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Avid Success: The Avid Program's Impact On The College Readiness Of Latinx High School Students

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Publication Date

2023-06-16

AVID SUCCESS: THE AVID PROGRAM'S IMPACT ON THE COLLEGE
READINESS OF LATINX HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

By

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A capstone project submitted for Graduation with University Honors

May 12, 2023

University Honors

University of California, Riverside

APPROVED

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Abstract

A growing number of Latinx students are enrolling in college, which contributes to the overall educational success of Latinx students. However, Latinx individuals pursue and complete higher education at a much lower rate compared to other racial groups. The Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) program aims to close the opportunity gap for minority and low-income students, while developing the skills they need to succeed in college. The purpose of this study is to evaluate whether the AVID program meets the students' social needs, provides academic assistance, and fosters a positive learning environment. Self-report data will be collected from participants surveys using high school transcripts. It is hypothesized that participation in the AVID program positively influenced students' academic experiences and gave them the determination to continue their education. Implications of this work include: determining the effectiveness of college outreach programs offered by educational institutions, such as AVID, will help determine whether such services are meeting the needs and expectations of Latinx high school students as they transition to college or university.

Acknowledgements

First, I would like to acknowledge my faculty mentor Dr. Wesley Sims for his continuous support and patience throughout the development of my capstone project. It was a great privilege and honor to work and study under his guidance. I could not have undertaken this project without his help, and I am looking forward to working with him on future projects regarding education and psychology. I would also like to thank both graduate and undergraduate researchers, from the SSPRC lab, for their insightful comments, encouragement, and moral support. Thank you to University Honors for allowing me the opportunity to be involved in undergraduate research, and providing me with the resources necessary to do so. To my closest friends, thank you for all the support and kindness you all have given me. Lastly, I would like to thank with gratitude, the support and unconditional love of my family - my parents, Mauricio and Eugenia Hernandez; my sister, Jessica; my brother, Eliam; and my grandparents. They all kept me going and supported me throughout my journey navigating higher education. This would not have been possible without them. *Los quiero mucho!*

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Introduction

Systemic issues contribute to the low college completion rate and academic preparation in public school settings. Patterns such as high dropout rates and under-preparedness are prominent among Latinx students (Contreras & Contreras, 2015). Most Latinx students are the first in their families to attend college, and they lack knowledge of the requirements needed to get into college. Latinx students are not taking the appropriate classes needed to enroll in higher education or they are not pursuing rigorous courses. There is also a disproportionate number of Latinx students who are “stuck” taking remedial courses, which further delays their progress toward a degree (Huerta et al., 2013). Students of color are not fairly represented in these advanced courses, because of their teachers’ deficit views. Deficit views from teachers place the blame on these students for their educational and economic disparities (Pollack, 2012). Teachers with deficit thinking believe their students are unintelligent or incapable of being challenged academically, which undermines the education of students of color. The leveled and exclusionary tracking of schools shows how Latinx and African American students are overrepresented in lower-level courses and underrepresented in upper-level courses (Oakes, 2005). These students feel trapped in this never-ending cycle, dwindling their motivation to continue with their education, which ultimately contributes to developing a negative view of school.

Another factor that influences the low Latinx student completion rate is their low socioeconomic status. These individuals have to work long hours while attending college to pay for their schooling and financially support themselves. Most Latinx students spend more than 20 hours working per week (Contreras & Contreras, 2015). The amount of time students spend working affects the time they spend studying, engaging on their college campus, and socializing with other students. Other studies related to college completion have shown that school climate

plays a role in student motivation, engagement, and persistence (Nora & Crisp, 2012). Students decide to stay in their schools if they feel welcomed, supported, and accepted. In a positive school environment, students are more likely to be involved and participate in a number of activities. College outreach programs like the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) program, offer academic, school, and community support to first-generation underrepresented students. Through AVID, students are encouraged to take control of their own learning.

Literature Review

Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) Program

The AVID program is a college outreach program designed to engage and support low-income and ethnic minority students. The AVID program is designed for academically average students, including those who come from families without a tradition of college-going. The program is aimed at students in the middle of the academic spectrum, including those who earn B, C, and even D grades. AVID is also open to students who have the desire to go to college and are willing to learn more about higher education. AVID is often implemented in both middle schools and high schools, but for this study, we will be focusing on the high school program. The AVID high school program is structured as a four-year-long elective program. Students have the option to take the initial AVID elective any year of high school or they could take the course series and participate for multiple years (Todhunter-Reid et al., 2020). The decision to stay in the program depends on the student, but they do need to receive approval from their AVID teacher.

