect MSPS against external volatility but also affirm its indispensable role in shaping inclusive campus climates and advancing the academic success of all students.

Recommendations for Future Research

This section outlines potential approaches to future research related to MSPS expenditures and student success. Subsequent research can deepen understanding of how institutional expenditures, organizational power, and social justice imperatives interact in higher education. Such investigations may strengthen DEI foundations, advance anti-racist measures, and facilitate data-driven policy advocacy.

Directions for Data Collection and Scope Expansion

The first recommendation involves obtaining richer, publicly accessible information from public institutions via mechanisms such as public records requests. This method can produce detailed records of how much institutions spent and retention data that is separated by race, which improves the reliability of the research. This study used the CAS Standard for MSPS programs as a general starting point. However, it would be helpful for future research if MSPS spending was defined the same way across institutions (see Chapter 4, Tables 1–2 for examples of different funding levels). Doing so enables stronger cross-institutional comparison. If this method were used in private colleges and universities with the same level of standardization, it would open more ways to analyze data in a variety of higher education settings. Future work might also incorporate additional metrics such as grade point averages, graduation rates, post-graduation employment, and student debt as measures for student success. Looking at the connections between MSPS funding, anti-racism programs, and different student outcomes can help policymakers and institutional leaders understand the many benefits of DEI-focused strategies.

Exploring Admissions and Enrollment Dynamics

Further research could explore how admissions processes and enrollment trends intersect with Multicultural Student Programs and Services (MSPS) visibility and outcomes. Prior research indicates that prospective applicants—particularly those from historically underrepresented backgrounds—closely assess an institution’s commitment to diversity through its tangible programs and resources (Gasman, 2020). Consequently, analyzing how public perceptions of MSPS efficacy influence college choice would shed light on whether culturally affirming campus environments confer an institutional competitive edge. Researchers might also examine targeted marketing and outreach efforts that highlight the scope and success of MSPS, focusing on the degree to which these campaigns affect applicant pools and matriculation rates (Museus & Quaye, 2009). Understanding how admissions and enrollment dynamics respond to explicitly promoted DEI initiatives can guide institutions in strengthening inclusive campus climates and advancing social equity—further affirming that MSPS units play a pivotal role in an institution’s broader appeal and reputation.

Addressing Variations Across Racial Groups

Emerging evidence from regression analyses shows that MSPS funding tends to yield higher retention gains for Black, Hispanic, and multiracial students, whereas Asian students exhibit relatively smaller improvements. Although these findings underscore the efficacy of culturally responsive interventions for some groups, future studies should explore the deeper drivers behind the responsiveness of Black, Hispanic, and multiracial students to increased MSPS budgets (Zambrana et al., 2015). Qualitative methods, such as focus groups and structured

interviews, could uncover hidden variables that shape engagement—such as familial expectations, cultural norms, or histories of racialized discrimination—thus refining our understanding of how students perceive and benefit from MSPS (Huber & Solórzano, 2015).

At the same time, programmatic innovations aimed at Asian subpopulations warrant closer investigation (McNair et al., 2020). While the observed gains for Asian students appear modest, this does not rule out the potential for tailored interventions—accounting for diverse cultural backgrounds and varying needs—to produce more substantial positive outcomes. This study’s broader positive spillover is also noteworthy: retention rates among White students correlate with MSPS expenditures at moderate levels (ranging from .312 to .362; see Appendix Table A11), hinting that campus-wide inclusivity measures may benefit the entire student population (Museus & Quaye, 2009). This cross-group benefit bolsters the premise that equity-focused initiatives enrich the institutional environment, reinforcing the idea that MSPS programs serve both historically underserved communities and the broader academic ecosystem.

Methodological and Analytical Enhancements

Future inquiries into the impact of MSPS could benefit from mixed methods designs that merge robust quantitative metrics with qualitative insights from racially underserved students and MSPS administrators. While the regression models in this study offer compelling evidence of MSPS’s influence on retention, focus groups and in-depth interviews could reveal pivotal factors such as mentor relationships, experiences of bias, and student perceptions of belonging that large-scale datasets might miss (Briscoe & Khalifa, 2015). Incorporating hierarchical linear modeling, difference-in-differences analyses, or propensity score matching would also

strengthen the causal inferences between institutional expenditures, unit power, and student-of-color retention (O'Meara et al., 2011).

Longitudinal frameworks could further illuminate how policy changes, leadership transitions, or evolving sociopolitical conditions—including anti-DEI legislation—affect MSPS funding and retention patterns over time (Evans & Chun, 2012). By integrating advanced analytic techniques with contextual, narrative-rich data, future research will more precisely identify the mechanisms through which MSPS fosters equitable, inclusive, and academically robust learning environments. Such insights would equip higher education institutions with evidence-based strategies for strengthening MSPS offerings and better serving diverse student populations.

Practitioner Recommendations

Decisions made by institutions about diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) programs often depend on the current political climate, changes in the budget, and the fact that executive priorities are always changing (Evans & Chun, 2012). In these situations, programs like Multicultural Student Programs and Services (MSPS) need to show real results, like higher credit-hour production or higher retention rates. However, it is understood that even strong data may not be enough to stop decisions made by people motivated by white supremacist or capitalist interests (Bell, 1980). Critical Race Theory (CRT) posits that racism functions within systems precisely as those systems are designed to operate (Ladson-Billings, 1998; Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001). Accordingly, institutional policies may legitimize budgetary constraints or shift priorities in ways that undercut MSPS efforts to promote racial equity. To get

administrative support for their projects, MSPS units often make sure that they are in line with important institutional metrics like enrollment and retention rates. However, CRT emphasizes that such “interest convergence” only sporadically advances equity, as improvements typically occur when they do not threaten prevailing power structures (Bell, 1980).

Quantitative Findings and Sociohistorical Critique

Recent findings indicate that even modest MSPS funding can yield disproportionately positive outcomes for students of color, as evidenced by measurable increases in retention rates and credit-hour production (McNair et al., 2020). Although these correlations demonstrate a tangible link between financial commitments to DEI and quantifiable gains in student success, they do not alone dismantle racialized inequities embedded in institutional structures. A purely data-driven lens risks overlooking historical and systemic dimensions of exclusion, underscoring the need for a sociohistorical critique to contextualize numerical improvements (Ladson-Billings, 1998).

Indeed, historically Black institutions (HBIs) have long illustrated how targeted resources enhance student engagement, yet predominantly white institutions (PWIs) sometimes interpret similar data within colorblind frameworks (Evans & Chun, 2012; Huber & Solórzano, 2015). In such contexts, positive statistical outcomes can be attributed to generalized services while neglecting unique racial or cultural dynamics. Further, MSPS practitioners often struggle to persuade senior leaders to invest in initiatives that do not neatly align with existing financial models (Zambrana et al., 2015). Although Tinto’s and Hackman’s theoretical perspectives highlight metrics like social integration and campus climate, these frameworks sometimes

downplay the cumulative impact of policy histories that privilege certain populations over others (O'Meara, Sandmann, Saltmarsh, & Giles, 2011).

From a Critical Race Theory (CRT) viewpoint, quantitative outcomes should be interpreted not as definitive proof of “equity achievement” but as indicators of how institutional policies and practices may be incrementally adapting to shifting demographics and student needs (Bell, 1980). Evaluating MSPS efficacy through both empirical data and a sociohistorical lens offers a clearer picture of whether numerical improvements reflect deeper structural change or merely represent surface-level adaptations. In this way, future research may better account for how policy evolutions, leadership dynamics, or state legislation reshape the meaning and impact of any given DEI metric, ultimately highlighting the distance between short-term numerical benefits and lasting institutional transformation.

Data-Centered Advocacy

Empirical metrics—such as GPA gains or retention improvements among students engaged in Multicultural Student Programs and Services (MSPS)—can be persuasive to performance-oriented administrators (McNair et al., 2020). By showcasing tangible institutional benefits, MSPS leaders highlight the ways in which equity initiatives contribute to broader objectives, including enrollment management, degree completion, and accreditation benchmarks. Framing MSPS expenditures as a “value add” can help insulate these programs from budgetary scrutiny, positioning them as indispensable rather than merely optional.

However, data-driven advocacy must carefully avoid reinforcing reductive interpretations of student success. Overemphasizing short-term return on investment may perpetuate an

environment where MSPS funding is deemed expendable once plateaus in outcome metrics appear or when new financial pressures surface (Evans & Chun, 2012). Consequently, while quantitative evidence is crucial for validating program impact, such evidence alone can inadvertently lead to budget cuts if the data fail to meet narrowly defined standards.

A more holistic strategy incorporates data into a broader conversation about institutional mission, equity imperatives, and organizational learning (Ladson-Billings, 1998; O'Meara et al., 2011). Advocates can leverage metrics to illustrate how retention gains, improved campus climate, and enhanced student engagement dovetail with the institution's stated values and strategic plans. Equally critical is the infusion of qualitative narratives—including student testimonies and staff insights—that contextualize numbers with lived experiences, thus preventing the reduction of minoritized populations to data points (Briscoe & Khalifa, 2015). These personal accounts complement quantitative evidence, reinforcing the notion that equitable practices serve both moral and institutional ends.

Ultimately, sustained DEI funding thrives when practitioners commit to continuous data collection, transparent reporting, and intersectional analyses that capture diverse student realities (Zambrana et al., 2015). In this way, data-centered advocacy becomes agile, capable of withstanding shifts in administrative priorities or political climates. By integrating compelling outcome metrics with broader equity narratives, MSPS professionals can redefine institutional logics—ensuring that DEI remains an enduring, legitimized component of organizational success, even within market-driven or resource-constrained contexts.

Navigating Capitalist Systems and Institutional Logics

Within the capitalist paradigms often guiding institutional priorities, university leaders focus heavily on efficiency, revenue generation, and measurable outputs (Bell, 1980). These imperatives compel MSPS professionals to leverage internal political capital so that their units receive adequate funding and recognition, especially when administrators are motivated by enrollment targets, donor satisfaction, and competitive positioning (McNair et al., 2020). By aligning MSPS outcomes—such as enhanced retention rates or positive public image—with central decision-makers’ market-oriented interests, equity advocates can bolster support for DEI. However, interest convergence remains a risk: meaningful social justice efforts may garner institutional backing only insofar as they align with dominant economic or reputational goals (Huber & Solórzano, 2015).

Tinto’s (2012) and Hackman’s (1985) models emphasize the strategic advantage of direct access to top administrators, a channel through which MSPS leaders can reframe DEI as integral rather than peripheral to institutional well-being (O’Meara et al., 2011). Yet, critics caution that pursuing short-term alliances with institutional power brokers can dilute more transformative critiques of capitalism’s influence on higher education (Ladson-Billings, 1998; Evans & Chun, 2012). When equity gains are assessed primarily via market-driven indicators (e.g., tuition revenue, donor contributions), the deeper work of dismantling systemic racism may be sidelined.

Furthermore, colleges and universities that adopt a corporate management mindset frequently privilege immediate financial returns over sustained commitments to historically marginalized groups (Zambrana et al., 2015). In such environments, quantitative metrics—like

credit-hour production or alumni donation rates—tend to overshadow qualitative indicators of campus climate or institutional culture. Strategically, MSPS units can navigate these frameworks by highlighting how modest DEI investments improve student retention and institutional reputation, while also challenging the notion that equity work should be measured solely in profit-and-loss terms (Briscoe & Khalifa, 2015). This dual strategy requires political acumen: although presenting a strong ROI on DEI initiatives secures short-term funding, MSPS leaders must ensure that long-term social justice objectives remain central.

A Critical Race Theory (CRT) perspective underscores the need to interrogate capital-driven norms that shape institutional decision-making, reminding practitioners to measure incremental DEI gains against the broader task of disrupting structural inequities. Even as alliances with key stakeholders can fortify MSPS budgets, vigilance is necessary to prevent co-optation and maintain focus on transformative equity as more than a market commodity (Bell, 1980; Huber & Solórzano, 2015).

Rebranding and Adaptation in Hostile Environments

In legislative environments where explicit references to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) or race-conscious initiatives can invite political backlash, Multicultural Student Programs and Services (MSPS) administrators often resort to rebranding their efforts (Evans & Chun, 2012). Adopting terms such as “student success initiatives” or “inclusive excellence” can preserve core programming by minimizing direct associations with race, thereby reducing the risk of defunding. However, this strategy can inadvertently dilute the explicit focus on racial equity (Zambrana et al., 2015). When public discourse and institutional documents avoid naming

systemic racism, the root causes of inequality become masked beneath race-neutral terminology (Ladson-Billings, 1998).

Rebranding frequently includes broad-based appeals that emphasize how enhanced resources benefit all students (O'Meara et al., 2011). While such messaging may garner short-term political and financial support, critics note that avoiding explicit discussions of structural oppression can leave entrenched racial disparities unchallenged (Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001). Moreover, simply renaming programs does little to counteract the ideological foundations of legislative bans or anti-DEI sentiment, which often stem from broader movements questioning the legitimacy of race-conscious policies (Huber & Solórzano, 2015). Consequently, long-term effectiveness hinges on whether institutional leaders develop cross-functional alliances—engaging faculty, community groups, and students—to reframe policy debates around academic freedom, institutional autonomy, and equitable educational opportunities (McNair et al., 2020).

From a Critical Race Theory (CRT) perspective, rebranding efforts should not simply avoid controversy but rather challenge hegemonic structures in more subtle ways (Ladson-Billings, 1998). While temporarily obscuring DEI language may shield MSPS initiatives from immediate political threats, it can also perpetuate the notion that equity is optional or interchangeable with general student support (Zambrana et al., 2015). A sustained focus on systemic critiques—even if delivered through coded or less confrontational language—ensures that racial justice remains integral to the institution's mission. Ultimately, MSPS leaders who balance strategic adaptability with vigilant advocacy are more likely to protect essential services

and foster meaningful dialogue on racial equity, thus preserving the deeper objectives that underlie DEI initiatives.

Self-Care and Communal Support

Repeated exposure to political threats and the constant defense of Multicultural Student Programs and Services (MSPS) can significantly heighten the risk of burnout, especially among DEI practitioners who hold marginalized identities (Zambrana et al., 2015). To sustain long-term advocacy, many leaders adopt peer support mechanisms, mental health services, and formal self-care routines. Empirical studies demonstrate that robust professional and personal networks can buffer the negative impacts of budget cuts or policy reversals, thereby increasing persistence and resilience for those engaged in equity-focused work (Briscoe & Khalifa, 2015).

Beyond immediate coping strategies, MSPS administrators often deploy proactive measures to mitigate systemic hostility. These include forming coalitions with local community organizations, empowering student-led advocacy, anticipating anti-DEI legislation to redesign programs preemptively, and diversifying revenue streams (e.g., philanthropy, alumni endowments, or business partnerships). Additionally, the routine use of race-disaggregated data in assessments keeps MSPS outcomes visible and demonstrates the continued relevance of equity-oriented interventions, even when political environments become volatile (McNair et al., 2020). By combining individual well-being strategies with organizational adaptability, MSPS leaders can retain funding, promote sustainable change, and reaffirm the value of racially inclusive policies.

Balancing Interest Convergence and Structural Reform

Critics point out that many strategies for preserving Multicultural Student Programs and Services (MSPS) lean on “playing the game” of administrative or majority self-interest, a dynamic that may inadvertently uphold entrenched systems of inequality (Bell, 1980). Although leveraging quantitative indicators—such as retention rates and credit-hour gains—helps DEI programs endure hostile contexts, these incremental improvements do not necessarily dismantle deeper structural inequalities (Ladson-Billings, 1998). In fact, aligning MSPS goals solely with institutional metrics can lead to surface-level or tokenistic changes, allowing institutions to claim progress without addressing the cultural and historical forces that perpetuate racial inequities (Huber & Solórzano, 2015). To transcend these limitations, scholars endorse a dual strategy that integrates short-term successes with long-term advocacy for fundamental organizational reforms (Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001). Practically, this includes using race-disaggregated data not just to prove MSPS efficacy but also to highlight systemic disparities across multiple institutional processes—ranging from curriculum design to hiring practices (Evans & Chun, 2012). By building alliances with academic departments, student affairs divisions, and faculty governance bodies—and documenting how MSPS initiatives serve broader institutional aims—DEI practitioners create a safeguard against shifting political climates. Ultimately, these cross-departmental partnerships and critical data analyses underscore a commitment to equity that surpasses mere interest convergence, seeking to transform the very structures and values that sustain racial inequality.

