A Literature Review of Retention and Recruitment Strategies of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs)

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Abstract: Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) were initially founded with the aim of providing higher education to the African American Community. These institutions have progressed to grow and widened their scope to recruit diverse students. Currently, they recruit students from other races such as whites and Hispanics among others. However, there has been attrition in HBCUs. This study was conducted to explore strategies that HBCUs can use in the retention and recruitment of students. The methodology used was the critical literature review where various pieces of literature related to the topic were analyzed and reviewed. Results from the study indicated that the barriers to recruitment and retention include institutional financial difficulties, as well as students’ social and educational backgrounds. The recruitment and retention strategies identified include enrollment management, student counseling services, promoting interaction among students, and soliciting grants among others.

Keywords: African American Community, Critical, Barriers, Counseling Services,

Introduction

According to Prince and Ford (2016) the term historically black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) refers to institutions of higher learning that were founded in the United States before 1964. These institutions main objective was to foster higher learning for the African American community. These institutions admit students from all races. The intention of these institutions was to serve the African American, most of them are located in states that were formally considered as slave states. Besides, most of these institutions came into being after the American Civil War. These institutions are mostly associated with the religious missionary organizations which established them after the civil war. However, there are institutions which had been established before the civil war which include the Lincoln University and the Cheney University. The two institutions were established in 1854 and 1837 respectively and were specifically developed for the education of African American black people.

As suggested by Lomotey (2010) HBCUs have faced various challenges in their history. Initially, they were excluded from land grants in most states
especially in South America. However, after the Agricultural College Act of 1890, states were required to have the land grant for HBCUs. The act also fostered the foundation of many HBCUs as states aimed at adhering to the regulation passed. The Act also allowed the HBCUs to continue receiving annual funding from the federal government. As Burke (2014) discussed these funds were used in research and extension activities. Later, HBCUs received another boost from the Higher Education Act of 1965 which led to the formation of a program for federal grants to help support HBCUs. Also, these colleges have benefitted from increased availability of resources through the HBCU Library Alliance which supports the information sharing and collaboration among professionals in HBCUs with the aim of strengthening them. According to the American School Research (2016), only 27 of the 107 HBCUs offer doctoral programs and 52 have Master’s programs. In addition, Bachelor’s degrees are offered in 83 colleges and associate degrees in 38 colleges.

Despite the above progress made by the HBCUs since they were founded, there are current challenges that limit their overall successes. Despite having struggled for funding, Fort (2013) argued that there are HBCUs, which are still not financially stable. The financial instability in these institutions has been caused by the decline in financial aid to students. Besides, the higher cost of providing private education has contributed to the budgetary crisis among these schools. Other factors include the great recession which affected the economy of most institutions adversely. The problem of funding is a plague in both public and private HBCUs.

Newkirk (2012) suggested that the second problem facing HBCUs is the accreditation challenge. Accreditation of these schools is usually a complicated process. Most of the HBCUs are accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS). In SACS, 13% of the membership is formed by the HBCUs. Therefore, they contribute a small percentage of its membership (Lee, 2008). However, 25% of the sanctions of SACS between the years 1996 to 2005 were regarding HBCUs. Therefore, these schools are at a substantial risk of sanctions as compared to other schools. As Lee (2008) asserted that from the year 1989 to the present, 50% of HBCUs have lost their accreditation under SACS and many have been forced to close.

This study was motivated by the high increase of attrition in HBCUs. HBCUs contribute significantly nationally through the provision of academic opportunities to African-American, as well as students from other races. They create a favorable environment to empower and nurture learners. Therefore, these schools require fostering to ensure that they continue meeting their objectives for the interest of the nation and the students. Consequently, this study sought to provide knowledge that is paramount in contributing to the success of the HBCUs through...
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the adoption of effective retention and recruitment strategies.

The positive social change and policy implications for this study are that policymakers, potential students, and communities will be better informed on how to improve student enrolment and retention in graduate programs at HBCUs and compete better for eligible students.

**Problem Statement**

Despite the continuation of financial problems, accreditation issues, and comparatively low graduation rates, (HBCUs) historically Black colleges and universities have continued to be a significant location of choice for education among African-Americans. Additionally, HBCUs have been found to be growing in popularity among other groups. Despite the popularity of HBCUs, students have other options, and often HBCUs are not the first choice for many students considering the kinds of funding and opportunities that various (PWIs) predominately white institutions may be able to offer.