The program's primary goal is to offer students with the essential resources needed to succeed in their challenging courses and prepare students for college eligibility ("Data & graduation," 2021). In this program, students are taught skills that allow them to take ownership of their own learning. AVID utilizes engagement learning strategies that involve collaborative activities, where students assist one another to learn and, as a result, reinforce their individual learning. Students also receive additional support through collaborative group tutorials and AVID-trained tutors. AVID tutors are usually undergraduate or graduate students, who work closely with AVID students to guide them through any coursework they need additional support in. AVID students are encouraged to explore different career opportunities through the program's curriculum, individual research, and college guest speakers. Students have the opportunity to

hear from individuals who have extensive knowledge or first-hand experience with higher education. Students are able to ask questions about college campuses and specific programs to help guide students make decisions about college and their future. In addition to academically preparing students, AVID helps them develop time management, planning, and study skills. Academic behaviors and a variety of skills are usually taught three days a week, and the other two days are scheduled for tutorials designed to support students' performance in content courses (Wilson et al., 2021). AVID students also participate in field trips to visit many colleges and universities. These field trips help students visualize themselves as future college students while also giving them a taste of independence. Students are able to decide on what they like and dislike about certain schools, and find a school that is right for them.

The state of California has invested a lot of time and resources into the AVID program since 1986 (*The History of AVID*, n.d.). For example, the state has helped develop different program pathways for students, professional learning programs for educators, and conferences and webinars for both students and educators. In recent years, the program has expanded to early elementary and secondary schools while still working towards the goal of aiding in student success.

Past Research on AVID

Although there have been previous research evaluations of the high school AVID program, there is not enough evidence available to determine strong inferences or causal statements. Previous descriptive studies on AVID reported positive relationships between AVID participants and the program (Todhunter-Reid et al., 2020). A study conducted on retention and graduation rates found that AVID graduates had greater retention and potential graduation rates than some state and national populations (Watt et al., 2011). Another study reported that the

amount of time enrolled in the program positively correlated with students' grade point average (GPA), the number of college requirements met, and the number of Advance Placement (AP) courses completed (Huerta et al., 2013). All the findings mentioned before suggest that AVID is an effective program in improving the college readiness of students; however, some studies did not find positive relationships between the program and students. The What Works Clearinghouse is a digital library of educational research that focuses on evidence-based education. The What Works Clearinghouse found one extensive study considered to be high-quality, that examined the effects of taking AVID in high school on students' reading test scores (Todhunter-Reid et al., 2020). In the study, students who took AVID as an elective were matched with students who did not take AVID based on their ethnicity, gender, age, and baseline reading achievement (What Works Clearinghouse, 2010). In the What Works Clearinghouse study, the sample was small, which made it difficult to determine the effects of the program. Past research studies on AVID have used small sample sizes and limited methods, thus more research is needed to provide stronger evidence on the effectiveness of AVID in preparing Latinx students for higher education.

Opportunity Gap

The AVID program's main purpose is to close the opportunity gaps between groups, by preparing and encouraging students to enroll and graduate from college. Oftentimes, the terms "opportunity gap" and "achievement gap" are used interchangeably. However, the opportunity gap refers to how race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, linguistic backgrounds or other factors lower students' educational aspirations, achievements, and school attainment. Opportunity gaps take into consideration students' access to effective teachers, rigorous curriculum, and academic and social support in and out of the classroom (Cruz, 2021). The achievement gap refers to the

differences in students' test scores, graduation rates, and college enrollment rates (Cruz, 2021). Disparities in academic achievement among racial minorities are associated with disparities in income, poverty rates, unemployment rates, and the educational attainment of their parents. For example, students whose parents did not attend college or did not prioritize post-secondary education, may not have access to the same level of familial encouragement and support as their peers. Additionally, such students may not be encouraged to enroll in college preparatory courses and their parents may face challenges navigating the complexities of the college admission process. Systematic differences in opportunities, that lead to educational inequalities, are reinforced by various social policies such as the No Child Left Behind law, housing segregation, tracking in schools (Oakes, 2005), and teacher quality (Flores & Gunzenhauser, 2021).

According to a 2009 study, the standardized test scores of Black and Latinx students were two to three years behind those of their white peers, who were of the same age (Auguste et al., 2009).

When students are presented with opportunities to learn, their learning is facilitated; however, the absence of such opportunities has resulted in disparities in their academic achievements.