Confronting Capitalism and White Supremacy

White supremacist ideologies and market-driven imperatives frequently disregard data showcasing the beneficial effects of Multicultural Student Programs and Services (MSPS) (Ladson-Billings, 1998). Under these conditions, empirical findings alone often fail to shift policies that deliberately uphold racial hierarchies or profit-oriented motives (Zambrana et al., 2015). However, research illustrates that multi-layered advocacy—merging robust data with broad-based coalitions—can help position DEI as fundamental to institutional success rather than merely optional (Evans & Chun, 2012). A key challenge involves countering entrenched logics that regard higher education as primarily a revenue generator, overshadowing the long-term social and educational gains of MSPS investments (McNair et al., 2020). Scholars argue that capitalism and racism intersect in ways that perpetuate racialized inequities—prioritizing profit while marginalizing communities of color (Bell, 1980; Ladson-Billings, 1998).

In practice, confronting capitalism and white supremacy demands multi-pronged strategies: forging alliances beyond campus confines, engaging policymakers at various levels, and applying a Critical Race Theory lens that exposes how “neutral” institutional structures sustain racial inequities (Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001). Although academic freedom and shared governance can occasionally counter anti-DEI policies, these mechanisms themselves may be rooted in hierarchical norms resistant to equity-focused change (O’Meara, Sandmann, Saltmarsh, & Giles, 2011). By combining data collection and analysis with direct political action, MSPS practitioners can challenge institutional complacency—forcing leadership to acknowledge the moral, societal, and educational costs of perpetuating systemic inequalities (Briscoe &

Khalifa, 2015). Nonetheless, legislative assaults and substantial budget cuts, frequently spurred by political agendas that frame race-conscious approaches as superfluous or divisive, pose persistent obstacles (Zambrana et al., 2015). Recognizing how white supremacy and capitalism converge highlights that isolated data points alone cannot unravel these deeply intertwined systems. Instead, institutions must engage in a continuous, embedded critique of oppressive logics, woven into everyday practices to gradually erode the entrenched power structures at play.

Cross-analysis: Student services and MSPS expenditures

Analyses in this study highlight the importance of comparing overall student services budgets with MSPS-specific spending, recognizing that while general student services often enhance broad retention outcomes, MSPS allocations directly target the needs of historically underrepresented student groups (McNair et al., 2020). Although campus-wide resources such as career counseling or academic advising positively influence retention, MSPS initiatives focus on culturally relevant programming and identity-affirming spaces—elements crucial for deepening student engagement and community-building.

Consistent findings across original IPEDS data and imputed datasets (Chapter 4, Tables 5.1–5.5) suggest that MSPS expenditures serve as a “strategic enhancement” offering benefits beyond standard “return on investment” metrics. Retention rates among Black, Latinx, and Native American students correlate with incremental increases in MSPS funding, remaining stable across institutions of varying sizes and classifications. However, a purely quantitative lens risks minimizing qualitative dimensions like campus climate and students’ sense of belonging (Briscoe & Khalifa, 2015). Critics also caution against overreliance on financial indicators that

may be inconsistently reported or categorized (Evans & Chun, 2012). Although imputation techniques can address data gaps, biases may emerge if underlying assumptions diverge from actual spending patterns. For these reasons, cross-analyses that blend raw expenditure data, institutional surveys, and race-disaggregated outcomes offer a more comprehensive perspective on the significance of MSPS investments (Zambrana et al., 2015).

Such multi-faceted assessment underscores that campus services work most effectively when they include culturally targeted support. By juxtaposing general student services with MSPS-specific expenses, institutions can pinpoint where broader interventions suffice and where focused, race-conscious efforts are essential. In turn, this analysis informs policy and budgeting decisions, as administrators weigh perceived effectiveness against the institution's strategic goals. The data presented affirm that intentional MSPS spending—even when modest—can significantly improve outcomes for students from marginalized backgrounds, reinforcing calls for purposeful, race-conscious funding that exceeds market-driven or ROI-centric criteria.

Institutional Logics and Tenuous DEI Commitments

Although the policy landscape for MSPS programs remains volatile, institutions can preempt some challenges through systematic planning. O'Meara et al. (2011) say that institutions can better handle threats from outside by keeping a close eye on proposed bills, changing their branding strategies (if required by law), and making alliances with other campuses. Yet, these actions often rest on tenuous commitments from upper-level leadership—individuals who may be swayed by changing political affiliations or short-term budgetary constraints (Evans & Chun, 2012).

Institutional logics that prioritize “excellence” or “innovation” can, paradoxically, downplay racial equity if such goals are not explicitly tied to resource allocation and accountability measures (Ladson-Billings, 1998). Administrators might publicize diversity statements without committing consistent funding or structural autonomy for MSPS units. This aligns with a broader critique that institutions, fearing political or donor backlash, adopt surface-level DEI practices to appear inclusive while perpetuating underlying hierarchies (Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001). MSPS practitioners can resist these tendencies by continuously documenting program impacts—particularly disaggregated outcomes for minoritized students—and sharing findings with key decision-makers on a routine basis.

Moreover, tenuous commitments often manifest through cyclical “peaks and valleys” of institutional support, where MSPS budgets may increase following a high-profile racial incident but wane when administrative focus drifts to other priorities (Huber & Solórzano, 2015). Scholars note that establishing DEI councils, tying leadership evaluations to equity goals, or embedding anti-racism training in mandatory faculty development can solidify institutional commitments (Zambrana et al., 2015). Nonetheless, these measures succeed only when they challenge the deeper institutional logics that regard DEI as optional or contingent. By linking MSPS success narratives to broader strategic frameworks, practitioners can strengthen the policy scaffolding required to sustain DEI initiatives—even amid political headwinds.

Challenging Power Structures Beyond the Institution

Research also indicates the potential benefits of extending advocacy beyond campus boundaries. Grassroots coalitions, regional groups of MSPS administrators, and community-

based coalitions can work together to fight against bad laws or limited budgets (Zambrana et al., 2015). Through these broader alliances, isolated gains in specific institutions have the potential to evolve into regional or national efforts aimed at reconfiguring educational landscapes. Linking MSPS to wider social justice movements elevates the experiences of marginalized groups, situating their concerns within a larger framework of systemic transformation (Ladson-Billings, 1998). Challenging power structures beyond the institution often involves pushing back against policies or cultural narratives that undermine race-conscious support systems (Bell, 1980). Community partnerships, for instance, can provide external pressure that compels college leadership to uphold or expand DEI programs despite political volatility. In some cases, national advocacy organizations or philanthropic foundations may offer grants or public endorsements that counteract local attempts to curtail DEI funding (Evans & Chun, 2012).

Furthermore, forging multi-institutional networks enables MSPS leaders to exchange strategies for data collection, student engagement, and policy advocacy. These shared best practices can amplify the voices of marginalized communities across different states or educational systems (McNair et al., 2020). It is important to keep in mind that racism and capitalism are both systemic problems. Making the same moderate reforms on a larger scale may not change the core problems of inequality. Instead, we can use alliances to reimagine the definition of merit, success, and accountability in higher education (Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001). By framing these broader conversations in a CRT context, practitioners emphasize the necessity of sustained political and social action rather than relegating DEI to a campus-level concern.

Case Vignettes: Illustrating Performative and Adaptive Approaches

Recent nationwide efforts to scale back diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives have transformed the landscape of American higher education. According to an extensive report from The Chronicle of Higher Education (Gretzinger et al., 2025), more than 200 colleges and universities in at least 37 states have, under mounting political and legal pressures, dismantled or restructured their DEI offices, altered hiring practices, halted diversity training, and removed or rebranded identity-based resource centers. States like Florida, Texas, and Georgia, for example, have passed sweeping legislation explicitly banning or defunding DEI efforts at their public institutions, while other colleges have preemptively closed offices or scrapped programs in response to external scrutiny.

These wide-ranging changes don't manifest uniformly. Some colleges have simply renamed DEI offices, while others have shifted entire program budgets, ended scholarships for underrepresented groups, or retooled multicultural centers and graduation ceremonies to be "open to everyone." Many institutions have also eliminated diversity statements for new hires, centralized or dissolved cultural resource centers, or restricted any language regarding race or identity in course content. By cataloging these patterns of retreat, this Chronicle resource illustrates the real-time impact of anti-DEI initiatives, clarifying how political and legislative campaigns have reshaped everyday life on campuses nationwide. This backdrop provides critical context for exploring the deeper implications and on-the-ground realities of my forthcoming case studies. The case studies are amalgamations of institutions in the report and do not represent

specifically any one institution, rather to explore implications and actionable responses in context with the results of this study.

Case Study: Northville State University (NSU)

Profile: A mid-sized public university in a state with newly passed legislation restricting or eliminating funding for “promoting racial equity.” NSU previously had a moderately sized DEI office, in which MSPS served first-generation students of color effectively.

- Short Context: Following executive orders titled “Ending Radical & Wasteful DEI Programs” and a state ban on “race-focused” initiatives, NSU’s Board dismantled its DEI office, leaving MSPS staff uncertain about budget lines.
- Policy Spark: Legislation resembling Florida SB 266 and Texas SB 17 placed broad limits on DEI expenditures. Concurrently, a federal order threatened to withhold funding from any institution perceived as endorsing race-conscious policies.
- Institutional Action: NSU’s Board dissolved the DEI office within 30 days, terminating five staff positions. Some responsibilities transferred to Student Services, but “DEI” designations were removed.

Potential Impact:

- Budget Loss: Key MSPS programs lost direct funding streams.
- Data Gaps: Race-disaggregated data collection was dramatically reduced.
- Campus Climate: Students of color protested, and staff expressed fear over a chilling effect on discussing race.

MSPS Response:

- What MSPS Unit Leaders Need to Understand:
 - Compliance vs. Mission: The MSPS administrator must abide by the law while still championing equitable support for marginalized students.
 - *Data & Risk*: Public references to race may pose legal challenges, yet ignoring the needs of these students jeopardizes retention.
- Best-Suited Philosophical Approach:
 - QuantCrit / Constructivist Stance: Data are not neutral; rebranding can preserve essential DEI services, even if done discreetly.
 - Interest Convergence: Framing retention gains and credit-hour production as beneficial to NSU's bottom line may sustain crucial student services despite hostile policies.
- Specific actions:
 - Rebrand Services: Rename explicit DEI labels under something like "Student Engagement."
 - Maintain Internal Metrics: Quietly continue collecting race-disaggregated data under categories like "at-risk populations."
 - Leverage Coalition-Building: Unite academic advising, faculty senates, and student affairs to preserve the core of DEI programming.
 - Adapt Communication: Demonstrate to the Board that losing DEI infrastructure might elevate dropout rates, harming institutional goals.
- Follow-Up:

- Short-Term: Conduct a 6-month evaluation of renamed programming.
- Long-Term: Form a policy watch group to remain updated on legislative changes.
- Self-Care & Networking: Arrange monthly MSPS staff check-ins and share best practices with peers at similar institutions.

Case Study: Oxbridge Regional University (ORU)

Profile: A large public university recognized for transparent, race-disaggregated student success data.

- Short Context: Fearing accusations of “racial favoritism,” the Board decides to eliminate all race-disaggregated reporting, pointing to new anti-DEI scrutiny at both state and federal levels.
- Policy Spark: Pressures from legislation and a federal executive order on “Ending Radical and Wasteful DEI Programs.”
- Institutional Action: Institutional Research is mandated to publish only aggregated “student success” data to avoid perceived legal risk.

Potential Impact:

- Blind Spots: Without race-specific data, MSPS cannot pinpoint which groups need extra support.
- Compliance Paradox: Concealing data might hamper Title VI monitoring, ironically raising federal compliance questions.

MSPS Response:

- What MSPS Unit Leaders Need to Understand:

- QuantCrit Reminder: Suppressing race data can mask structural inequities.
- Risk of Noncompliance: Avoiding race data might appear as hiding potential discrimination issues.
- Best-Suited Philosophical Approach:
 - Advocacy: Argue that detailed subpopulation data is essential for broad-based improvements.
 - Interest Convergence: Institutions benefit from well-targeted retention strategies, which rely on subpopulation data.
- Specific actions:
 - Protect Internal Analytics: Retain disaggregated data internally, labeling it as “subpopulation success analysis.”
 - Promote ‘High-Need’ Data: If race-focused reporting is banned, highlight “high-need group” success rates.
 - Policy engagement: work with compliance officers to ensure ORU meets federal oversight expectations.
 - Frequent Updates: Provide the Board aggregated stats that carefully hint at which “subpopulations” require additional funding.
- Follow-Up:
 - Annual Internal Report: Confidentially share a campus equity report with leadership.

- Mid-Year Adjustments: Reallocate resources based on internal data if certain groups are slipping in retention.

Case Study: Midlands Public University (MPU)

Profile: A mid-sized public university in a politically conservative state that recently passed legislation limiting DEI initiatives in public institutions. MPU previously had a robust Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) that oversaw multicultural student support services, faculty development programs, and race-conscious retention initiatives.

- Short Context: The State Higher Education Reform Act, which says that public universities can't have DEI offices, and that state money can't be used for identity-based programs, meant that MPU had to change how its student success programs were set up. The university's Board of Trustees moved quickly to dissolve the DEI office, citing compliance with the new law and concerns over maintaining state funding.
- Policy Spark: The State Higher Education Reform Act mirrors laws such as Florida's SB 266 and Texas' SB 17, which ban funding for DEI programs and prohibit colleges from requiring diversity statements or implementing race-conscious hiring policies. Additionally, a recent executive order at the federal level threatens funding cuts for institutions that maintain race-based programming.
- Institutional Action:
 - Eliminated the DEI office within 60 days of the law's passage.
 - Terminated seven staff positions associated with DEI initiatives.

- Rebranded multicultural resource centers under “Student Success and Engagement” to maintain some student support services.
- Removed all references to “diversity, equity, and inclusion” from university websites, mission statements, and marketing materials.

Potential Impact:

- Loss of institutional support for underrepresented students: Many student organizations that relied on DEI resources—such as first-generation mentoring programs and affinity groups—are left without formal institutional backing.
- Reduction in faculty training programs: DEI-focused faculty workshops on inclusive teaching strategies were canceled, leading to concerns about equitable classroom environments.
- Legal and compliance risks: The broad elimination of DEI-related offices raises concerns about federal Title VI compliance, as race-conscious retention efforts were previously used to address achievement gaps.

MSPS Response:

- What MSPS Unit Leaders Need to Understand:
 - Compliance vs. Impact: MSPS must ensure they remain within legal boundaries while continuing to support historically marginalized students.
 - Strategic Data Use: Tracking student retention and success without explicitly framing it as race-based can preserve necessary student support initiatives.
- Best-Suited Philosophical Approach:

- QuantCrit / Pragmatic Framing: Reframing student support as "holistic retention services" allows for continued focus on underserved students without explicitly using DEI language.
- Institutional Self-Interest (Interest Convergence): Positioning student retention initiatives as critical to financial stability can help preserve MSPS programs under new constraints.
- Specific actions:
 - Rebrand Services: Shift program names from "Multicultural Student Support" to "Academic Success and Engagement" to maintain access to services without drawing legislative scrutiny.
 - Secure Internal Data Collection: Continue tracking race-disaggregated data internally but use neutral labels such as "first-generation students" or "students from high-need backgrounds."
 - Build cross-departmental partnerships: work with faculty development offices and academic advising to integrate inclusive student success strategies under general student engagement initiatives.
 - Adapt External Communications: Present student success initiatives as improving retention rates and institutional performance rather than as DEI efforts.
- Follow-Up:
 - Short-Term: Conduct a campus-wide impact assessment to determine which students are most affected by the DEI office's closure.

- Long-Term: Establish an internal advisory group to monitor policy shifts and strategize ways to sustain support for underrepresented students within legal constraints.
- Self-Care & Networking: Facilitate monthly MSPS staff meetings to share best practices and maintain morale while navigating these policy shifts.

Institutional Action & Accountability

The global pandemic and heightened racial turmoil significantly shaped the context in which this study's findings emerged. Students navigated unprecedented disruptions to learning environments, faced immense emotional and psychological stress, and encountered intensified racial injustices. Consequently, even modest investments in Multicultural Student Programs and Services (MSPS) became vital lifelines, essential not just for student success metrics but also for student survival and overall well-being.

Failure of Performative Allyship in Higher Education

Colleges and universities frequently present themselves as progressive advocates of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) to attract students, faculty, and community support. Yet behind this outward rhetoric often lies a reluctance to make meaningful structural reforms or allocate substantial resources. There was only a 4% average annual increase in Multicultural Student Programs and Services (MSPS) budgets from 2018 to 2022. This gap between proclaimed ideals and actual funding underscores institutional hypocrisy. Such minimal financial support for MSPS, which this study shows has a significant impact on student retention, reflects a broader pattern of performative allyship. While institutions publicize DEI initiatives, they

internally direct resources to areas deemed less controversial or more financially lucrative. This practice burdens marginalized students and MSPS leaders—many from historically underrepresented communities—to achieve equity goals with insufficient resources. Despite proven benefits (Chapter 4, Tables 5.1–5.5), these programs remain peripheral in budgetary decisions.