HBCUs also face great competition in the admission of African-American and students from other races. Despite these institutions being considered as effective in the retention and graduation of African-American students as compared to predominately white colleges and universities (PWIs), the HBCUs have faced various challenges. Betsey (2008) argued that the higher learning institutions environment is rigid and may contribute to some HBCUs closing to due to their lack financial soundness. Moreover, lack of proper strategies to retain and recruit students has contributed to the decline in the performance of the HBCUs.

**Research Questions**

These research questions guided the researcher in the topic and are classified into two major categories, which are the general questions and the specific questions. The general questions are broad based questions:

1. What are some of the barriers to the retention of diverse graduate students at HBCUs found within the current literature?

2. What are the successful strategies for the recruitment of diverse graduate students at HBCUs(s) found in the current literature?

The specific questions are narrower than the general ones. They were derived from the general questions and aimed at presenting the findings more precisely. More specifically, the following research questions need to be addressed:

1. How to increase the academic stature and status of HBCUs by enforcing admissions standards.

2. How to increase the success and retention of currently enrolled students by enveloping them in a network of comprehensive academic and personal and community-based support services;

3. How to effectively collaborate with community colleges to increase the number of reverse transfers and dual enrollees;

4. How to increase the number of qualified Hispanic, Caucasian and other non-white students;

**Purpose of the study:**

The purpose of the study was to provide a comprehensive background for understanding the decline in enrollment in HBCUs. Moreover, the study was conducted to inspire ideas by identifying
gaps or inconsistencies within a limited area of research. The research critically examined the existing literature and identified strategies that could be used for the effective enrollment, recruitment, and retention of diverse students’ populations at HBCUs. Additionally, the researcher has provided suggestions for future research study.

**Literature Review**

**Introduction**

The analysis of literature provided a systematic and comprehensive overview of the strategies currently used for increasing the enrollment of diverse student population at HBCUs. The section also presents a differentiation of the most important determinants of the barriers to retention of diverse students’ population at HBCUs.

**Determinants of the Barriers to Retention**

As suggested by Lee and Keys (2013) there have been rapid changes in the higher education which have affected all universities. These changes included the shift in outcome metrics. Initially, performance in higher education institutions was measured through inputs such as the number of students enrolled, programs offered, faculties, and facilities. However, metrics such as retention, production of career ready students and outcomes of students after graduation are considered as metrics in measuring performance.

Hutto and Fenwick (2002) consider inadequate finance as a barrier to recruitment and retention of students by HBCUs. For students to enroll in school, they require money to fund their education and for their maintenance. Hutto and Fenwick (2002) observed that students’ retention is affected by various forms of student financial aid. Students’ access to financial aid has become complicated because of changing requirements for students to access the funds.

Therefore, most students have lacked access to financial aid hence reducing their enrollment in colleges and universities. Besides, the continuing students who have lacked enough funds to sustain their college life end up dropping from the school. Consequently, the HBCUs face a challenge in retaining the students. Similar observations were made by Lee and Keys (2013) who noted that financial aid was paramount in enhancing students’ retention. According to Lee and Keys (2013), the lack of adequate funds has been a critical barrier to the retention of diverse students in the HBCUs especially those from low socioeconomic class. HBCUs have also faced financial instability, which has contributed as a barrier to recruitment and retention. Similar observations were also made Lee and keys (2013) who argued that financial support is a formidable barrier, which challenges the recruitment and retention of students by HBCUs. Most of the HBCU students depend on funding from the Pell grants, personal savings, and family incomes. Those from less privileged families have modest
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financial support, which may not be sufficient to sustain them in the campus. Students’ loans are also sources of funding in higher education. However, it contributes to the indebtedness of the students after they graduate. The students are not sure of securing employment after they graduate because of the increasing unemployment rate. Therefore, some of them are reluctant to apply for the loans leading to the escalation of their financial problems. Consequently, the students may drop out of the college due to a lack of adequate funds to sustain them.

Financial problems were also noted as a barrier by other scholars and practitioners. For example, Gabriel, Chang, Dennett, et al., (2006) conducted a survey at NOVA to explore factors that contributed to students not returning to the institution. The study was qualitative and involved gathering data through focus groups and telephone surveys. Additionally, understanding factors that made the students not to return, the study also asked the students to suggest any improvements to the institution which would make it better. Among the barriers identified to have contributed to the students not returning to the college included a lack of sufficient funding. Students lacked enough funding to facilitate their studies; therefore, they had opted to drop out from the college and engage in other income generating activities.