Focusing solely on the achievement gap, as measured by test scores, restricts the conversations of addressing only the outcome of unequal opportunities within the schools. This approach overlooks the opportunity gaps that exist beyond the school setting, which contributes to the flawed understanding of the root causes of the achievement gap within schools.

Academic Preparation and College Readiness

To prepare for college, high school students enroll in courses with rigorous curricula that will help them develop the necessary skills to succeed. For example, these students enroll in AP, honors, and or International Baccalaureate (IB) courses. College readiness encompasses a range of factors, including the level of high school coursework, academic performance (measured by

GPA), and access to standardized testing opportunities (Hurtado et al., 2020). These factors are all forms of college readiness that contribute to a student's ability to enroll and excel in credit-bearing college courses. Indicators of college readiness seek to measure academic preparedness, which is widely viewed as a crucial predictor of college. Researchers have determined that variables like GPA, standardized test scores, and enrollment in higher-level courses are strong predictors of college readiness (Hurtado et al., 2020). Students who participate in college preparatory coursework and excel in those courses are more likely to enroll in higher education. African Americans and Latinx students are more likely than their white counterparts to be placed in lower track systems, despite having the same scores (Oakes, 2005). The reasoning behind tracking implies that students who perform poorly must be isolated from their peers to be taught a more basic curriculum. Latinx students' ability to take academically challenging courses is limited because they are often placed in remedial courses, which prevents them from moving to higher-level courses. The rationale behind tracking is that low-performing students should be separated from their peers and taught a more simplified curriculum, leading to a widening gap between high- and low-performing students, and limiting the opportunities for Latinx students to move up tracks.

College Outreach Programs

College outreach programs aim to address factors that lead to the under-representation of low-income and non-white students in higher education. The Latinx population in the U.S. continues to rise, but Latinx students remain underrepresented in colleges and universities. Outreach programs for college can be a valuable resource for Latinx students, as they can enhance students' educational backgrounds and provide them with reliable information regarding college admissions and financial aid. As of the year 2020, there are approximately 56.5 million

Latinx people in the U.S., representing 17.6% of the total U.S. population. By contrast, in 1980, Latinx people only accounted for 6.5% of the total U.S. population (Hurtado et al., 2020). This demographic shift has made Latinx individuals, the largest and youngest non-white, ethnic, and racial group in the country. Despite this growth, only 15% of Latinx individuals who are 25 years or older, hold a bachelor's degree or higher (Hurtado et al., 2020). Differences in the underrepresentation and degree attainment across various groups can be attributed, in part, to their level of academic readiness. When students are placed in remedial courses, their chances of achieving positive educational outcomes are limited. Between 2000 and 2005, Latinx enrollment in higher education increased by 30%, surpassing that of any other demographic group (Mendiola et al., 2010). The progress made in increasing the enrollment of underrepresented groups, particularly Latinx people, in higher education can be attributed to the implementation of early intervention programs and college outreach programs. Programs aimed to prepare students for college, also develop the cultural and social capital among Latinx students, which ultimately eases their selection and transition into colleges and universities.

Nature and Purpose

Many high schools offer college outreach programs that are designed to motivate, prepare, and increase the number of students who attend and succeed in college. This project intends to focus on the AVID program's impact on the college readiness of Latinx high school students. Latinx students are enrolling in college at a higher rate, but degree completion rates still remain low (Mendiola, Watt, & Huerta, 2010). The AVID program aims to close the opportunity gap for minority and low-income students while helping them develop academic and social skills needed in college. The opportunity gap is often attributed to a lack of access to quality schools and resources needed for these students to be academically successful. The purpose of this

project is to evaluate whether the AVID program is meeting the students' social needs, providing academic support, and fostering a positive learning environment. Additionally, the study will determine if students are also developing various resilience factors such as self-efficacy, self-esteem, and self-awareness. To do so, this study will compare the post-secondary progress of Latinx students who participated in AVID during high school and are now attending a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) relative to those students that did not participate in AVID.

Little is known about the impact college outreach programs have on minority and low-income students. There are only a few studies that have investigated the underlying mechanisms that contribute to AVID students' success (Llamas, Lopez, & Quirk, 2014). This study will provide insight on students' perceptions of the AVID program and if the program improved academic readiness as they transitioned to college or university. The results of this study will examine the effectiveness of AVID in preparing Latinx students for higher education matriculation and identify factors that contribute to their achievement. The study will answer the following research questions:

1. Does early college readiness vary based on AVID participation?
2. What factors contribute to the early college achievement of Latinx students?
3. Is AVID perceived as more valuable than other or no specific program to facilitate college aspiration, readiness, and success?