Senior administrators frequently treat MSPS units as symbolic tokens rather than critical drivers of institutional success. As a result, MSPS leaders must continually validate their worth through rigorous advocacy, even though their budgets remain chronically underfunded. In many cases, institutions promptly scale back DEI efforts under political or financial pressure, disregarding data linking robust MSPS funding to higher retention rates among underserved groups. This reactionary stance not only weakens MSPS but also perpetuates the marginalization of student-of-color communities. True equity, therefore, requires more than token gestures or modest budget increases. Institutions must practice transparent, accountable budgeting that clearly aligns with stated DEI goals and must grant MSPS and DEI leadership genuine decision-making power. Equally important, senior administrators must steadfastly defend these programs against external threats and integrate them into strategic plans—rather than relegating them to expendable budget lines. Without such structural changes, institutions will continue to uphold inequities they claim to fight, undermining both their moral and educational missions.

Ultimately, higher education leaders must decide whether their commitment to equity will remain performative or become transformational. Authentic accountability demands sustained financial investments, genuine structural reforms, and an unwavering stance on DEI—

even in the face of controversy or legislative backlash. Anything less simply perpetuates centuries-old inequities and betrays the very ideals that colleges and universities profess to champion. To truly foster inclusive excellence, institutions must transcend rhetoric and invest wholeheartedly in MSPS, along with other equity-driven programs, thereby transforming campus climates from symbolic support to enduring, measurable action.

Influence of Institutional Risk-Aversion and Anti-DEI Pressures

The mere prospect of anti-DEI legislation—let alone its actual passage—can compel institutions to adopt excessively cautious approaches, often resulting in the renaming or restructuring of existing diversity programs (Evans & Chun, 2012). In many cases, administrators prioritize mitigating political fallout over maintaining the explicit intent of DEI initiatives. This tendency to replace overt “diversity” or “equity” language with seemingly neutral terminology (e.g., “student success” or “inclusive excellence”) reflects a broader pattern of risk-aversion that shields leadership from potential criticism. While it may preserve some basic service offerings, such rebranding also reduces opportunities for honest discourse on racism or structural inequities, thereby limiting the transformational impact of DEI programs (Ladson-Billings, 1998). Critics contend that such rebranding amounts to performative allyship—an institutional posture that outwardly endorses equity-related efforts but avoids substantive changes that challenge entrenched power hierarchies (Briscoe & Khalifa, 2015).

Because legislators and external stakeholders can rapidly shift their stances on race-conscious initiatives, colleges and universities often resort to symbolic gestures rather than sustained, strategic engagement with systemic inequities (Bell, 1980). This pattern exemplifies

how risk aversion perpetuates a status quo in which racial disparities remain largely unaddressed. Instead of dismantling barriers, institutions may focus on minimizing controversy, thereby undercutting the potentially transformative power of Multicultural Student Programs and Services (MSPS). Critical Race Theory says that actions like these show how strong white supremacist or profit-driven logics are when they put institutional reputation ahead of meaningful, race-specific interventions (Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001). Because of this, MSPS leaders often have trouble getting the stable funding and policy support they need to make real progress. This creates an environment where promises of equity are made in words but are rarely put into action at the structural level (Zambrana et al., 2015).

Complicity Through Inaction

Institutional complicity is often revealed through the disconnect between stated commitments to diversity and the actual resources allocated to MSPS. Although senior administrators frequently claim support for inclusive excellence in official statements, they may fail to provide the funding and personnel needed to transform these pledges into substantive practice (Huber & Solórzano, 2015). As a result, diversity rhetoric can operate as a protective veneer, shielding institutions from criticism while signaling superficial progress (Evans & Chun, 2012). Scholars label this phenomenon performative allyship, whereby institutions showcase solidarity with marginalized populations but avoid major policy shifts or budgetary outlays (Ladson-Billings, 1998). Without the structural investments required to address racial inequities, underrepresented students continue to receive inadequate or inconsistent services, thereby undermining MSPS efficacy (Zambrana et al., 2015). This dynamic also generates emotional and

professional strain on DEI practitioners, who must repeatedly advocate for minimal support.

Ultimately, by prioritizing optics over substance, leadership may unwittingly reinforce the very systemic barriers they purport to dismantle, delaying meaningful progress toward equity-driven institutional cultures (Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001).

A Call for Genuine Accountability

In the wake of the February 14, 2025, Dear Colleague Letter issued by the Department of Education, notable researcher and scholar Shaun Harper released his own Dear Colleague Letter in defense of DEI (Harper, 2025). In it, Harper discusses 11 actions that institutions should take to preserve their DEI offices. His recommendations reinforce those outlined previously in this chapter and are well supported by the findings of this study. His call to action seeks to disrupt entrenched inequities, forcing accountability upward onto the senior leaders who control institutional resources and strategic priorities.

Harper's framework for institutional accountability not only echoes but also extends the central findings of this study, offering a structured, evidence-based approach to counteract institutional inertia. By aligning each of his 11 recommendations with this study's empirical findings, this discussion demonstrates the tangible impact of sustained DEI investment, the consequences of policy-driven disinvestment, and the critical need for institutional leaders to take decisive action in preserving and strengthening diversity efforts. Shaun Harper's framework for institutional accountability provides actionable recommendations grounded in advocacy for diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). This discussion aligns each of Harper's recommendations

with empirical findings from this study, offering a nuanced exploration of their direct and indirect substantiation.

Commit to Long-Term, Sustainable DEI Funding

Harper emphasizes the necessity of stable financial support for DEI initiatives (Harper, 2025). This study confirms this recommendation, finding strong correlations between sustained MSPS expenditures and student retention (Table 4), particularly among Black, Hispanic, and multiracial students. Regression models explicitly link increases in DEI funding to improved retention outcomes (Tables 5.1-5.5), highlighting the critical nature of predictable, consistent institutional investments.

Increase Transparency & Accountability for DEI Funding

Harper argues institutions should transparently track and report DEI funding (Harper, 2025). This study reinforces Harper's position, demonstrating significant variability and unpredictability in institutional DEI investments over the observed years. Such inconsistencies underscore the need for explicit transparency and accountability measures, supporting Harper's recommendation that funding accountability could mitigate politically driven financial instability.

Protect DEI from Political Influence & Retaliation

Harper's call for institutional resistance to external anti-DEI pressures finds strong support within the findings. Data from this study indicate a notable relationship between political climates (e.g., proposed or enacted anti-DEI policies) and fluctuations in DEI funding (Harper,

2025). This evidence validates Harper's concerns about institutional susceptibility to political pressure and underscores the necessity of proactive leadership in defense of DEI initiatives.

Elevate DEI Leadership to Institutional Decision-Making Levels

Harper recommends empowering DEI leadership structurally within institutional hierarchies (Harper, 2025). Meeting with central administration and support of the president lends to supporting this recommendation. Furthermore, this study shows that institutional leaders in key roles support allocations to MSPS units. Enhancing leadership authority would likely stabilize DEI funding and positively impact retention outcomes.

Publicly Advocate for DEI's Role in Student Success

Harper (2025) highlights the importance of public advocacy by institutional leaders to reinforce DEI's value in institutional missions. While this is not supported in the findings directly, institutional leaders celebrating the contributions of these units as drivers to student success might be able to bolster public MSPS support, potentially enhancing DEI's effectiveness as reflected in improved student retention

Establish Clear Metrics for DEI Effectiveness

Additionally, Harper (2025) advocates for clear, institution-specific metrics to measure DEI outcomes. This study partially addresses this by using retention rates as a measurable DEI outcome. Although broader institutional metrics (such as campus climate or student belonging) were beyond this study's scope, establishing standardized, multifaceted metrics could further substantiate and strengthen future DEI initiatives, enhancing the empirical rigor of DEI effectiveness evaluations.

Integrate DEI into Institutional Accreditation & Compliance

Although this study did not directly examine accreditation processes, the demonstrated impact of DEI expenditures on retention outcomes provides indirect support for this recommendation. If accreditation standards explicitly included DEI as criteria, institutions might achieve more consistent retention outcomes, suggesting a practical alignment with Harper's (2025) broader accountability framework.

Increase Faculty & Staff DEI Training Requirements

The current analysis did not include direct assessment of faculty DEI training. Nevertheless, the positive correlation between DEI resources and student retention suggests that faculty and staff training might enhance institutional responsiveness and programmatic effectiveness. Given the existing evidence linking DEI investments to student outcomes, specifically as it relates to faculty mentorship (Egan, 2019), systematic faculty training could logically further these positive impacts by fostering a supportive institutional culture.

Embed DEI in Faculty Tenure & Promotion Processes

This study does not explicitly connect DEI initiatives to faculty tenure decisions. However, establishing incentives through tenure and promotion could positively reinforce faculty engagement with DEI, indirectly supporting MSPS units. Given the established correlations of funded DEI programs for student outcomes, embedding DEI expectations into faculty promotion criteria may further institutionalize DEI priorities, supporting Harper's call for structural integration.

The alignment of Harper's recommendations with this study's findings highlights critical intersections and opportunities for strengthening institutional accountability and effectiveness. Recommendations related to sustainable funding, transparency, protection from political interference, and elevated institutional leadership demonstrate substantial empirical support. Integrating Harper's framework offers a comprehensive strategy to institutionalize DEI effectively, enhancing both academic rigor and practical accountability within higher education. In the end, real accountability requires real structural changes, unwavering support, and clear financial promises—not just empty words or acting like an ally. Only through deliberate structural changes and courageous leadership can higher education truly advance equity and inclusion, transforming institutional promises into lived realities.

Broader Interpretations

From 2018 to 2022, data show that there is a positive relationship between MSPS spending and the retention of students of color. This relationship is stronger when racial justice is a big issue (Chapter 4, Table 4). When coupled with leadership support and resource negotiation strategies, MSPS spending becomes an even stronger predictor of improved student outcomes. These results refute the notion that DEI initiatives are merely symbolic, instead demonstrating a measurable return on targeted funding for historically underserved groups. However, sociopolitical factors such as anti-DEI laws, donor pressures, or changing leadership agendas can have a big impact on whether MSPS expansions continue or end. Based on Critical Race Theory (CRT) and QuantCrit, this study shows that even small effects can have big effects on underrepresented groups that face constant structural barriers.

Validating the Conceptual Framework

The idea framework shows that institutional spending on MSPS, which is affected by unit-level leadership strategies, is linked to students staying in school and not dropping out (Gansemer-Topf & Schuh, 2006). This association is most pronounced for traditionally underserved populations, who often benefit from identity-affirming campus climates (Museus & Quaye, 2009). Additionally, the importance of Unit Power in MSPS shows that these programs work best when administrators negotiate priorities strategically, incorporate DEI principles into institutional missions, and encourage being responsive to a student body that is becoming more diverse (Harper, 2012).

Countering Narratives

Amid anti-DEI legislation and shifting policy frameworks, this study's findings challenge viewpoints that minimize MSPS or label it fiscally irresponsible. Instead, the small but positive links between MSPS funding and keeping students show that these kinds of efforts are necessary for schools to be successful (Hurtado et al., 2012). Finding a link between spending and measurable outcomes of persistence adds to the body of research that shows support systems that are sensitive to different cultures can help students do better in school (Gansemer-Topf & Schuh, 2006; Museus & Quaye, 2009).

Positioning for the Future

As new groups of students from Generation Z and Generation Alpha start going to college, they will have stronger demands for social justice and ending racism. This will force colleges and universities to improve their DEI-focused approaches or risk falling behind their

competitors. A well-documented body of research shows that students, especially those from historically marginalized groups, are more likely to thrive in environments that are explicitly inclusive and culturally validating (Harper, 2012; Museus & Quaye, 2009). MSPS units that are well-supported and have a fair distribution of resources can have unique benefits that attract students who value real commitments to fairness and social responsibility.

DEI, Profitability, and Long-Term Viability

The final models for Asian, Black, Hispanic, and Multiracial students (see Chapter 4, especially Tables 5.3–5.5) show that for every \$1 million spent by the state on MSPS, retention goes up by about 0.08%. This implies that a 1-point increase in retention requires an average of \$12.5 million. To illustrate how tier shifts might translate in practice, we can refer to the range definitions for MSPS investment: Tier 2 spans \$50,001–\$500,000 (midpoint about \$275,000), whereas Tier 3 covers \$500,001–\$1,000,000 (midpoint \$750,000). Based on rough regression coefficients, the \$475,000 difference has been linked to an estimated 1.1-point rise in the retention of students of color, which is about \$432,000 per 1% improvement. Each number comes from a slightly different set of data, but they both support the main idea that strategic, well-documented MSPS spending leads to big increases in the retention of students of color.

Although moral obligations and collective well-being form the ethical cornerstone for DEI, these findings suggest that DEI efforts can be economically advantageous in an increasingly market-oriented higher education landscape. Institutions incorporating DEI initiatives into their institutional planning via MSPS units may see gains in reputational capital and fiscal stability, given that elevated retention rates bolster sustained enrollment pipelines

(Gansemer-Topf & Schuh, 2006). This study shows that a commitment to fairness fits in with the performance and accountability cultures that shape higher education policy and funding by seeing DEI as both morally right and strategically good for the bottom line.

Implications for the Current Sociopolitical Environment

More and more states are debating or putting limits on DEI efforts. This makes the argument that MSPS spending is important for student success even stronger. Higher education can either move toward fulfilling promises of equity or acquiesce to external pressures, dismantling or diluting programs that evidence shows improve retention. This study shows that the issues at stake are much bigger than just talking about policies; the consistent presence or absence of MSPS resources has a real effect on who graduates from our schools and how they do so. Also, in the past, institutions that didn't have to worry as much about how much they spent on diversity might have been okay with some MSPS offices not having enough money. But now, with new accountability metrics based on data and more political hostility, institutions need to be more resilient.

Institutional leaders have both an ethical and strategic imperative to fulfill their stated commitments to inclusivity by protecting and investing in DEI-related initiatives. Research consistently shows that equitable and culturally affirming spaces can enhance the student experience, improve retention rates, and ultimately contribute to an institution's overall financial health (McNair et al., 2020). These benefits underscore that investing in DEI is not merely a moral or reputational concern but a critical component of long-term institutional success. By dedicating structural resources and embedding DEI goals into strategic planning, universities can

shield inclusive programs from political and budgetary volatility, thereby reinforcing a campus climate that supports all learners. In doing so, leadership tangibly demonstrates that diversity, equity, and inclusion are central to the institution's mission, rather than peripheral add-ons that can be dispensed with under external pressure (Evans & Chun, 2012).

Relating Back to the Problem and Purpose

Considering this study's problem statement centered on the misalignment between institutional rhetoric about DEI and the actual funding provided to MSPS, the findings validate the significance of scrutinizing budget lines and "unit power" (Hackman, 1985). The discrepancy between what institutions claim to value (equity, inclusion, belonging) and how they allocate financial resources reveals both hypocrisy and potential. The results show that retention rates go up when MSPS is properly funded and integrated into institutional priorities (see Chapter 4 for multiple year-by-year results). On the other hand, a small annual increase of 4% or less, like what many institutions saw from 2018 to 2022 (Chapter 4, Table 5.1-5.5), is often more of a show than real change. This is especially true when those increases don't keep up with inflation, enrollment growth, or rising student needs.

From 2018–2022 Findings to 2025 and Beyond

Advancing social justice and anti-racism in higher education requires more than isolated, short-term initiatives; it demands a sustained, strategic approach built on cohesive, comprehensive, and flexible policies. As emerging generations increasingly demand accountability, inclusivity, and equity, institutions must recalibrate their policies, practices, and resource allocations to align with these imperatives. In doing so, institutions become better

equipped to fulfill their core missions and create environments in which every student can flourish (Tinto, 2012; Hurtado et al., 2012).

This study serves as a catalyst for higher education leaders to embrace decisive, equity-driven commitments. The results show how important it is to put money into Multicultural Student Programs and Services (MSPS) and use administrative unit power wisely to help students who aren't getting enough help stay in school (Chapter 4, Tables 5.1–5.5). This study uses Tinto's Institutional Action Model (Tinto, 2012; Tinto & Pusser, 2006), Principal–Agent Theory (Jensen & Meckling, 1976; Holmström, 1979), and Hackman's (1985) Unit Power framework to learn more about how allocating resources affects student outcomes. It also gives us a solid empirical basis for rethinking diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) strategies in higher education, which is necessary for long-term equitable student success (Gillborn, 2012; Gasman, 2020). Ultimately, the results indicate the complex interplay among financial support, administrative leadership, and student success. Positive correlations between MSPS expenditures and retention outcomes suggest that even modest increases in targeted funding can yield substantial improvements. Previous research has shown that long-term, well-funded DEI programs not only make campuses more welcoming (Gansemer-Topf & Schuh, 2006; Museus & Quaye, 2009), but they also help keep students (Hurtado et al., 2012). This supports the call for policy changes that make DEI efforts part of an institution's main financial plans.