Grier-Reed, Madyun, and Paterno (2008) argued that students’ background is also an important determinant of barriers to the retention of the diverse student population at HBCUs. HBCUs students come from diverse backgrounds some of which are unique. Some of the backgrounds contribute as obstacles and might alienate them at various college and universities. Students with poor backgrounds face challenges through their college education particularly if they do not have stable external funding or family support. Therefore, they are more likely to drop out of school. Harrison, (2014) argued that students’ high school background greatly affects their retention at the college level. Where students have not been prepared to handle rigorous activities from their high schools, they may find the tasks at college level more challenging and may contribute to their reasons for withdrawing from the college due to being ill-prepared. Where students were trained on time management and were prepared to handle challenging roles in their high schools are observed to be more successful in their college lives. Therefore, preparation in high schools is vital for the students’ success in colleges and universities. Another background factor suggested by Harrison (2014) is the family and community support. Community and family support is fundamental for the students’ retention in the HBCUs. Where students lack proper support from their families and community, they face difficulties while adjusting to the social life in the college. Lack of social adjustment makes the students find it difficult to fit in the college community hence contributing to loneliness. In severe conditions, the student may fail to cope with college life and end up withdrawing from HBCUs. Moreover, Gabriel et
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al., (2006) made similar observations. The students who lacked proper preparation for college had challenges in coping with the college life. Their lack of preparedness was noted as among the factors that contribute to their dropout rates, which impede the retention of students at HBCUs.

**Strategies for Increasing Enrolment**

Lee and Keys (2013) provided a detailed analysis of the repositioning that HBCUs have taken for future success. This repositioning has considered factors such as access to education, research, and innovation for success. According to Lee and Keys (2013) in the American higher education, the HBCUs are considered as unique with their main objective during foundation being to offer higher education to the African Americans. However, these colleges and universities have drastically changed; currently, they have joined other institutions in recruiting students from all races. Lee and Keys (2013) argued that HBCUs enroll diverse students both racially and socioeconomically. HBCUs have widened their recruitment scope to reach out to White students, and Asian and Hispanic students among others. Harper and Gasman (2008) support the observations by Lee and Keys (2013) where they observed that HBCUs have responded to the needs of Lesbians, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ) communities. These institutions have created a supportive environment for LGBTQ hence, fostering their recruitment and retention.

The second strategy used by HBCUs in fostering recruitment and retention as noted by Lee and Keys (2013) is the use of grants. The HBCUs have persistently pushed for more grants from the government and other organizations. The analysis conducted by Lee and Keys (2013) indicated that HBCUs have been receiving more Pell grants as compared to other institutions. Besides, Lee and Keys (2013) noted that there is an increase in the number of students receiving federal loans. The students in four-year institutions and the private HBCUs were noted to be higher as compared to the two-year institutions and public HBCUs.

According to the study by Hutto and Fenwick (2002), the fostering of interaction among students is also a technique used by HBCUs to retain more students. This strategy involves encouraging students to interact actively through working together, discussion, participating in students clubs, and in games. Hutto and Fenwick (2002) noted that these interactions are beneficial in encouraging the sense of belonging among students. It was found that where students developed a sense of belonging in the HBCUs they are more likely to remain committed and ready to complete their studies. Consequently, the HBCUs benefited from increased retention rates. Similar observations were made by Gabriel, et al., (2006) who argued that students interaction among themselves contributes to peer support which contributes to retention, Besides,Gabriel et al., (2006) the quality of the interaction between the
students and the faculty can be used as strategy for recruitment and retention.

Hutto and Fenwick, (2002) considered counseling as a factor used by HBCUs to enhance students’ retention. This technique involved providing both career and psychological counseling. Students received psychological counseling when they are depressed. HBCUs also offered counseling related to students careers and guide them in their career options and selection. Enrollment management has also contributed to the retention of students in HBCUs. According to Hutto and Fenwick (2002), enrollment management is the first step in the retention process. During enrollment, the HBCUs have their first encounter with the students. The enrollment activities include the application and the admission processes. It forms the first contact and students’ impression regarding the institution. Therefore, it is a critical stage in forming a good relationship between the institution and the students. During enrollment, HBCUs use trained personnel who guide students through a wide range of courses offered in the institutions. These experts guide the students in selecting courses that suit their interest and qualifications (Hutto & Fenwick, 2002). In addition, to the enrollment personnel assists in creating a glowing image of the institutions hence leading to increased enrollment. However, Hutto and Fenwick (2002) argued that it is important to maintain the good image of the institution portrayed in the enrollment stage. Where students create high expectations from their first stage of enrollment and later come to note that the institution offers less than they expected, there are high chances that the students might withdraw from the school hence adversely affecting the retention (Hutto & Fenwick, 2002). Enrollment management is broad since it also covers advertisement. During advertisement, HBCUs use various strategies to reach out to diverse potential students and encourage them to enroll. The methods used by these institutions include the use of catalogs, brochures and other materials which contain information about the institutions and the courses offered. The advertising conducted by HBCUs contributes to students’ recruitment through providing them with relevant information.

Gabriel, et al., (2006) also considered enrollment as a key element in students’ recruitment and retention. According to Gabriel et al., (2006), overcoming the barriers in recruitment and retention begins with open enrollment. Open enrollment policies have made HBCUs and other colleges to be considered as education melt points because they encourage students to apply. Besides open enrollment policies make it possible for students to access education in HBCUs hence increasing their enrollment rates.

After the enrollment, the second stage is the orientation. HBCUs use orientation programs effectively to contribute to the retention of the students (Hutto & Fenwick, 2002). New students require information regarding the procedures in the institution. HBCUs have orientation programs through which students learn more about the
institutions. These programs assist the students to understand the communities in the campus. Moreover, the new students have a chance to meet management team and other staff in the institutions (Hutto & Fenwick, 2002).

Methodology

The methods used in the study are discussed. The steps and procedures used in the collection of data and its interpretation are reviewed. It is fundamental to understanding how the research was conducted. The research methodology is also useful in assessing the weaknesses and strengths of the study. There were no primary data collected. The study used secondary data from current literature closely related to the topic. This approach was preferred because it was easy and quick. Besides, there are credible studies which are closely related to the topic of the current study. Therefore, the research considered using the related literature to find answers to the research questions identified.

The study adopted the use of qualitative design. According to Creswell (2014) qualitative design involves the collection and analysis of non-numerical data. In this case, various opinions and conclusions from the current study were collected for the analysis. The conclusions from these studies were compared to arrive at the answers to the study questions. The study compared the views and observations of different authors with the aim of identifying common themes from the secondary data collected. The credibility of the literature used considered, and only peer-reviewed articles and books were used. As well, the credibility of online sites used to inform the study was evaluated for their credibility. Therefore, the studies analyzed were conducted professionally.

Strategies for Retention and Recruitment used by HBCUs

The first strategy noted to be used by HBCUs in their retention strategies is student’s interactions. HBCUs foster students’ interaction as a strategy to enhance retention. These colleges and universities create different platforms where students can interact among themselves. These interactions aim at creating a sense of belonging and unity among students hence reducing the chances of students transfer to other schools.

The second strategy is the use of counseling. Counseling is paramount for students in their recruitment and retention. HBCUs provide career counseling to advise students on career selection. HBCUs counsel them on the courses to take to advance their careers. Also, in the case, students require psychological counseling. HBCUs often have special units, which offer free counseling to the students hence eliminating some of the factors such as depression, which can contribute to students withdrawing from the institutions due to issues that may affect their academic progress/standing.

The third strategy that was discovered used effective enrollment management in attracting and retaining the students. Enrollment is the first stage
in the retention process. It forms the first impression about the institution because it is the first interaction between the institution and the student. HBCUs aim at ensuring that they create a positive impression on their students during enrollment. This impression is essential in bolstering students’ retention. Moreover, enrollment management involves other strategies which aim at making the potential students aware of the HBCUs. This information is disseminated through various techniques which include the use of flyers, brochures, catalogs and magazines among other methods. Open enrollment policies were also noted to be among the strategies used by HBCUs to boost their recruitment and retention. It is through open enrollment, HBCUs have been able to attract students from diverse races and various levels of socioeconomic classes.