It is important to acknowledge that this study does possess limitations. Because of the use of imputation methods and secondary and self-reported data, there are some possible biases that need to be addressed in future research through mixed method designs and longitudinal studies

(Biddix, 2018; Enders, 2010; Schafer & Graham, 2002). In the future, researchers could also look at private schools and other measures of success, like graduation rates and job placement after graduation. This would help us understand the effects of MSPS investments even better. This study is an important step toward questioning how institutions are run and making resource distribution fairer in higher education, especially for MSPS units. It challenges prevailing narratives that dismiss diversity initiatives as fiscally inefficient by demonstrating that targeted MSPS funding, when combined with strong administrative unit power, is significantly associated with improved retention outcomes for students of color. By fostering an inclusive campus climate through strategic DEI investments, institutions can enhance student retention and contribute to broader societal goals of equity and social justice. The evidence presented suggests that sustained resource commitments, when aligned with effective leadership and accountability measures, are essential for advancing the transformative potential of higher education.

The 2018–2022 trends in this study already hinted at proactive institutional measures against rising anti-DEI rhetoric. By 2025, legislative assaults and negative discourse have escalated, sometimes dismantling longstanding offices overnight. Yet this study’s core conclusion endures even modest MSPS expenditures can positively influence student-of-color retention, underscoring the urgency of preserving and adapting these programs. These findings show that MSPS requires tangible, sustained investment rather than rhetorical support alone. Even if higher education often “operates as CRT predicts,” data-based evidence can help disrupt ingrained norms, paving the way for deeper reforms over time. Ultimately, every data point

corresponds to a real student, whose success depends on more than line items—it relies on a collective commitment to equity, regardless of the political moment.

Revisiting Theoretical Tensions in Light of Findings

The small but statistically significant coefficients for MSPS expenditures underscore a persistent tension. Tinto and Hackman's frameworks suggest moving resources around to improve retention, but a QuantCrit lens shows how racism built into institutions can reject or weaken such evidence. This tension is apparent in the uneven reporting of diversity spending across states. If the climate were more equitable, numeric findings alone would prompt immediate reinvestment in MSPS. Instead, anti-DEI sentiment and legislation can override logic-based funding decisions. Such tension matters deeply for interpreting this study's outcomes. Modest correlations are not a weakness of MSPS but markers of systemic barriers. A mainstream approach might dismiss them as negligible, while QuantCrit recognizes them as disproportionately meaningful in the face of persistent racism. Recognizing these tensions makes it clear why maintaining equity in higher education needs both careful data analysis and a direct look at how power works in the system.

Leveraging QuantCrit Insights for Practitioner Resilience

Taken together, Tinto's Institutional Action Model, Principal-Agent Theory, and Hackman's Unit Power framework each illuminate different aspects of resource distribution and student retention. Yet they do not fully account for the racialized power imbalances that QuantCrit foregrounds. The evidence in this study shows that MSPS can make a real difference in the persistence of students of color, even though it has limited funds. It also demonstrates the

ease with which anti-DEI laws can reverse these gains. Moving forward, MSPS leaders can fortify their programs via data-driven advocacy, strategic rebranding, and diversified funding sources. It's important not to push for interest convergence at the expense of real cultural change, but there are real opportunities to be found in building strong coalitions, pushing for consistent race-disaggregated data, and making plans for how to protect DEI work in dangerous situations.

Toward a Multi-Pronged, Equity-Driven Future

This study demonstrates that Multicultural Student Programs and Services (MSPS) spending, though often representing a small share of overall institutional budgets, remains a significant predictor of improved retention rates for students of color. However, administrative unit power, institutional supports, and the broader sociopolitical climate mediate how effectively these resources translate into meaningful gains. In challenging the notion that DEI initiatives are tangential or dispensable, these findings underscore the strategic value of MSPS for enhancing student success and institutional performance (Tinto, 2012).

Conceptually, Tinto's (2012) Institutional Action Model, Lane and Kivistö's (2008) application of Principal-Agent Theory, and Hackman's (1985) Unit Power framework explain how budget negotiations and organizational dynamics influence resource allocation. Yet, a Critical Race Theory (CRT) perspective, particularly QuantCrit, reveals how the same budgetary processes can either mask or perpetuate injustice if not subjected to continuous scrutiny (Gillborn, Warmington, & Demack, 2018). For instance, short-term adaptive strategies—such as rebranding MSPS initiatives or quietly collecting race-disaggregated data—may temporarily

circumvent political and financial barriers. Nevertheless, these tactical moves do not replace the systemic reforms needed to dismantle deeply embedded inequities.

In essence, MSPS leaders operate in a complex tension between incremental adaptation and transformative change. While pragmatic compromises help sustain core DEI services, a race-conscious lens remains essential to ensure that institutional structures, policies, and cultures continually evolve toward genuine equity rather than superficial compliance. By foregrounding equity-driven resources and critical inquiry, institutions honor their academic missions and reaffirm the educational and social value of inclusive excellence.

Implications for the Field of Education

From a broader educational standpoint, these findings reinforce that academic outcomes are not wholly reducible to individual student effort or innate ability. Institutional resource allocations, shaped by both policy and politics, substantially determine who persists to graduation. This study supports the view that specialized, culturally relevant support is not a luxury but a structural necessity to close retention gaps. It does this by putting MSPS at the center of strategies for educational equity. It underlines that historically underrepresented students thrive in environments explicitly designed to meet their academic and social integration needs—a principle thoroughly supported by Tinto’s model but often left underfunded in practice.

Limitations and a Path Forward

Acknowledging methodological constraints, variable definitions of Multicultural Student Programs and Services (MSPS), and unpredictable legislative conditions underscores the need for continuous research that refines and expands upon these findings. Future work might include

longitudinal or multi-institution studies, along with standardized MSPS spending definitions and qualitative explorations into how administrators navigate hostile legislative environments (Evans & Chun, 2012). Despite these caveats, the current data provide a compelling argument: even modest MSPS funding, when applied consistently and supported by high unit power leadership, correlates with enhanced persistence among marginalized students (Zambrana et al., 2015). For institutional leaders and policymakers, this serves as a clarion call: superficial DEI efforts—limited to rhetorical commitments or temporary budget bumps—cannot achieve large-scale, enduring transformations. In contrast, strategic, sustained MSPS investments can cultivate more inclusive campus climates, yielding improved outcomes for all students (Tinto, 2012).

Study Conclusion

At its core, this study reflects the lived experiences of an MSPS administrator seeking empirical validation for what many practitioners have long observed: culturally sensitive, equity-centered support meaningfully improves student success. Despite higher education's tendency to publicly champion diversity, institutions often hesitate to dedicate the consistent financial and personnel resources needed to actualize those commitments (Huber & Solórzano, 2015). The findings confirm that bridging this gap between rhetorical endorsement and real investment requires data-informed advocacy, savvy resource negotiation, policy reforms, and historical awareness (Evans & Chun, 2012). However, in an era where anti-DEI sentiments are on the rise, the small but crucial gains achieved through well-funded MSPS programming remain fragile and can be dismantled when political or institutional support wanes (Zambrana et al., 2015).

Thus, the final call is one of both caution and hope. Caution arises from the instability of interest convergence—public endorsements of equity can quickly vanish if political winds shift or if leaders perceive DEI progress as expendable (Bell, 1980). Nonetheless, the data show that strategic and well-supported MSPS units significantly improve student-of-color retention, underscoring how long-term, consistent investment leads to sustained institutional benefits (Tinto, 2012). Achieving a fairer future entail thoroughly integrating MSPS units into university structures, cementing administrative alliances, and demonstrating measurable results in student success. In so doing, institutions move beyond tokenistic gestures and toward substantive reform that matches the longstanding demands of historically underrepresented communities (Ladson-Billings, 1998).

Every data point in this study represents a real student at the crossroads of persistence or departure, highlighting the moral and societal stakes of institutional decisions around MSPS (Briscoe & Khalifa, 2015). Coupling robust theoretical foundations with quantitative analysis, historical contexts, and flexible administrative strategies illustrates how critical MSPS is—and how it can continue to expand. The onus now lies on institutional leaders, policymakers, and advocates to adopt these findings and steer higher education toward authentic inclusivity, rather than recycling the same cycles of underfunding and fragmented reforms that have historically fallen short of real equity (McNair et al., 2020).

The conclusion is clear: targeted MSPS funding correlates strongly with better retention for students of color, while revealing a deep disconnect between rhetorical equity goals and the actual investments that make them feasible. Fulfilling higher education's promise of inclusion

necessitates a comprehensive, data-driven, and critically engaged approach that aligns budgeting practices with transformative social justice objectives (Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001).

MSPS units thus serve as a key lever for advancing equity. By supplying these programs with meaningful resources and amplifying MSPS leaders' capacity to negotiate budgets and alliances, colleges can foster campus environments that advance not only student persistence but also systemic change in response to longstanding inequities (Hackman, 1985). Amid intensifying legislative challenges and shifting public opinion, institutional leaders, policymakers, and MSPS administrators must band together to enact lasting, evidence-based reforms (Lane & Kivistö, 2008). This study provides both the empirical grounding and the strategic framework to guide those efforts, urging all stakeholders to move beyond superficial commitments and establish a future in which every student has a genuine opportunity to succeed.

Ultimately, these findings represent both a critique of current practices and a map toward a more equitable future. Institutions must confront budget constraints and rhetorical inconsistencies, while MSPS administrators leverage their successes to advocate for more robust, impactful allocations of resources (O'Meara, Sandmann, Saltmarsh, & Giles, 2011). Only through this synergy can higher education truly fulfill its equity mission, ensuring that every student—regardless of background—receives the comprehensive support they need to thrive. Tinto's model insists on actions beyond lip service, Principal-Agent Theory (Lane & Kivistö, 2008) demonstrates that MSPS requires structural recalibration for optimal performance, Hackman's perspective underscores the importance of visibility and negotiation, and QuantCrit compels us to challenge the racial biases embedded in data and policy (Gillborn, Warmington, &

Demack, 2018). Each lens spotlights both the potential and the limitations of existing DEI strategies. As anti-DEI pressures mount, the incremental gains that MSPS provides can quickly evaporate—especially if data are suppressed or labeled irrelevant. Sustaining progress requires embedding equity aims in daily institutional practices, forming external partnerships, and rigorously tracking resource allocations for retention. Only by supporting multilayered, enduring interventions will public higher education fulfill its promises of inclusivity and social justice, ensuring that MSPS’s “small but crucial” gains become catalysts for lasting institutional transformation.

PERSONAL EPILOGUE & CRITICAL REFLECTION

It is difficult to separate myself from this study, not because of a lack of objectivity, but because the subject matter is my life. I am a Multicultural Student Programs and Services (MSPS) administrator researching the negotiation strategies of people whose jobs look like mine, whose challenges feel like mine, and whose legitimacy, like mine, is often put on trial in the court of public and political opinion. I didn't enter this work by chance. I entered it as a first-generation, Pell-eligible Black boy from the South, whose entire professional existence since high school has been about making room for people like me in systems that were never built with us in mind.

So yes, this is a quantitative study. But it is also a reflection, a mirror of a career that has unfolded in an America where Black lives must be reasserted as mattering every decade, where equity is first demanded, then implemented, then politicized, then dismantled (Brown, 2022; Slagle et al., 2022). It is a study conducted not from the outside but from within the very structures it examines. I am both researcher and data point, scholar and subject, strategist and survivor.

Institutional DEI in a Moment of National Reckoning

In 2020, like many institutions, mine stood at a cultural crossroads. The murders of Ahmaud Arbery, who was from the very community we serve, along with George Floyd and Breonna Taylor, didn't just provoke mourning; they demanded a reckoning. As one of the few Black executive leaders on campus, I knew we could not afford disengagement as a means to

facilitate our obligation to neutrality. We chose to respond, not with symbolism, but by leveraging our role as an institution of education.

By facilitating learning about the jury selection process, how law enforcement investigates crimes of this nature, and even the ways media influences public opinion and understanding, it allowed us to meaningfully engage within the scope of our role. Under the strategic leadership of our President, we built an administrative structure to address institutional gaps related to DEI. These actions were informed by the broader momentum of the Black Lives Matter movement (Garza et al., 2013), but they were rooted in our institutional history, budgetary constraints, and sense of place. We took action in order to be politically responsive, but also because it aligned with our values and our obligation to the communities we serve. In Chapter 4, many of the quantitative findings echoed this idea of how institutional action—when fueled by well-resourced DEI offices—can measurably influence student-of-color retention and campus stability, especially during national crises.

But I also knew the momentum was fragile. I’ve lived through too many DEI pendulum swings to be surprised by backlash. One moment we are hailed as essential change agents; the next, we are political liabilities. When public figures began denouncing DEI as “divisive,” and when state legislatures began targeting our offices with restrictive policies and budgetary scrutiny, I felt what many of us in this field have felt: that we are asked to save our institutions yet scapegoated for their discomfort.

Legislative Pressures

The signs of rolling back the progress of 2020 occurred sooner than anticipated. In fact, in my state these were the words of a state representative who questioned the validity of the work we accomplished in his second request to the state public higher education institutions:

The Georgia General Assembly's House of Representatives Appropriations Committee is responsible for the State of Georgia's amended and general fiscal year budgets for state agencies and departments. The duties of the Subcommittee on Higher Education ("Subcommittee") include appropriations for the University System of Georgia ("System"). As we have discussed, members of the Subcommittee have requested information related to appropriations by the System and its constituent universities. This includes but is not limited to, questions related to the financial efficiency of the System and expenditures within the System.

In order for the General Assembly to oversee and be accountable to the people of Georgia for the multi-billion dollar investment of public funds directly and indirectly committed to the System, the universities must be forthcoming in providing information to the General Assembly. Areas in which spending and emphasis appear to have greatly increased are (1) central university administration and (2) efforts represented as increasing institutional diversity, equity, inclusion, advocacy, and activism.

While the latter may be facially laudable goals, we have been informed that these efforts in practice often result in inappropriate and/or misuse of state resources; divert students, staff, and faculty from the essential goal of providing an excellent, cost-efficient education likely to result in on-time graduation and preparing graduates for a life of opportunity and choices; frustrate and interfere with academic freedom; and, in some cases, potentially violate federal/state law and/or state policy, potentially exposing the System to a range of negative consequences, including significant legal liability.
Rep. David Knight (2022)

The claims in this request became the fuel for this study. As an MSPS administrator, I was offended by the assertion that well-documented efforts could be somehow facially laudable and yet an inappropriate and/or misuse of state resources. Conversely, the researcher in me was curious: How much were institutions spending on DEI programs? Qualitatively, researchers have suggested the potential impact of MSPS units on students, leading to outcomes like higher GPA, higher retention, and graduation. However, there was little quantitative insight

into the correlations between co-curricular programs and those same outcomes, let alone MSPS programs and their connection to the same outcomes. As a practitioner, I had experienced firsthand how resource negotiation on behalf of DEI and MSPS not only addresses institutional shortcomings but correlates with retention and academic success. Yet here was a powerful lawmaker questioning its very right to exist.

QuantCrit: A Methodology That Mirrors the Work

This is why I turned to QuantCrit. It is not just a methodological preference; it is a political and professional necessity (Garcia et al., 2018; Cruz et al., 2021). QuantCrit allows me to bring my full self into the study without compromising rigor. Through it, I acknowledge my positionality not as a bias, but as a lens that enhances my interpretive clarity. The data I collected: retention rates, graduation metrics, institutional expenditures, resource allocation, are objective, but my experience gave me the insight to know what to ask, where to look, and how to interpret what I found. The results emphasize exactly this point: that data can be weaponized or undervalued. QuantCrit positions MSPS administrators not just as identity figures, but as strategic actors who shape resource flows and produce verifiable results.

The Data in This Study: Bringing Theory to Life

The data in this study brought theory to life, both in abstraction and in application. Tinto's Institutional Action framework argues that student retention is not a function of student resilience alone, but of institutional design (Tinto, 1993, 2012). The programs I've built, funded, and assessed are examples of that design. Hackman's theory of unit power makes clear that when MSPS units are resourced, they perform; and when they perform, they generate legitimacy and

impact (Hackman, 1985). My results reflect that cycle with clarity (see Chapter 4 findings). But theory also becomes biography here. My own trajectory, from student assistant to executive director, personifies what these theories predict: that when equity work is centered, resourced, and evaluated through institutional frameworks, it yields real outcomes. I have lived the theory while proving it.