**Determinants of the Barriers to Retention at HBCUs**

From the review of literature, the lack of adequate funding was noted as a crucial factor which, acts as a barrier to the retention and recruitment of students in HBCUs. The HBCUs are observed to lack sufficient funding and major benefactors that are required to recruit and retain students. These financial problems were caused by various factors, which include the reduction in grants and funding from the government in addition to loses in program accreditation. For example, according to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) (2013) cited Saint Paul’s College, which was a HBCU for a series of deficiencies and violations, among them the lack of financial stability. As discussed by Hawkins (2013) a federal judge issued a preliminary injunction, which allowed Saint Paul’s College to maintain their accreditation on a probationary basis. This probationary period allowed Saint Paul’s to enroll students and hold classes in 2011 through 2013. Saint Paul’s College lost their accreditation and closed its doors on June 30, 2013. Budgetary crisis has made a number of HBCUs suffer economically and some others have yet to recover. Also, students have lacked sufficient funding to enroll in institutions of higher learning that has also contributed to their low enrollment. The lack of funding has contributed to continuing students dropping out of HBCU colleges and universities.

The second barrier noted is the background of the students before starting college. The students’ background has several factors affecting it. The first factor identified is the students’ preparation in high school. Where students have a weak foundation from high school, they may find it more difficult to cope with challenging roles in colleges and universities. Consequently, their chances of dropping out are high. The second factor is the support from family and community. Before joining the campus community, students have prior communities and family backgrounds. If the students have a poor social background, they may also find it difficult to fit in the new campus community. Colleges and universities are communities formed by people from different races.
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and socioeconomic class. For the students’ effective integration into the campus community, past socialization skills are essential. Where the student lacks the socialization skills, they may not integrate effectively in the campus community. Therefore, they feel isolated and lack peer to interact with. Consequently, they may not feel like part of the college and their chances of dropout are significant. Also, community and family support are essential in sustaining the students in the campus. The community and family may provide moral and financial support for the student to graduate. However, lack of this support may contribute to retention problems where the students affected high chances of dropping out.

**Discussion**

Funding is important in the recruitment and retention of students in both the HBCUs and PWIs. Therefore, where funding is not adequate, they impede the success of the schools in recruitment and in retaining the students. For the majority students to enroll in the HBCUs, they require federal financial aid funding. The sources of these funds include individual earnings, donations, grants and students loans among others. Where there are no other streams of sufficient funding students; particularly those from low socioeconomic classes, students result to dropping out of school or deferring their studies. Consequently, the retention of students at HBCUs is adversely affected.

According to Harrison (2014) HBCUs have realized that students can influence their peers positively, which also contributes to retention. Therefore, through the fostering of students interactions, HBCUs have created unity among students. Additionally, Harrison (2014) found that students attending HBCUs have reported feeling like they were part of a large family community and continued their academic study through to graduation. Consequently, the It has been noted that HBCUs have been able to retain some of the students who would have transferred to other colleges and universities because of this type of supportive environment.

HBCUs use counseling as a strategy to boost retention. Depression may contribute to students dropping out if not addressed. Therefore, HBCUs reduce chances of students dropping out because of depression through offering psychological counseling. As well, through the use of career counseling, HBCUs guide students in career selection and progression. Therefore, they encourage students to take the careers that they will complete successfully hence contributing to increased retention.

The fourth strategy used by HBCUs is the orientation programs. As discussed by Harrison (2014) these programs provide a platform where the students are introduced to the institution and the communities that form it. Therefore, the students have an opportunity become well acquainted with various people and offices that they visit whenever they need assistance. This information is paramount for the students on the campus. The programs contribute to the effective integration of
the new students at the institution and in making them feel welcomed. Therefore, it contributes to the development of a positive attitude towards the campus hence, improved rates of retention.

The last strategy used is enrollment management. HBCUs are using robust enrollment techniques which create a positive image of the institutions hence attracting and retaining more students. To enroll and retain more students, HBCUs have also have formulated open enrollment policies. These policies allow diverse students to apply for admission in the campuses hence contributing to diversity in recruitment. These institutions do not discriminate students by their religion, beliefs, gender, race or socioeconomic status. Therefore, they had a broad scope, which contributes to their recruitment and retention.

It is from the literature review that effective enrollment management was noted as the primary strategy where recruitment and retention are founded. This stage involved various activities with engaged both the students and the HBCUs. Activities involved in enrolment management include marketing the institutions, admitting the students, conducting research and students’ retention. The enrollment is based on the theories of student retention. The prominent theory obtained from the literature review conducted was the Tinto’s theory. The Tinto model posited that students have pre-college attributes which include abilities, family background, and prior schools experience. These factors have an impact on the student’s goals and commitments. Therefore, students’ retention depends on the degree of the academic and social connection between the students and the institution.