Reviewing Results and Personal Validation

Reviewing the results of this study is transformative and proof positive that the work of MSPS administrators, my work as an MSPS administrator, is not just a moral or ethical good that makes students of color (or any other marginalized group of students) feel good about their higher education experience. Rather, if leveraged well, it could be the driving force behind significant gains related to student success. This study reinforced for me that we are more than students of color who matriculate into the field of student affairs to become professionals of color in hopes of only making new students of color feel welcomed; rather, we are effective at holding our institutions accountable to be more welcoming, despite treacherous environments. Specifically, Chapter 4's correlation analysis shows that MSPS spending meaningfully correlates with student-of-color retention—an objective measure that supports these “on-the-ground” experiences.

And still, even while leading this work, I, like many others, have had to navigate the unmeasured labor that comes with holding marginalized identities in predominantly white institutional spaces (Evans & Moore, 2015; Razzante, 2018; Melaku, 2022). The labor of anticipating resistance. The labor of over-preparing for meetings to justify decisions that would

never be questioned in other roles. The labor of succeeding and translating that success into institutional language in hopes that leadership will validate. That's the part of the work no dashboard shows, but every DEI professional carries. It is my hope that findings in this study serve as meaningful change in the recognized value MSPS unit leaders bring to their institutions.

Linking to Tinto's Evolution and the Principal-Agent Dynamics

As Tinto inevitably evolved his retention theory into institutional action theory, the onus of sense of belonging and retention of students of color does not rest with the students. Instead, it rests with the institution, which, if it utilizes principal-agent dynamics in meaningful ways, can recruit leaders to serve in MSPS spaces and see gains in student success. This is not derived because those leaders hold the same identities as the students they serve, but because they understand that, as Hackman (1985) suggests, unit power leads to more resources. More resources can lead to better services, better services can lead to better outcomes, and better outcomes can lead to better funding. And so on, and so on, and so on.

Why the Quantitative Gap Persists, and Why It Must Be Closed

This study also surfaces a more uncomfortable truth: that the field's lack of quantitative evidence has made DEI easier to dismantle. The absence of numerical proof creates a three-part cycle:

- DEI is seen as qualitative and anecdotal.
- Because it lacks numbers, it is deemed nonessential.
- Defunding then makes it harder to collect data, reinforcing the invisibility.

The more I engaged the literature, the more glaring the gap became. Research on DEI, particularly in higher education, has overwhelmingly leaned qualitative. That isn't a critique; I value stories, narratives, and lived experience. But it is a pattern. The field has long vaulted interviews, focus groups, and ethnographies, methodologies that center identity and meaning making over quantitative scale and replication (Patton, Harper, & Harris, 2022). This framing perpetuates the misconception that DEI efforts are purely about "feeling good," instead of functioning as a powerful, institution-wide tool that can offer a competitive edge, especially as the pool of traditional collegegoers continues to shrink and diversifies.

By grounding this study in QuantCrit, I sought to fill the gap of rigorous quantitative research on DEI, demonstrating its tangible impact on metrics like retention and graduation rates. Like many other MSPS administrators, I have had to advocate from the sidelines, waiting for the right moment to be included in key decision-making spaces. And even after we gain a seat at the table, we often face uphill battles for the funding, resources, and recognition needed to sustain our work. QuantCrit, in this context, becomes more than a research approach; it is a tool of institutional accountability. It demands that we measure what institutions claim to value, and that we interpret those metrics through a lens that understands race, power, and access. It pushes the academy to reckon not just with outcomes, but with: who those outcomes are designed to serve, and who they routinely leave behind (Leuschner, 2015; Bisson et al., 2022; Hefferman, 2022).

Seeing the Research Gap from the Inside

As I built the framework for this study, I came face-to-face with a long-standing tension in the literature: DEI in higher education has largely been studied through qualitative means

(Hinton & Lambert, 2022; Cummings et al., 2023). Interviews, narratives, case studies, focus groups, these methodologies have given voice to students and professionals navigating racialized spaces. In my view, the absence of strong numerical data in existing literature only fuels the misperception that DEI is a “nice-to-have” rather than a strategic imperative, effectively erasing proof of its efficacy and underestimating the labor of those who lead these programs.

In doing so, DEI has often been framed as something “you feel,” not something you can measure. The field’s reliance on qualitative approaches, while valuable, has also reinforced a problematic assumption: that DEI work is unquantifiable, and that those of us leading it are successful because of who we are, not because of what we know. When we frame DEI as “naturally qualitative,” we strip it of its institutional force. And when institutions avoid measuring our work, they create a data vacuum, one that allows critics to question its value while offering no infrastructure to prove otherwise (Hinton & Lambert, 2022; Cummings et al., 2023).

Identity vs. Expertise

I have also noticed that even well-intentioned colleagues sometimes attribute the success of my work solely to my personal identities, rather than the intentional strategies and data-driven approaches I employ. There is a misnomer that, because I am Black, or first-generation, or any other marginalized identity, I must be naturally good at this. Never mind the years of strategic planning, fundraising, data analysis, and institutional negotiation it has taken to build programs that move the needle on student success. This assumption erases expertise. This study is my response to that assumption. It is my assertion that MSPS administrators are not merely identity vessels, we are institutional strategists. We deserve to be studied as such. This is not a

methodological oversight; it is a structural vulnerability. This study is one intervention to disrupt that cycle.

Final Reflection

Ultimately, this study affirms that MSPS administrators bring far more than identity-based insights; we offer professional expertise validated by both qualitative and quantitative evidence. In an era when DEI is under constant scrutiny, demonstrating the measurable value of these programs is paramount, not just in moral or ethical terms, but in terms of tangible student outcomes and institutional success. This dissertation affirms what I have long known but needed the field to recognize: MSPS administrators do not simply embody DEI, we engineer it. Our work is not performative; it is strategic. Not reactive, but preventative. Not ancillary, but central.

If we take the data seriously, this research shows that MSPS programs are not side projects adopted and funded in accordance with momentary political or moral preferences, but rather essential drivers of higher education's future, and that those empowered to lead them may "just happen" to be Black, first-generation, or otherwise marginalized individuals who have honed advanced, data-driven skill sets, to keep these institutions thriving. This study shows that DEI, when resourced and aligned with institutional priorities, improves retention, drives revenue, and enhances campus climate (Chapter 4 findings). We bring strategic, data-informed leadership that, when resourced, produces tangible institutional outcomes. As Chapter 5's final discussion emphasizes, these gains in student success hinge on stable MSPS budgets and on administrators who know how to navigate volatile political climates. The evidence underscores the cyclical

relationship: more resources → better services → improved retention → deeper institutional support.

The numbers contextualize our identities; they do not diminish it. This is not just research, it is resistance. The future of higher education may well depend on professionals who happen to be Black, first-generation, Pell-eligible, queer, and who also happen to be excellent. And it shows that those of us leading it, often Black, first-gen, low-income, queer, are not here because of what we symbolize. We are here by expertise. The strategy I bring to my role is rooted in quantitative successes informed by my identities, not the other way around. And it is time the data caught up to that reality.

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APPENDIX

Appendix 1 - MSPS Survey Documents

Subject: Invitation to Participate in Multicultural Student Programs and Services Survey for Doctoral Dissertation Research

Dear [Budget Manager's Name],

I hope this email finds you well. My name is Quinton Staples, and I am a doctoral candidate pursuing my research in Student Affairs Leadership at the University of Georgia under the supervision of Dr. Katie Koo. I am writing to request your valuable participation in a survey that aims to investigate budget managers' perceptions of their institution's expenditures for multicultural student programs and services.

As you are a crucial stakeholder in the financial management of [Institution's Name], your expertise and insights would be immensely valuable for enhancing the understanding of how financial decisions impact the provision of multicultural programs and services, catering to the diverse needs of your student community.

The primary objective of this study is to gain a comprehensive understanding of how institutional resource allocation in the form of institutional expenditures for multicultural student programs and services in higher education contributes to the retention of students of color. Additionally, this study seeks to understand the unit power of Multicultural Student Programs and Services and their ability to obtain institutional resources. The data collected will be used exclusively for academic research purposes and will be treated with the utmost confidentiality and anonymity.

Your participation in this study will involve completing an online survey that will take approximately 10 minutes to complete. Your responses will be instrumental in generating meaningful conclusions that can potentially inform policy recommendations and best practices for the enhancement of multicultural initiatives at public 4-year institutions.

Participation in the survey is entirely voluntary, and you have the option to withdraw at any point during the process without any repercussions. Rest assured that your individual responses will be anonymized and reported in aggregate form to ensure confidentiality. Results will be made available to survey participants.

To access the survey, please follow the link provided below:

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=HmwhqGNNUkOMO1D6HxR1sQacJT4Bc0VHpRyq1chuRu1UNIFCSk1XMFBKU002VFdRODA0SDNQTDDBNMS4u>

I kindly request you to respond to the survey by December 17, 2023. Your prompt participation will contribute significantly to the overall success of this research project.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the survey or the research project, please do not hesitate to contact me or Dr. Katie Koo at katie.koo@uga.edu. I will be more than happy to provide any clarifications you may need.

Thank you for considering this invitation to participate in the survey. Your willingness to contribute to this study is highly appreciated, and I am confident that your valuable input will make a significant impact on the outcomes of this research.

Looking forward to your participation and support.

Sincerely,

J. Quinton Staples II
Doctoral Candidate
Student Affairs Leadership
University of Georgia
jqs29688@uga.edu

Appendix 2 – University Of Georgia Consent Form

Title of this study: Navigating Resources for Equity: The Relationship Between Multicultural Student Programs and Services Unit Power and Students of Color's Retention.

You are being asked to take part in a research study. The information in this form will help you decide if you want to be in this study. Please ask the researcher(s) below if there is anything that is not clear or if you need more information.

Principal Investigator: Dr. Katie Koo, Associate Professor
Department of Counseling and Human Development Services
katie.koo@uga.edu

Co-investigator : J. Quinton Staples II
Department of Counseling and Human Development Services
Jqs29688@ccga.edu

Purpose of Study: The purpose of this doctoral dissertation research is to learn about the relationship between institutional resource allocations for Multicultural Student Programs and Services and students of color retention, and the relationship between unit power for Multicultural Student Programs and Services ability to obtain institutional resources.

Criteria:

You are being invited to be in this research study because you are listed as the senior administrator for the Multicultural Student Programs and Services at your institution. You are invited to participate in this study, given you meet the eligibility criteria to participate in this study. All participants must be the most senior administrators for multicultural student programs and services, including individuals who serve as chief administrators for diversity, equity, and inclusion (or similar) programs.

Your involvement in this study is voluntary, and you may choose not to participate or to stop at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

If you are interested in participating in this study, please read the additional information on the following pages, and feel free to ask questions at any point.

Study Procedures and Time Commitment: If you agree to participate in this study, I will collect information about your experiences as budget managers for multicultural student programs and services. As this study continues, you can share your thoughts and experiences when you feel like sharing via this study survey.

Participation is voluntary. You can refuse to take part or stop at any time without penalty. Your decision to refuse or withdraw will not affect you at all. Also, you can withdraw from this study at any time you want.

Risks and discomforts: There will be no known risks by participating in this study. There are questions that may make you uncomfortable. You can skip these questions if you do not wish to answer them.

Benefits: With your participation, you will contribute to the field of this study of higher education and counseling. This research may help us to understand budget manager perception for multicultural student programs and services

Protection of Privacy and Confidentiality: I will do everything I can to protect your privacy and confidentiality. I will not tell anybody that you were in this study or what information I collected about you. Also, please note that I will not use any identifiers or codes that are linked to your information. All the data, including recording files and transcripts, will be kept in a password-protected file on a personal laptop. for five years following the end of this study. Thus, by the end of 2028, all recordings and transcripts will be destroyed.

The collected information (survey results) may be shared in future studies (e.g., publication in a journal article) without additional consent, but please note that there will be no identifiers associated with you, and I will continue to use the pseudonym to protect your privacy and confidentiality.

Participant rights: If you have questions about this research study, please feel free to ask questions about this research at any time. You can contact the Principal Investigator, Dr. Katie Koo, at or Co-Investigator, J. Quinton Staples II, at jqs29688@uga.edu. If you have any complaints or questions about your rights as a research volunteer, contact the IRB at 706-542-3199 or by email at .

If you agree to participate in this research study, please sign below:

_____ Name of Researcher	_____ Signature	_____ Date
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_____ Name of Participant	_____ Signature	_____ Date
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Please keep one copy and return the signed copy to the researcher.

Appendix 3 – Multicultural Student Programs and Services Budget Manager Unit Power Survey

Section One: Institutional Information

1. Institution Name: _____
2. Institution Location (State): _____
3. What is Your Institutional Title/Role: _____
4. How years have you served at this institution: _____
5. Does your institution have a space designated as a Multicultural Student Programs and Services. Note: Multicultural Student Programs and Services are defined as any office/department where fifty percent or more of the organization or individual's compensated time is spent: (1) Directly advancing, advocating for, or formally supporting affinity or identity groups based on racial, gender, sexual orientation or identity, or ethnicity. (2) Advocacy for social justice. (3) Advocacy for anti-racism. (4) Focused on serving students, faculty, or staff primarily belonging to specific identifications of race, gender, sex, sexual orientation, or identity. (5) Policies or recommendations to further diversity, inclusion, and equity. (CAS Standards, 2018; Knight, 2022).
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
6. If no, is there an individual whose job function aligns with the MSPS definition? Note: Multicultural Student Programs and Services are defined as any office/department where fifty percent or more of the organization or individual's compensated time is spent: (1) Directly advancing, advocating for, or formally supporting affinity or identity groups based on racial, gender, sexual orientation or identity, or ethnicity. (2) Advocacy for social justice. (3) Advocacy for anti-racism. (4) Focused on serving students, faculty, or staff primarily belonging to specific identifications of race, gender, sex, sexual orientation, or identity. (5) Policies or recommendations to further diversity, inclusion, and equity. (CAS Standards, 2018; Knight, 2022).
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

Section Two: Institutional Expenditures

This section focuses on the amount of dollars allocated/spent on MSPS. Respondents are asked to report their data over a ten-year period from 2018 – 2022. Additionally, respondents are asked to consider funding type. State funds are considered institutional dollars funded by state/government agencies; student fees are considered dollars generated from student activity fees (or similar source). Foundation dollars are dollars allocated from private donations. Grant dollars are funds allocated from grant sources. Funds should consider all expenses, including personnel costs, travel, programming, and supplies/materials.

Please select the funding range for FY 2018

	Less than \$39,999	\$40,000 to \$79,999	\$80,000 to 119,999	\$120,000 to \$159,999	\$160,000 to \$199,999	More than \$200,000	N/A
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State Funds							
Student Activity Fees							
Foundation Dollars							
Grant Funds							

Please select the funding range for FY 2019

	Less than \$39,999	\$40,000 to \$79,999	\$80,000 to 119,999	\$120,000 to \$159,999	\$160,000 to \$199,999	More than \$200,000	N/A
State Funds							
Student Activity Fees							
Foundation Dollars							
Grant Funds							

Please select the funding range for FY 2020

	Less than \$39,999	\$40,000 to \$79,999	\$80,000 to 119,999	\$120,000 to \$159,999	\$160,000 to \$199,999	More than \$200,000	N/A
State Funds							
Student Activity Fees							
Foundation Dollars							
Grant Funds							

Please select the funding range for FY 2021

	Less than \$39,999	\$40,000 to \$79,999	\$80,000 to 119,999	\$120,000 to \$159,999	\$160,000 to \$199,999	More than \$200,000	N/A
State Funds							
Student Activity Fees							
Foundation Dollars							
Grant Funds							

Please select the funding range for FY 2022

	Less than \$39,999	\$40,000 to \$79,999	\$80,000 to 119,999	\$120,000 to \$159,999	\$160,000 to \$199,999	More than \$200,000	N/A
State Funds							
Student Activity Fees							
Foundation Dollars							
Grant Funds							

Section Three: Student Retention

This section focuses on the 1-year retention rate for first-time full-time students of color. Please indicate the retention rate in percentages for each racial category in the reported year.

FY 2018

Race	Retention Rate
Black/African American	
Latinx/Hispanic Non-White	
Asian American/Pacific Islander	
American Indian/Alaskan Native	
Two or More Races	

FY 2019

Race	Retention Rate
Black/African American	
Latinx/Hispanic Non-White	
Asian American/Pacific Islander	
American Indian/Alaskan Native	
Two or More Races	

FY 2020

Race	Retention Rate
Black/African American	
Latinx/Hispanic Non-White	
Asian American/Pacific Islander	
American Indian/Alaskan Native	
Two or More Races	

FY 2021

Race	Retention Rate
Black/African American	
Latinx/Hispanic Non-White	
Asian American/Pacific Islander	
American Indian/Alaskan Native	
Two or More Races	

FY 2022

Race	Retention Rate
Black/African American	
Latinx/Hispanic Non-White	
Asian American/Pacific Islander	
American Indian/Alaskan Native	
Two or More Races	

Section Four: This section of the survey focuses on your unit power for your MSPS unit. Resources for the purposes of this study are exclusively referring to institutional expenditures you reported for the years 2019 - 2023.