There were four specific questions identified in the study. This discussion section concludes by providing answers to the specific questions. The general questions have been addressed in the discussion

1. How to increase the academic stature and status of HBCUs by enforcing admissions standards.

Embracing diversity is one of methods that can be used in increasing the academic, stature, and status of HBCUs by enforcing admission and general enrollment standards. The students should be recruited to the HBCUs based on their high school performance but not based solely on other factors such as race, sexual orientation or socioeconomic status among others. HBCUs can also strengthen their enrollment management. During the advertisement campaigns, they should provide clear information on the admission requirements for each faculty member. Therefore, the targeted students will have clear information about which courses they should apply based on their prior performance.

2. How to increase the success and retention of currently enrolled students by enveloping them in a network of comprehensive academic and personal and community-based support services.

The study has identified various methods through which students can be enveloped into a
network of comprehensive and personal support. These methods include fostering team work among students. Students are encouraged to for project teams which make them as a group hence strengthening their social cohesion. Additionally, HBCUs can have forums where students can meet and debate on some issues affecting them with a directed focus. These forums are critical to fostering unity among students. Other activities used by HBCUs to increase network among students include games where students actively interact and socialize. Also, during orientation, the students are encouraged to know each other and interact as a community.

3. How to effectively collaborate with community colleges to increase the number of reverse transfers and dual enrollees;

Effective collaboration with community colleges to increase the number of reverse transfers and dual enrollees requires the colleges involved to have a fair agreement which favors them equally. The agreement should not favor transfer to some colleges. Also, the transfers should be conducted in a transparent and fair manner to encourage enrollment and retention in the schools and colleges involved. Where equivalent grades require being estimated during the reverse transfer, the conversation should be fair to encourage students’ enrollment.

4. How to increase the number of qualified Hispanic, Caucasian and other non-white students;

To increase the number of qualified Hispanic, Caucasian, Asian, Native American, and other non-white students, HBCUs have made their enrollment policies open. The open policies allow admission of students from any race provided that they meet the qualifications for the courses applied for. Moreover, the HBCUs need to consider creating an environment that will support extremely culturally diverse students. The students need to be guided on how to understand other students from diverse cultures. Cultural studies can foster the student’s understanding of people from other cultures and assist them in living as one community. HBCUs need to extend their outreach advertising programs to high schools with diverse races and encourage all students to consider enrolling in their courses regardless of their races or background.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion

HBCUs were initially developed for African Americans; however, they have gained popularity and embraced students from other races without discrimination. Over time, HBCUs have gained recognition through various advancements in education, business, sciences, and other professional opportunities. According to Lee and Keys (2013) under the 1862 Morrill Act, which created a significant number of land-grant institutions, and the Morrill Act of 1890, which established 18 black land-grant universities. The federal government was committed to providing financial support to schools where states agreed to match that level of support. Although, land-grant
universities produce talented students, innovative research and state-of-the-art practices in agriculture and STEM disciplines that are geared toward improving life in rural and high-risk communities. States are failing to provide the nation’s historically black land-grant universities the same level of one-to-one matching dollars they provide other land-grant institutions that receive federal funding, which may also contribute to attrition.

Among the factors causing attrition are the barriers to the recruitment and retention of the students. The study has identified various determinants of barriers to the retention of diverse students’ population at HBCUs. As previously mentioned, financial problems and students’ weak social and academic backgrounds are some of these various determinants. The purpose of the study was to identify various strategies that can be used by HBCUs in the recruitment and retention of students. The strategies identified include students counseling, enrollment management, promoting interaction among students, social media, open enrollment of students from all races, and soliciting grants among others.

**Recommendations**

From the review conducted, funding was one of the strategies used by the HBCUs to attract more students. According to Lee and Keys (2013) funding is a critical factor, which attracts more students to enroll in PWIs than HBCUs and other institutions of higher learning. HBCUs target students from all races and all socioeconomic status. Some of the students are from lower socioeconomic backgrounds; therefore, they may require funding to support their learning opportunities. Consequently, when the HBCUs lobby for more funding they attract a higher population of students who require funding. Therefore, they can increase their recruitment through the benefit of grants and student loans. The study recommends that HBCUs should use the following methods to foster their recruitment the retention.