1. Environmental power is identified as external influences in budget allocation and negotiation (Hackman, 1985). Following the model provided by Hackman (1985) consider how the institutional expenditures for your budgetary unit compare with those of other similar units to yours in your ability to bring in the following.

	Much Lower than Most Similar Units	Lower than Most Similar Units	About the Same as Most Similar Units	Higher than Most Similar Units	Much Higher than Most Similar Units
Student recruitment and retention					
Ability to cope with current societal needs and problems					
Overall outside financial support					
Community support					
Alumni Support					
Federal Government Support					

2. Institutional power is the internal power a unit or subunit holds within its given institution (Hackman, 1985). Following the model provided by Hackman (1985) consider how the institutional expenditures for your budgetary unit compare with those of other similar units to yours in your to leverage following institutional power during resource allocation process.

	Much Lower than Most Similar Units	Lower than Most Similar Units	About the Same as Most Similar Units	Higher than Most Similar Units	Much Higher than Most Similar Units
Historical power within institution					
Length of time at institution					
Visibility within institution					
Visibility outside of the					

institution					
Number of Students served					
Federal government support					
Interaction with central administration					
Number of times monthly that unit leader talks with central administration					
Support of president					
Ease of access to president					

3. Resource negotiation strategies refer to the methodology employed by MSPS unit leaders in the resource allocation process (Hackman, 1985). Following the Hackman (1985) model how much do you use each of the following strategies when you prepare your unit's annual budget

	Much Lower than Most Similar Units	Lower than Most Similar Units	About the Same as Most Similar Units	Higher than Most Similar Units	Much Higher than Most Similar Units
Focusing on the needs of the total institution					
Focusing on needs of division					
Focusing on needs of unit					
Including budget request for innovative programs					

Appendix 4 -Variable Definitions & Data Codes

Carnegie Classification

Data Code	Basic Carnegie Classification	Carnegie Classification
1	Special Focus Institutions	30: Special Focus Four-Year: Arts, Music & Design Schools
2	Baccalaureate/Associate Colleges	23: Mixed Baccalaureate/Associate's
3	Baccalaureate Colleges	21: Arts & Sciences Focus 22: Diverse Fields
4	Master's Colleges & Universities	18: Larger Programs 19: Medium Programs 20: Small Programs
5	Doctoral Universities	15: Very High Research Activity 16: High Research Activity 17: Professional Universities

Institution Size

Data Code	Institution Size Label	Size Label
1	Very Small	Institutions with fewer than 1,000 students
2	Small	Institutions with 1,000 to 2,999 students
3	Medium	Institutions with 3,000 to 9,999 students
4	Large	Institutions with 10,000 to 19,999 students
5	Very Large	Institutions with 20,000 or more students

Selectivity Score

Data Code	Range (Selectivity Score)	Description
0	Open Admissions	Open Admissions
1	Least Selective	Least Selective
2	Less Selective	Less Selective
3	Moderately Selective	Moderately Selective
4	Highly Selective	Highly Selective
5	Most Selective	Most Selective

Anti-DEI legislation

Data Code	State Anti-DEI Legislation Status	Restriction Level
1	No Bill	No restriction on DEI activities.
2	Tabled, Failed, or Vetoed	Attempted but no impact on DEI.
3	Introduced	Proposed, potential anticipatory effects.
4	Final Approval	High likelihood of restriction.
5	Signed into Law	Legally enforceable, full restriction in effect.

Student services expenditures

Data Code	Expenditures	Range (Figures)
1	Very Low Expenditure	Below \$5,000,000
2	Low Expenditure	\$5,000,000 – \$15,000,000
3	Moderate Expenditure	\$15,000,001 – \$35,000,000
4	High Expenditure	\$35,000,001 – \$60,000,000
5	Very High Expenditure	Above \$60,000,000

MSPS Expenditures

Data Code	MSPS Investment (State Audit)	Range (Expenditure)
1	Minimal Investment	\$0 – \$50,000
2	Low Investment	\$50,001 – \$500,000
3	Moderate Investment	\$500,001 – \$1,000,000
4	High Investment	\$1,000,001 – \$5,000,000
5	Exceptional Investment	Above \$5,000,000

Respondent Role

Data Code	Respondent Role	Simplified Description
1	Chief Diversity Officer (CDO)	Senior leader overseeing institutional DEI efforts.
2	Student Affairs Leadership	Executive overseeing student life and engagement.
3	Director of DEI Programs	Managerial role focused on DEI initiatives.
4	Academic DEI Leader	Academic administrator with DEI responsibilities.
5	Senior University Administrator w/ DEI	Executive leader managing broader DEI strategies.

MSPS Administrator Unit Power Level

Data Code	Unit Power Level	Simplified Description
1	Much Less Than Similar Departments	Significantly weaker than similar departments.
2	Less Than Similar Departments	Somewhat weaker than similar departments.
3	About the Same as Similar Departments	Comparable to similar departments.
4	More Than Similar Departments	Somewhat stronger than similar departments.
5	Much More Than Similar Departments	Significantly stronger than similar departments.

Appendix 5 – Supplemental Tables

Table A1.1 Frequencies of Data Sources

		Completed MSPS Survey (Y/N)	MSPS State Audit (Y/N)	State Retention Report (Y/N)
N	Available Data	32	48	23
	Missing Data	243	227	252
	Total	275	275	275

Table A1.1 presents the number of cases with complete data and the cases with missing data for the sources of direct data. This study uses 3 sources of direct data. (1) MSPS (Multicultural Student Programs and Services) Administrator Survey: Over 800 emails were sent to participate in this study. (2) MSPS State Audit: For some data on MSPS expenditures, the information was obtained from state audits conducted by state legislators. Finally, (3) State Retention Reports: in some cases, the rates of student retention by race were taken from research done on a state level by the governance body of the state's higher education institutions.

Table A1.2 Frequency of Mutual Peer Institutions

		Data Sourced Institution Cases	Mutually Peer Institution Cases
N	Available Data	77	277
	Missing Data	200	0
	Total	277	277

Table A1.2 represents the number of cases sourced through mutual peer institution matching via the Chronicle of Higher Education (Elis, 2024) search tool. For all institutions where data was available via the various data sources, their mutual peer institution was found and added to the overall cases in the analysis.

Table A1.3 Frequency of IPEDS Data

		Data Sourced Institution Cases
N	Available Data	275
	Missing Data	2
	Total	277

Table A1.3 shows the number of cases available to source institutional characteristics like Carnegie classification, institutional size, selectivity, institutional retention, and combined student services data.

Table A2 Selectivity Score Range

		Frequency	Percent
Variable	Least Selective	134	48.4
	Less Selective	125	45.1
	Moderately Selective	16	5.8
	Total	275	99.3
Missing	System	2	.7
Total		277	100.0

Table A2 presents the distribution of institutions by selectivity. Among the 275 institutions with valid data, nearly half (48.7%) fell into the first category, indicating a lower selectivity score range. Another 45.5% occupied the second tier, bringing the combined total of less selective categories to just under 95%. A small minority (5.8%) was classified into the highest selectivity range, signaling a more competitive admissions environment for that subset. Data were missing for two institutions, representing less than 1% of the overall sample.

Table A3 Student Services Expenditure Tier

		Frequency	Percent
Variable	Low Expenditures	71	29.1
	Moderate – Low Expenditures	58	23.8
	Moderate – High Expenditures	59	24.2
	High Expenditures	61	25.0
	Total	275	99.3
Missing	System	2	.7
Total		277	100.0

Table A3, the institutions are fairly evenly spread across the four tiers of student services expenditures. Approximately one-quarter (25.1%) of the 275 valid cases fall into the first expenditure tier, with similar proportions in the second and fourth tiers (also around 25%). The third tier closely follows at 24.7%. This even distribution suggests no single expenditure level predominates. Missing data again involved only two institutions, a negligible fraction of the total.

Table A4 Institution Size

		Frequency	Percent
Variable	Very Small	2	.7
	Small	62	22.4
	Medium	54	19.5
	Large	65	23.5
	Very Large	92	33.2
	Total	275	99.3
Missing	System	2	.7
Total		277	100.0

Table A4 shows how institutions vary by size. The largest proportion (33.5%) is found in the largest size category (category 5), while about 23.6% are in the next largest group (category 4). The remaining categories, ranging from very small (category 1) to smaller mid-sized groups, account for the rest. Notably, only a tiny fraction (0.7%) represents the smallest size category. Two institutions lacked size data, a minimal portion of the dataset.

Table A5 Carnegie Grouping

		Frequency	Percent
Variable	Special Focus Institutions	1	.4
	Baccalaureate/Associate Colleges	4	1.4
	Baccalaureate Colleges	21	7.6

	Master's Colleges & Universities	101	36.5
	Doctoral Universities	148	53.4
	Total	275	99.3
Missing	System	2	.7
Total		277	100.0

Table A5 shows that more than half (53.8%) of the institutions fall into category 5, and another 36.7% into category 4, indicating that most are concentrated in these two classifications. A smaller number of institutions appear in categories 1 through 3 (collectively under 10%), highlighting the relative rarity of those classifications. As in previous tables, data were missing for two institutions, a negligible amount.

Table A6 Role Code

		Frequency	Percent
Variable	Chief Diversity Officer (CDO)	89	32.1
	Student Affairs Leadership	82	29.6
	Director of DEI Programs	39	14.1
	Academic DEI Leader	8	2.9
	Senior University Administrator w/ DEI	57	20.6
	Total	275	99.3
Missing	System	2	.7
Total		277	100.0

Table A6 provides an overview of the institutions' role codes. One-third (32.4%) align with the first role category, and nearly 30% fit into the second. A fifth of the sample (20.7%) occupies the fifth category, while the remaining 17% is split among categories 3 and 4. This distribution indicates a broad representation of role types, though no single category overwhelmingly dominates. Missing data remain minimal at two cases.

Table A7 Descriptive Statistics for Retention Rates (2018–2022)

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Retention 2018	275	27	100	77.04	10.688
Retention 2019	275	48	97	77.05	10.277
Retention 2020	275	44	97	78.43	9.633
Retention 2021	275	37	97	75.48	11.450
Retention 2022	275	35	98	76.17	10.639
Valid N (listwise)	275				

In Table A7, the retention rates are presented for a fixed sample of 275 institutions for five consecutive academic years. Overall, retention rates generally range from the mid-70s to high 70s, with the highest mean of 2020 at 78.43 while the lowest mean was recorded in 2021 at 75.48. Standard deviations range from about 9.6% to 11.5% age points, and this shows that the variations in the performance of the institutions are moderate; that is, some institutions have very high retention rates while others have low retention rates. The minimum values per year go from the high 20s to the mid-40s, while the maximum retention rate is usually in the upper 90s, giving a clear view of the different performances of the institutions.

Table A8 Descriptive Statistics for Student Services Expenditures (in Millions)

Year	N	Minimum (M)	Maximum (M)	Mean (M)	Std. Deviation (M)
2018	275	1.87	331.27	44.05	46.66
2019	275	1.86	355.83	46.10	49.42
2020	275	2.05	384.97	46.53	50.65
2021	275	2.12	388.40	45.50	49.84
2022	275	2.25	411.24	49.45	54.47

Note: Values rounded and expressed in millions of U.S. dollars.

The table details the number of institutions with valid financial data each year (N), along with the minimum, maximum, mean, and standard deviation of student services spending. The wide-ranging values, spanning from just under \$2 million to hundreds of millions of dollars,

underscore the considerable heterogeneity in how institutions allocate resources to support students. These expenditures may include counseling, career services, health and wellness programs, academic advising, and other areas of campus life integral to student success and retention. Observing shifts in these expenditures over time can offer insights into how institutions respond financially to changes in enrollment patterns, policy mandates, or evolving student needs.

Table A9.1 Correlation Analysis Environmental Power and MSPS Administrator Roles

	Chief Diversity Officer (CDO)	Student Affairs Leadership	Director of DEI Programs	Academic DEI Leader	Senior University Administrator w/ DEI
Student Recruitment and Retention	0.047	0.028	-.122*	0.052	-0.002
Cope w/ current societal needs	0.031	0.006	-0.084	0.116	-0.018
Overall outside financial support	0.016	-0.002	-0.114	.284**	-0.036
Community Support	0.067	0.035	-0.101	.146*	-0.091
Alumni Support	0.052	0.059	-.143*	.121*	-0.054
Federal Government Support	0.072	0.024	-.133*	.185**	-0.072

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table A9.1 examines the correlations between various institutional roles associated with diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) and elements of unit power. The roles analyzed include Chief Diversity Officer (CDO), Student Affairs Leadership, Director of DEI Programs, Academic DEI Leader, and Senior University Administrator with DEI responsibilities. The correlations between these roles and student recruitment and retention are mostly weak and not statistically significant, except for the Director of DEI Programs, which shows a small negative correlation ($r = -.122$, $p = 0.044$). When examining the institution's ability to cope with societal needs and problems, correlations remain generally weak and insignificant. The Academic DEI Leader shows the strongest positive association ($r = 0.116$, $p = 0.056$), approaching statistical significance.

In terms of overall outside financial support, academic DEI leaders demonstrate a statistically significant positive correlation ($r = .284$, $p < 0.01$). Other roles show weak or insignificant correlations, except for the Director of DEI Programs, which has a marginal negative association ($r = -0.114$, $p = 0.060$), although this is not statistically significant. For community support, the Academic DEI Leader again exhibits a positive correlation ($r = .146$, $p = 0.015$), indicating a meaningful relationship. The other roles show weak or nonsignificant correlations, with the Director of DEI Programs displaying a slight negative association ($r = -0.101$, $p = 0.094$). Regarding alumni support, two roles, Director of DEI Programs and Academic DEI Leaders, stand out. The Director of DEI Programs shows a statistically significant negative correlation ($r = -.143$, $p = 0.018$), while Academic DEI Leaders demonstrate a positive but modest correlation ($r = .121$, $p = 0.046$). Finally, in terms of federal government support, the Academic DEI Leader is the only role showing a significant positive correlation ($r = .185$, $p = 0.002$). Conversely, the Director of DEI Programs has a weak but statistically significant negative correlation ($r = -.133$, $p = 0.028$), indicating some variation in the perceived efficacy of different DEI leadership roles in securing federal funding.

Table A9.2 Correlation Analysis Institutional Power and MSPS Administrator Roles

	Chief Diversity Officer (CDO)	Student Affairs Leadership	Director of DEI Programs	Academic DEI Leader	Senior University Administrator w/ DEI
Historical power within institution	-0.010	0.071	-.163**	-.167**	.141*
Length of time at institution	-0.028	0.069	-.152*	-0.062	0.112
Visibility within the institution	0.071	-0.066	-0.053	-0.013	0.043
Visibility outside of the institution	0.056	-0.057	-0.075	-0.052	0.086
Federal government support	0.054	0.001	-0.111	-.122*	0.082
Number of students served	-0.002	-0.055	0.013	.321**	-0.080
Interaction with central administration	0.021	-0.020	-0.079	0.014	0.060
Number of times monthly that a unit leader talks with central administration	.158**	-0.058	-0.117	-0.114	0.031
Support of President	0.024	-0.067	-0.002	0.096	0.011
Ease of access to President	0.035	-0.035	-0.058	0.082	0.015

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table A9.2 investigates the relationship between institutional power and the roles of Multicultural Student Programs and Services (MSPS) administrators. In terms of historical power within the institution, Academic DEI Leaders ($r = -.167$, $p = 0.005$) and Directors of DEI Programs ($r = -.163$, $p = 0.007$) demonstrate significant negative correlations. By contrast, senior university administrators with DEI responsibilities show a modest positive correlation ($r = .141$, $p = 0.019$). When examining the unit's length of time at the institution, the Director of DEI Programs exhibits a weak but significant negative correlation ($r = -.152$, $p = 0.012$).

For visibility within the institution, none of the roles display significant correlations, suggesting that the perceived prominence of these units internally is not strongly differentiated by role. Similarly, for visibility outside of the institution, the relationships are uniformly weak and statistically insignificant across roles. Regarding federal government support, academic DEI leaders display a weak negative correlation ($r = -.122$, $p = 0.043$). Other roles do not exhibit statistically significant relationships in this domain. The number of students served presents a noteworthy finding for Academic DEI Leaders, who show a strong positive correlation ($r = .321$, $p < 0.01$). Other roles do not demonstrate significant relationships with this variable.

For interaction with central administration, no significant correlations emerge for any role, suggesting that the frequency or quality of interactions with central leadership is not

strongly tied to specific MSPS administrator roles. However, when examining the number of times monthly that a unit leader interacts with central administration, Chief Diversity Officers show a significant positive correlation ($r = .158$, $p = 0.009$). For support of the president and ease of access to the president, none of the roles show significant correlations, indicating that access to or endorsement from the president is relatively consistent across roles, regardless of differences in institutional power dynamics.

Table A9.3: Correlation Analysis Resource Negotiation and MSPS Administrator Roles

		Chief Diversity Officer (CDO)	Student Affairs Leadership	Director of DEI Programs	Academic DEI Leader	Senior University Administrator w/ DEI
Focusing on the needs of the total institution	Pearson Correlation	0.013	0.010	-0.015	0.004	-0.015
Focusing on the needs of the division	Pearson Correlation	0.082	-0.042	-0.061	.166**	-0.063
Focusing on the needs of the unit	Pearson Correlation	0.082	-0.042	-0.061	.166**	-0.063
Including budget request for innovative programs	Pearson Correlation	0.057	-0.053	-0.085	.177**	-0.006

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table A9.3 examines the relationship between resource negotiation practices and the roles of Multicultural Student Programs and Services (MSPS) administrators. When examining the practice of focusing on the needs of the total institution, none of the roles exhibit significant correlations. The coefficients for all roles are weak and statistically insignificant, indicating that resource negotiation centered on institutional needs is not strongly associated with any particular administrator role. In contrast, a notable finding emerges for focusing on the needs of the division and focusing on the needs of the unit, where Academic DEI Leaders show a statistically significant positive correlation ($r = .166$, $p = 0.006$) for both. Other roles, such as CDOs, student affairs leadership, directors of DEI programs, and senior university administrators, display weak and statistically insignificant correlations in these categories. For including budget requests for innovative programs, Academic DEI Leaders again stand out, with a significant positive correlation ($r = .177$, $p = 0.003$). Other roles, however, show no meaningful correlations, with coefficients that are weak and not statistically significant.

Table A10 Retention Rates – White Students (2018–2022)

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
White 2018	275	0.5709	0.9555	0.7433	0.0582
White 2019	275	0.5812	0.9562	0.7417	0.0576
White 2020	275	0.5832	0.9581	0.7200	0.0632
White 2021	275	0.5769	0.9658	0.7156	0.0652
White 2022	275	0.5130	0.9647	0.7365	0.0622

Valid N (listwise)

275

For White students, the retention rates vary between 71.5 and 74.3% for the period 2018 to 2022. Standard deviations are about 5-6% which shows that there is a moderate difference between the two groups. Although there are fluctuations from one year to another, these predictions indicate a medium level of consistency, although the detailed view shows that institutions may have different levels of retention rates at the extreme.

Table A11 Correlations Between State MSPS Expenditures and White Student Retention

	MSPS Expenditure 2018	MSPS Expenditure 2019	MSPS Expenditure 2021	MSPS Expenditure 2020	MSPS Expenditure 2022
White 2018	.318**	.316**	.309**	.303**	.352**
White 2019	.327**	.325**	.317**	.312**	.360**
White 2020	.328**	.326**	.318**	.312**	.362**
White 2021	.324**	.321**	.312**	.307**	.358**
White 2022	.312**	.308**	.300**	.297**	.344**

Table A11 evaluates the relationship between state-level MSPS (Multicultural Student Programs and Services) expenditures and retention rates for White students from 2018 to 2022. By analyzing Pearson correlation coefficients, this table provides insight into the extent to which MSPS funding influences the persistence of White students in higher education. Retention rates, a measure of the proportion of students who continue to the subsequent academic term, are assessed alongside state-imputed annual MSPS expenditure data. The findings reveal consistently positive and statistically significant correlations ($p \leq 0.01$) between MSPS expenditures and White student retention across all years examined. For 2018 expenditures, the correlations range from $r = .318$ to $r = .352$, indicating a moderate relationship. Similar values are observed for expenditures in 2019, with correlations ranging from $r = .327$ to $r = .360$, showing a slight increase in the strength of the association. Expenditures for 2020 maintain this trend, with correlations between $r = .328$ and $r = .362$, representing the strongest observed relationships in this dataset. For 2021 and 2022, the correlations remain robust but begin to slightly taper off. In 2021, the range is $r = .324$ to $r = .358$, while for 2022, it is $r = .312$ to $r = .344$. Despite this minor decline, the relationships remain significant and moderately strong, reinforcing the consistent link between MSPS funding and retention outcomes.

Table A12 MSPS Expenditure & Retention by Race Regression (White Students)

Hierarchical Multiple Regression Predicting Adjusted Retention Rate (80/20) – White 2018

Model	Predictor	B	Std. Error	β (Final)	t	Sig.	R ²
1	(Constant)	64.14316935	2.31584061		27.69757513	0.0	0.572
	Selectivity Score	4.187972856	0.58168992	0.303443826	7.199665471	0.0000000000061	
	Anti-State DEI Policy	-0.276306655	0.2126469	-0.05293561	-1.29936837	0.194938365	
	Stu. Serv. Expend. Tier	3.316715201	0.54095079	0.44975953	6.131269679	0.0000000031227	
	Institutional Size	1.99806142	0.60475347	0.286096613	3.303927181	0.001083736	
	Carnegie Grouping	-1.585747182	0.70975854	-0.1400918	-2.23420654	0.026297464	
Model	Predictor	B	Std. Error	β (Final)	t	Sig.	R ²
2	(Constant)	30.32152712	1.7295798		17.5311524	0.0	0.897

	Selectivity Score	1.121825218	0.30630633	0.081282985	3.662429154	0.000301606	
	Anti-State DEI Policy	0.094665029	0.10557422	0.018136193	0.896668009	0.370709934	
	Stu. Serv. Expend. Tier	0.500652578	0.30665124	0.067890444	1.632644887	0.10373132	
	Institutional Size	0.367728406	0.30225085	0.052653963	1.216633154	0.224826299	
	Carnegie Grouping	-1.160942941	0.3489354	-0.10256274	-3.3270999	0.001001785	
	Retention_2018	0.622720127	0.02291743	0.806810089	27.17234037	0.0000000000000	
	2018_Student Services	0.0000000187	5.3528E-09	0.105849742	3.485902783	0.000573884	
Model	Predictor	B	Std. Error	β (Final)	t	Sig.	R ²
3	(Constant)	30.53887374	1.72082725		17.74662378	0.0	0.899
	Selectivity Score	1.092250157	0.30454104	0.079140094	3.58654502	0.00039917	
	Anti-State DEI Policy	0.092260947	0.10486474	0.017675613	0.879809015	0.379762934	
	Stu. Serv. Expend. Tier	0.520646655	0.30471495	0.070601719	1.70863511	0.088693871	
	Institutional Size	0.364323162	0.30020679	0.052166376	1.213574013	0.225995051	
	Carnegie Grouping	-1.194088661	0.34691309	-0.10549098	-3.44203979	0.000671096	
	Retention_2018	0.619451279	0.02281278	0.802574897	27.15369449	0.0000000000000	
	2018_Student Services	0.0000000141	5.7282E-09	0.079826217	2.456595549	0.014670195	
	MSPS Expenditure 2018	0.0000002020	9.3878E-08	0.05122975	2.151379868	0.032353606	
<i>Hierarchical Multiple Regression Predicting Adjusted Retention Rate (80/20) – White 2019</i>							
Model	Predictor	B	Std. Error	β (Final)	t	Sig.	R ²
1	(Constant)	64.14316935	2.31584061		27.69757513	0.0	0.564
	Selectivity Score	4.187972856	0.58168992	0.303443826	7.199665471	0.00000000000614	
	Anti-State DEI Policy	-0.276306655	0.2126469	-0.05293561	-1.29936837	0.194938365	
	Stu. Serv. Expend. Tier	3.316715201	0.54095079	0.44975953	6.131269679	0.0000000031227	
	Institutional Size	1.99806142	0.60475347	0.286096613	3.303927181	0.001083736	
	Carnegie Grouping	-1.585747182	0.70975854	-0.1400918	-2.23420654	0.026297464	
Model	Predictor	B	Std. Error	β (Final)	t	Sig.	R ²
2	(Constant)	25.18681436	1.52245789		16.54352121	0.0	0.927
	Selectivity Score	0.511473527	0.26068818	0.037059334	1.96201272	0.050807533	
	Anti-State DEI Policy	0.082073779	0.08799773	0.015723926	0.932680674	0.351833849	
	Stu. Serv. Expend. Tier	0.132327103	0.25468714	0.017944072	0.519567275	0.603798907	
	Institutional Size	0.43131064	0.2520337	0.061758118	1.71132133	0.088191903	
	Carnegie Grouping	-1.433266326	0.29146562	-0.12662097	-4.91744563	0.0000015398829	
	Retention_2019	0.73071136	0.02138729	0.910000012	34.16568648	0.0000000000000	
	2019_Student Services	0.0000000111	4.2127E-09	0.06657558	2.638477367	0.008820735	
Model	Predictor	B	Std. Error	β (Final)	t	Sig.	R ²
3	(Constant)	25.28693432	1.53108129		16.515736	0.0	0.926
	Selectivity Score	0.509011229	0.26097756	0.036880925	1.950402286	0.052186356	
	Anti-State DEI Policy	0.081580183	0.08808993	0.015629362	0.926101095	0.355239255	
	Stu. Serv. Expend. Tier	0.138096997	0.25508621	0.018726492	0.541373816	0.588706506	
	Institutional Size	0.431406666	0.25228927	0.061771868	1.709968319	0.088446653	
	Carnegie Grouping	-1.441755649	0.29202751	-0.12737096	-4.93705422	0.0000014075779	
	Retention_2019	0.729016222	0.02155329	0.907888951	33.82389315	0.0000000000000	
	2019_Student Services	0.0000000100	4.542E-09	0.059696611	2.194372849	0.029080037	
	MSPS Expenditure 2019	0.0000000559	8.2106E-08	0.013911921	0.680768769	0.496614451	
<i>Hierarchical Multiple Regression Predicting Adjusted Retention Rate (80/20) – White 2020</i>							
Model	Predictor	B	Std. Error	β (Final)	t	Sig.	R ²
1	(Constant)	64.14316935	2.31584061		27.69757513	0.0	0.564
	Selectivity Score	4.187972856	0.58168992	0.303443826	7.199665471	0.0000000000061	

	Anti-State DEI Policy	-0.276306655	0.2126469	-0.05293561	-1.29936837	0.194938365	
	Stu. Serv. Expend. Tier	3.316715201	0.54095079	0.44975953	6.131269679	3.12273E-09	
	Institutional Size	1.99806142	0.60475347	0.286096613	3.303927181	0.001083736	
	Carnegie Grouping	-1.585747182	0.70975854	-0.1400918	-2.23420654	0.026297464	
Model	Predictor	B	Std. Error	β (Final)	t	Sig.	R ²
2	(Constant)	20.75370599	1.64395142		12.62428176	0.0	0.924
	Selectivity Score	0.610735741	0.26332564	0.044251478	2.319317393	0.021138433	
	Anti-State DEI Policy	-0.130236835	0.08918089	-0.02495114	-1.46036705	0.145373762	
	Stu. Serv. Expend. Tier	0.179619416	0.25658212	0.024357094	0.700046504	0.484512363	
	Institutional Size	0.299933059	0.25643948	0.042946544	1.169605623	0.243210606	
	Carnegie Grouping	-1.229490263	0.2958388	-0.10861851	-4.15594656	0.0000437585392	
	Retention_2020	0.772141343	0.02290537	0.902433547	33.71005281	0.0000000000000	
	2020_Student Services	0.0000000116	4.0796E-09	0.070977954	2.833127211	0.004963795	
Model	Predictor	B	Std. Error	β (Final)	t	Sig.	R ²
3	(Constant)	20.91108896	1.65294521		12.65080588	0.0	0.924
	Selectivity Score	0.610623804	0.26338859	0.044243368	2.318338079	0.021195308	
	Anti-State DEI Policy	-0.131631212	0.08921468	-0.02521828	-1.47544344	0.141285	
	Stu. Serv. Expend. Tier	0.18736215	0.25677712	0.025407039	0.729668387	0.466239818	
	Institutional Size	0.302955784	0.25652115	0.043379359	1.181016781	0.238658931	
	Carnegie Grouping	-1.24431606	0.29633443	-0.10992829	-4.19902623	0.0000366801221	
	Retention_2020	0.769582129	0.02307392	0.899442487	33.35289697	0.0000000000000	
	2020_Student Services	0.0000000099	4.465E-09	0.060575711	2.209207394	0.028019045	
	MSPS Expenditure 2020	0.0000000821	8.7888E-08	0.019743591	0.934557532	0.350870386	
<i>Hierarchical Multiple Regression Predicting Adjusted Retention Rate (80/20) – White 2021</i>							
Model	Predictor	B	Std. Error	β (Final)	t	Sig.	R ²
1	(Constant)	64.14316935	2.31584061		27.69757513	0.0	0.564
	Selectivity Score	4.187972856	0.58168992	0.303443826	7.199665471	0.0000000000061	
	Anti-State DEI Policy	-0.276306655	0.2126469	-0.05293561	-1.29936837	0.194938365	
	Stu. Serv. Expend. Tier	3.316715201	0.54095079	0.44975953	6.131269679	0.0000000031227	
	Institutional Size	1.99806142	0.60475347	0.286096613	3.303927181	0.001083736	
	Carnegie Grouping	-1.585747182	0.70975854	-0.1400918	-2.23420654	0.026297464	
Model	Predictor	B	Std. Error	β (Final)	t	Sig.	R ²
2	(Constant)	31.637777	1.75518562		18.02531689	0.0	0.888
	Selectivity Score	0.764514187	0.32042776	0.055393652	2.385917441	0.017739203	
	Anti-State DEI Policy	-0.009191546	0.10852049	-0.00176094	-0.08469872	0.932564869	
	Stu. Serv. Expend. Tier	0.239724613	0.31040783	0.032507593	0.772289186	0.44063137	
	Institutional Size	0.022456654	0.31449883	0.003215503	0.071404573	0.943129629	
	Carnegie Grouping	-0.437976551	0.36172078	-0.03869275	-1.21081389	0.227045493	
	Retention_2021	0.614400027	0.02349932	0.852332143	26.14543733	0.0000000000000	
	2021_Student Services	0.0000000145	4.9943E-09	0.087604144	2.900377651	0.004039748	
Model	Predictor	B	Std. Error	β (Final)	t	Sig.	R ²
3	(Constant)	31.82302559	1.75885668		18.09301801	0.0	0.888
	Selectivity Score	0.763104602	0.32002836	0.055291519	2.384490579	0.017809337	
	Anti-State DEI Policy	-0.011541733	0.1083999	-0.0022112	-0.10647365	0.91528742	
	Stu. Serv. Expend. Tier	0.24783179	0.31008277	0.033606958	0.799243984	0.424867443	
	Institutional Size	0.028501594	0.31413991	0.004081061	0.09072898	0.927776743	
	Carnegie Grouping	-0.465311954	0.36188841	-0.04110768	-1.28578851	0.199643532	
	Retention_2021	0.611235587	0.02359767	0.847942244	25.90236573	0.0000000000000	
	2021_Student Services	0.0000000117	5.4432E-09	0.070600204	2.144645642	0.032894116	

MSPS Expenditure 2021 0.0000001370 1.0617E-07 0.032882843 1.290335367 0.19806324						
<i>Hierarchical Multiple Regression Predicting Adjusted Retention Rate (80/20) – White 2022</i>						
Model	Predictor	B	Std. Error	β (Final)	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	64.14316935	2.31584061		27.69757513	0.0
	Selectivity Score	4.187972856	0.58168992	0.303443826	7.199665471	0.0000000000061
	Anti-State DEI Policy	-0.276306655	0.2126469	-0.05293561	-1.29936837	0.194938365
	Stu. Serv. Expend. Tier	3.316715201	0.54095079	0.44975953	6.131269679	0.0000000031227
	Institutional Size	1.99806142	0.60475347	0.286096613	3.303927181	0.001083736
	Carnegie Grouping	-1.585747182	0.70975854	-0.1400918	-2.23420654	0.026297464
Model	Predictor	B	Std. Error	β (Final)	t	Sig.
2	(Constant)	32.65352036	1.95769302		16.67959177	0.0
	Selectivity Score	0.747942927	0.35861418	0.054192964	2.085647915	0.037967234
	Anti-State DEI Policy	-0.119750361	0.1202	-0.02294211	-0.99625922	0.320033029
	Stu. Serv. Expend. Tier	0.442794631	0.34266743	0.060044681	1.292199365	0.197413801
	Institutional Size	0.631272254	0.34446918	0.090390041	1.83259432	0.06798491
	Carnegie Grouping	-1.643196613	0.39862291	-0.14516713	-4.12218308	0.0000502425346
	Retention_2022	0.634049535	0.02811684	0.817688569	22.55052702	0.0000000000000
	2022_Student Services	0.0000000127	5.0565E-09	0.083607949	2.502717722	0.01292701
Model	Predictor	B	Std. Error	β (Final)	t	Sig.
3	(Constant)	32.84489623	1.9571971		16.78159866	0.0
	Selectivity Score	0.724908728	0.35809221	0.052523998	2.024363303	0.043939615
	Anti-State DEI Policy	-0.114651055	0.1199631	-0.02196517	-0.95571932	0.340088379
	Stu. Serv. Expend. Tier	0.435249544	0.34189219	0.059021538	1.273060788	0.204116362
	Institutional Size	0.633643324	0.34365646	0.090729548	1.84382778	0.066328821
	Carnegie Grouping	-1.663667597	0.39791125	-0.14697562	-4.18100162	0.0000395155791
	Retention_2022	0.630871653	0.02812973	0.813590281	22.42722092	0.0000000000000
	2022_Student Services	0.0000000098	5.3819E-09	0.064976771	1.827401218	0.068768257
	MSPS Expenditure 2022	0.0000001569	1.0437E-07	0.04112894	1.503493395	0.133907156

White students, R^2 moved from 54.4% to 89.9%. In the third model, Retention_2018 ($p < .001^{***}$), Carnegie Grouping ($p < .01^{**}$), Institutional Size ($p < .05^*$), Selectivity Score Range ($p < .01^{**}$), and 2018_Student Services Combined ($p < .01^{**}$) proved influential. Although anti-DEI policy indicators initially showed effects in Model 1, they ceased to matter once prior retention and other institutional variables were introduced, highlighting that internal campus factors most strongly govern White student retention rates.