The first recommendation is the use of advancement in technology in the recruitment of more eligible students. Mobile cellular phones are essential gadgets that can be used to access a significant number of diverse students globally. HBCUs can largely use the mobile phones applications to advertise the courses they offer and convince more students to enroll. HBCUs can develop phone applications (Apps) through which students can learn more about them. These Apps should have features that allow students to apply for various courses in the institutions. Considering the high number of potential students in higher learning using the internet and mobile phones, the HBCUs would be able to reach out to a larger pool of potential applicants. According to North Carolina Central University (2014) the use of mobile cellular phones was adopted in the advertising campaign and received more than 10,000 students in 2014-2015. It is from the inclusion of the mobile Apps that this technique
will continue to contribute to enrollment of a higher number of students in HBCUs.

According to Galindo, Meling, Mundy and Kupczynski (2012) the use of social media as a tool for student recruitment and retention at most colleges and universities has also been used extensively for the past 5-7 years. Most colleges and universities have recognized that the average 18 to 24-year-old college student demographic uses social media least 4-5 times a week to interact with friends, family, and education or job opportunities. It was noted from the review of literature that many key populations are embracing the use of social media, as a contact method. As gathered from the current literature, HBCUs have been more hesitant to integrate these platforms into their marketing and communications plans.

As reported by Galindo et. al (2012) a significant number of PWI colleges and universities have leveraged social media in a significant manner to attract a large percentage of the 18 to 24 year old student market. Galindo et. al (2012) asserted that the majority of PWI universities and colleges have a social media presence to attract students from diverse backgrounds and varying socio-economic levels. As reported in the literature, PWIs have used social media to gain potential new students with admissions blogs and the creative use of location-based services like SCaVeNGeR, which is a social location based gaming platform for mobile phones. There is a significantly limited amount of literature on maintaining alumni engagement via dynamic, content-rich Facebook and Ning communities, to informing students about campus offerings through Twitter feeds and YouTube videos. It is from a review of the current literature that it can be witnessed that HBCUs have not utilized and or recognized the importance of social media as global student recruitment tool at the same rate of consistency as with most PWIs within the last few years.

The second strategy that HBCUs should use to increase their enrollment numbers is through broadening and strengthening relationships through the use of articulation agreements with other institutions of higher learning. It is through strengthened relationships that the HBCUs are likely to benefit from transfers from other institutions, who have met academic grade point average (G.P.A.) requirements. Thirdly, HBCUs require considering fostering their enrollment management. Enrollment management is critical in the recruitment of diverse students as well as in retention. These institutions need to recognize the importance of managing enrollment. As suggested by Harrison (2014) policies of open enrollment would be useful in increasing the recruitment and retention. Open enrollment will attract diverse students hence contributing to improved recruitment and retention. Lastly, HBCUs can improve the quality of faculty interaction with the students. The students require being actively engaged in the academic activities to sustain their interest in the institutions. With active engagement in faculty, the students are likely to remain
committed to HBCUs hence reduced rates of withdrawal.

The final recommendation involves funding. Concerning the barrier of financial inadequacy, the policy makers need to consider the students funding. The students' grants and loans need to be increased to assist the students to sustain their lives at HBCUs. The policy makers must consider the development of policies, which foster the offering of more grant funding to the HBCUs to assist them in solving their financial deficits. The study also recommends that HBCUs should consider other forms of funding and student directed research efforts. Specific methods identified which the HBCUs can exploit to raise more funds include engagement in research where they could receive income in the form of patents. Also, the study recommends that students need to be actively involved in income generating activities while still in school to contribute to their fees and living. Students need to be encouraged to engage in work-study programs where they earn an income while they are enrolled in courses of study. HBCUs require considering having flexible learning schedules which will allow students to learn and get time to work.

Suggestions for Future Research

The study did not consider whether strategies used to recruit and retain students differ based on whether the HBCUs are private or public. The research did not evaluate the difference in strategies used in recruiting and retaining students at two-year community colleges and four-year institutions. Therefore, a limitation or absence in establishing how the recruitment and retention strategies differ overall within public and private HBCUs, as well as in two-year community colleges and four-year PWIs needs to be investigated. Additionally, there is a significantly limited amount of literature on alumni engagement via dynamic, content-rich Facebook, Ning, and other communities. Moreover, it may be valuable to investigate why HBCUs have been not utilized and or recognized the importance of social media as global student recruitment tool at the same rate of consistency, as with most two-year community colleges and four-year PWIs.

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