Table A13. Sensitivity Testing for Correlation Analysis

	State_MSPS Expenditure 2018	State_MSPS Expenditure 2019	State_MSPS Expenditure 2021	State_MSPS Expenditure 2020	State_MSPS Expenditure 2022
State Retention Report Asian 2018	0.308	0.295	0.282	0.298	0.291
State Retention Report Asian 2019	.647**	.643**	.634**	.646**	.630**
State Retention Report Asian 2020	0.323	0.310	0.310	0.332	0.303
State Retention Report Asian 2021	.559*	.550*	.518*	.546*	.528*

State Retention Report Asian 2022	.530*	.522*	.498*	.529*	.494*
State Retention Report Black 2018	.598**	.624**	.615**	.617**	.615**
State Retention Report Black 2019	.670**	.690**	.682**	.673**	.693**
State Retention Report Black 2020	.682**	.698**	.684**	.678**	.701**
State Retention Report Black 2021	.733**	.747**	.735**	.731**	.749**
State Retention Report Black 2022	.705**	.720**	.708**	.706**	.719**
State Retention Report Hispanic 2018	.613**	.632**	.627**	.618**	.630**
State Retention Report Hispanic 2019	.724**	.742**	.728**	.727**	.733**
State Retention Report Hispanic 2020	.737**	.753**	.752**	.748**	.748**
State Retention Report Hispanic 2021	.787**	.789**	.783**	.784**	.790**
State Retention Report Hispanic 2022	.641**	.654**	.644**	.645**	.650**
State Retention Report Multiracial 2018	.773**	.791**	.785**	.780**	.788**
State Retention Report Multiracial 2019	.622**	.640**	.648**	.641**	.641**
State Retention Report Multiracial 2020	.804**	.811**	.816**	.814**	.808**
State Retention Report Multiracial 2021	.850**	.853**	.849**	.854**	.851**
State Retention Report Multiracial 2022	.815**	.815**	.818**	.823**	.817**

N = 20

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table A13 presents correlation coefficients between State_MSPS Expenditure (2018–2022) and annual retention outcomes (2018–2022) for Asian, Black, Hispanic, and Multiracial groups. These findings help validate the imputation strategy by showing that the non-imputed data exhibits correlations consistent with those in the larger dataset. Each cell reports a Pearson correlation coefficient, with asterisks indicating statistical significance at the 0.01 or 0.05 level. Although the sample size is limited to 20 observations, these coefficients provide a snapshot of whether expenditures consistently align with retention across multiple years. Notably, Black and Hispanic students display strong correlations in most year combinations, while Asian students sometimes show weaker or non-significant results.

Table A14. Sensitivity Testing for Hierarchical Regression Analysis

Asian Student Retention 2022 – Sensitivity Test

Model	Predictor	B	B (Final)	t	Sig.	R ²
1	(Constant)	44.661		8.544	0.000	0.715
	Selectivity Score Range	7.681	0.516	3.490	0.003	
	Institutional Size	3.215	0.391	1.751	0.099	

	Carnegie Grouping	1.000	0.112	0.525	0.607	
2	(Constant)	19.567		7.717	0.000	0.988
	Selectivity Score Range	0.525	0.035	0.798	0.438	
	Institutional Size	-1.464	-0.178	-1.909	0.077	
	Carnegie Grouping	-0.003	0.000	-0.007	0.995	
	Retention_2022	0.794	0.951	17.829	0.000	
	2022_Student Services Combined	\$0.00000007359	0.193	2.146	0.050	
3	(Constant)	21.474		6.769	0.000	0.989
	Selectivity Score Range	0.271	0.018	0.384	0.707	
	Institutional Size	-1.334	-0.162	-1.715	0.110	
	Carnegie Grouping	0.047	0.005	0.111	0.913	
	Retention_2022	0.762	0.913	13.861	0.000	
	2022_Student Services Combined	\$0.00000006792	0.178	1.954	0.073	
	State_MSPS Expenditure 2022 Imputed	\$0.00000011330	0.058	1.000	0.336	

Black Student Retention 2022 – Selectivity Test

Model	Predictor	β	β (Final)	t	p	R ²
1	(Constant)	40.219		7.015	0.000	0.649
	Selectivity Score Range	8.030	0.501	3.326	0.004	
	Institutional Size	3.632	0.410	1.803	0.090	
	Carnegie Grouping	0.959	0.100	0.459	0.652	
2	(Constant)	9.050		4.723	0.000	0.992
	Selectivity Score Range	0.535	0.033	1.076	0.300	
	Institutional Size	-0.367	-0.041	-0.633	0.537	
	Carnegie Grouping	-0.148	-0.015	-0.468	0.647	
	Retention_2022	0.886	0.986	26.334	0.000	
	2022_Student Services Combined	\$0.00000001496	0.036	0.577	0.573	
3	(Constant)	14.060		15.340	0.000	0.999
	Selectivity Score Range	-0.134	-0.008	-0.656	0.523	
	Institutional Size	-0.025	-0.003	-0.112	0.912	
	Carnegie Grouping	-0.017	-0.002	-0.143	0.888	
	Retention_2022	0.802	0.891	50.477	0.000	
	2022_Student Services Combined	\$0.00000000005	0.000	0.005	0.996	
	State_MSPS Expenditure 2022	\$0.00000029778	0.141	9.097	0.000	

Hispanic Student Retention 2022 – Selectivity Test

Model	Predictor	β	β (Final)	t	p	R ²
1	(Constant)	41.685		7.510	0.000	0.652
	Selectivity Score Range	7.927	0.509	3.392	0.004	
	Institutional Size	3.312	0.384	1.699	0.109	
	Carnegie Grouping	1.145	0.123	0.566	0.579	
2	(Constant)	12.223		7.677	0.000	0.994
	Selectivity Score Range	0.536	0.034	1.298	0.215	
	Institutional Size	-0.866	-0.100	-1.799	0.094	
	Carnegie Grouping	0.068	0.007	0.257	0.801	
	Retention_2022	0.860	0.983	30.742	0.000	
	2022_Student Services Combined	\$0.0000000310	0.078	1.438	0.173	
3	(Constant)	15.973		14.129	0.000	0.998
	Selectivity Score Range	0.036	0.002	0.142	0.889	
	Institutional Size	-0.610	-0.071	-2.202	0.046	
	Carnegie Grouping	0.166	0.018	1.100	0.291	
	Retention_2022	0.796	0.911	40.659	0.000	
	2022_Student Services Combined	\$0.0000000198	0.050	1.598	0.134	
	State_MSPS Expenditure 2022	\$0.0000002228	0.108	5.520	0.000	

Multiracial Student Retention 2022 – Selectivity Test

Model	Predictors	β	β (Final)	t	p	R ²
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1	(Constant)	41.565		7.468	0.000	0.652
	Selectivity Score Range	7.933	0.508	3.385	0.004	
	Institutional Size	3.333	0.386	1.705	0.108	
	Carnegie Grouping	1.136	0.122	0.560	0.583	
2	(Constant)	11.951		7.408	0.000	0.994
	Selectivity Score Range	0.532	0.034	1.272	0.224	
	Institutional Size	-0.829	-0.096	-1.700	0.111	
	Carnegie Grouping	0.056	0.006	0.209	0.837	
	Retention_2022	0.862	0.984	30.425	0.000	
	2022_Student Services Combined	\$0.0000000295	0.074	1.353	0.197	
3	(Constant)	15.813		14.384	0.000	0.998
	Selectivity Score Range	0.017	0.001	0.068	0.947	
	Institutional Size	-0.566	-0.065	-2.099	0.056	
	Carnegie Grouping	0.157	0.017	1.071	0.304	
	Retention_2022	0.797	0.909	41.834	0.000	
	2022_Student Services Combined	\$0.0000000180	0.045	1.497	0.158	
	State_MSPS Expenditure 2022	\$0.0000002295	0.111	5.847	0.000	

Table A14 presents a set of hierarchical regression models for Asian, Black, Hispanic, and Multiracial students that predict 2022 retention. Model 1 includes the institutional characteristics of selectivity, size, and Carnegie classification. Model 2 adds 2022 retention and combined student services spending. Model 3 introduces State_MSPS Expenditure 2022. This stepwise design demonstrates how each new variable affects the model's explanatory power.

For Asian students, the final model explains nearly all variance ($R^2 \approx 0.99$), although State_MSPS Expenditure 2022 is not statistically significant. In contrast, for Black, Hispanic, and Multiracial students, State_MSPS Expenditure 2022 remains significant in the final model ($p < 0.001$) and pushes R^2 values to 0.999 or higher. These results serve as a sensitivity test showing that, despite some differences across groups, the overall regression structure is consistent. Because these data underlie the imputation process in the broader study, the stability of these models—especially at high explanatory power—suggests that the imputed data likely captures the true relationships rather than artifacts of missing information.

Table A15. Principal Analysis Component Communalities

Factors	Initial	Extraction
Environmental Power - Student Recruitment and Retention	1.000	.758
Environmental Power - Ability to cope with current societal needs and problems	1.000	.788
Environmental Power - Overall outside financial support	1.000	.704
Environmental Power - Community Support	1.000	.748
Environmental Power - Alumni Support	1.000	.719
Environmental Power - Federal Government Support	1.000	.830
Institutional Power - Historical power within institution	1.000	.759
Institutional Power - Length of time at institution	1.000	.764
Institutional Power - Visibility within the institution	1.000	.929
Institutional Power - Visibility outside of the institution	1.000	.943
Institutional Power - Federal government support	1.000	.853
Institutional Power - Number of students served	1.000	.601
Institutional Power - Interaction with central administration	1.000	.790
Institutional Power - Number of times monthly that a unit leader talks with central administration	1.000	.847
Institutional Power - Support of President	1.000	.776
Institutional Power - Ease of access to President	1.000	.752

Resource Negotiation - Focusing on the needs of the total institution	1.000	.771
Resource Negotiation - Focusing on the needs of the division	1.000	.953
Resource Negotiation - Focusing on the needs of the unit	1.000	.953
Resource Negotiation - Including budget request for innovative programs	1.000	.809

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Total Variance Explained

Component	Total	Initial Eigenvalues		Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
		% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	8.166	40.832	40.832	8.166	40.832	40.832
2	2.558	12.789	53.621	2.558	12.789	53.621
3	2.326	11.632	65.253	2.326	11.632	65.253
4	1.925	9.625	74.878	1.925	9.625	74.878
5	1.073	5.363	80.241	1.073	5.363	80.241
6	.806	4.028	84.269			
7	.743	3.716	87.985			
8	.564	2.820	90.804			
9	.493	2.465	93.269			
10	.352	1.761	95.030			
11	.299	1.495	96.525			
12	.173	.863	97.388			
13	.161	.806	98.194			
14	.132	.658	98.852			
15	.110	.548	99.400			
16	.079	.393	99.792			
17	.022	.108	99.900			
18	.013	.065	99.965			
19	.007	.035	100.000			
20	-2.602E-16	-1.301E-15	100.000			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Component Matrix

	Component				
	1	2	3	4	5
Environmental Power - Student Recruitment and Retention	.667	.029	-.289	.204	.432
Environmental Power - Ability to cope with current societal needs and problems	.702	-.049	-.213	.439	.235
Environmental Power - Overall outside financial support	.695	-.450	-.109	-.085	.018
Environmental Power - Community Support	.837	-.146	-.010	-.110	.118
Environmental Power - Alumni Support	.600	-.557	.170	-.018	.142
Environmental Power - Federal Government Support	.585	-.368	-.085	-.576	.113
Institutional Power - Historical power within institution	.565	-.385	-.180	.480	-.166
Institutional Power - Length of time at institution	.578	-.506	-.003	.370	.191
Institutional Power - Visibility within the institution	.836	.100	.031	.198	-.423
Institutional Power - Visibility outside of the institution	.739	-.153	-.027	.042	-.609
Institutional Power - Federal government support	.529	-.188	.077	-.718	-.128

Institutional Power - Number of students served	.398	.040	.620	.173	.163
Institutional Power - Interaction with central administration	.839	.249	-.082	.132	.018
Institutional Power - Number of times monthly that a unit leader talks with central administration	.765	.362	-.208	-.294	-.044
Institutional Power - Support of President	.691	.160	-.374	-.360	.063
Institutional Power - Ease of access to President	.497	.556	-.399	-.156	.110
Resource Negotiation - Focusing on the needs of the total institution	.174	.686	-.487	.172	.057
Resource Negotiation - Focusing on the needs of the division	.526	.354	.724	-.085	.141
Resource Negotiation - Focusing on the needs of the unit	.526	.354	.724	-.085	.141
Resource Negotiation - Including budget request for innovative programs	.638	.405	.300	.287	-.255

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

a. 5 components extracted.

Table A15 applies principal component analysis (PCA) to evaluate the underlying factor structure of variables related to environmental power, institutional power, and resource negotiation. The communalities reveal how much of each variable's variance is captured by the extracted factors, most of which remain above 0.70. Five factors emerged with eigenvalues greater than 1, collectively explaining just over 80% of the total variance. This indicates a strong, coherent structure within the dataset. Because these variables form a cornerstone for imputation in the broader study, confirming that they converge into stable factors adds confidence to the imputation process. The high communalities and clear factor solution suggest that the constructs of power and resource negotiation are well defined, thereby reinforcing the reliability of the subsequent data analyses.

Table A16. Correlation Between MSPS Expenditures and Adjusted Black Retention Under Varying Weight Schemes

Weighting Scheme	Correlation (r)	p-value
80/20	0.44**	< .001
70/30	0.48**	< .001
60/40	0.50**	< .001

**, Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*, Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Note : N = 275 institutions.

Weighting scheme refers to the proportion of (institutional retention) to (national race-specific retention). For instance, "80/20" indicates 80% institutional retention data and 20% national race-specific data. Table A16 confirms that different weighting approaches (80/20, 70/30, 60/40 of institutional vs. national retention) did not substantially alter this study's core findings. It reports the correlation between State_MSPS Expenditure and Adjusted Black Retention under each scheme. As shown, the correlation coefficients remain in the moderate positive range across weightings, with only minor numerical differences. Although this study

calculated similarly adjusted retention rates for multiple racial/ethnic subgroups (e.g., Hispanic, Asian, Multiracial), Table A16 highlights Black student retention as a representative example of how the weighting schemes (80/20, 70/30, and 60/40) minimally alter the correlations with MSPS expenditures. In preliminary checks, correlations for the other subgroups followed the same pattern: small numerical shifts but no qualitative change in the overall results. By focusing on one illustrative subgroup here, we avoid overburdening the appendix with repetitive tables; however, additional details for all subgroups are available upon request.