Since there is little evidence to evaluate the effectiveness of the AVID program, the study will explore the efficacy of AVID participation within and between groups of college students. We hypothesize that participation in the AVID program positively influenced students' college readiness, study skills, organization, and achievement like GPA. AVID participation is also hypothesized to be a significant factor in students' college success. The AVID factors

hypothesized to be predictors of college achievement for Latinx participants will be teacher support and post-secondary preparation/discussions. Additionally, generally favorable ratings of satisfaction for AVID participants is anticipated. Higher ratings of satisfaction are anticipated for AVID participants than for non-AVID participants.

Methods

Participants

The participants recruited for the study included 24, 18 years of age or older undergraduate students currently enrolled at the University of California, Riverside (UCR). Care was taken to ensure the sample included Latinx students who did and did not participate in AVID during high school and are currently attending UCR, a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI). According to the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (n.d.) at the University of California, Riverside (UCR), 41.5% of undergraduate students are Hispanic and Latino. Hispanic and Latino students are the largest ethnic/racial group at UCR, with Asian students following at 33.8% (*Student Diversity Statistics*, n.d.). When looking at the graduate student population, Hispanic and Latino students are the third largest group with 15.8% (*Student Diversity Statistics*, n.d.). White students account for 28.4% of graduate students, with the largest group being international students at 32.4% (*Student Diversity Statistics*, n.d.). From the demographic questionnaire, 10 participants reported that they participated in AVID while 13 participants reported that they did not participate in AVID while in high school. Of the 24 participants, 17 (70.83%) were females, 5 (20.83%) were males, and 1 participant identified as gender non-conforming. When looking at race 22 participants identified as Hispanic/Latino, while 2 participants identified as non-Hispanic/Latino. For race, 1 participant identified as White, 17 as Hispanic/Latino, 2 as Asian, 1 as Black or African American, and 2 as other. Regarding participants' area of study, 12 identified as education majors, 1 identified as psychology major, 8 identified as majors in other fields, while 2 reported being double majors.

Procedures

Participants were recruited using listserv, virtual and in-class announcements, direct email, and word of mouth solicitations. Written consent was obtained using a web-based survey software, Qualtrics. Following completion of the written consent process, which included an initial description of the study as well as associated risks and benefits, participants were asked to complete study questionnaires. Participants then completed a 32-item Qualtrics survey. Survey items initially asked for relevant demographic information (e.g., race/ethnicity, gender, grade-point average). The measures for the Qualtrics survey are based on factors that may have contributed to students' college preparation and readiness. The survey will look into general high school experiences and program satisfaction, skills developed, students' personal growth, teacher support, tutor support, and post-secondary preparation and discussions. Participants were given a period of two weeks to respond to the survey and 24 surveys were returned.

Measures

Participants will provide all data via Qualtrics survey. The survey will ask basic demographic questions, participants' high school achievement, and questions asking about students' insight on the AVID program or their general high school experiences.

Demographic Questionnaire

The demographic questionnaire asked for participants' gender, race, ethnicity, current degree status, area of study, parents' level of education, primary language spoken at home, and whether or not they participated in the high school AVID program. If they were in the program, participants would provide the number of years they were enrolled in the program. If participants did not participate in AVID, then they were asked if they participated in any other college outreach programs. Participants would have the opportunity to list the programs that they were

enrolled in during high school. The high school achievement questions asked about the number of AP, IB, and honors courses they took in high school. All participants took the demographic questionnaire regardless of whether or not they participated in AVID during high school.

College Preparation Questions

The survey solicited students' perceptions of certain factors that helped them prepare for and transition into college. For participants that answered "no" to the question asking if they participated in the AVID program, in the demographic questionnaire, they were directed to a survey about their general high school experiences. The participants who answered "yes," were directed to a survey about their experiences within the AVID program. Both surveys had six items describing components that may have contributed to students' college preparation.

Questions were developed to solicit responses related to (a) school and program satisfaction, (b) skills developed, (c) students' personal growth, (d) high school and AVID teacher support, (e) high school and AVID tutor support, and (e) post-secondary preparation and discussions.

The students were presented with questions regarding each subject and were asked to rate their agreement on a 5-point scale, ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). Participants also had a choice of not answering certain questions they felt uncomfortable with. In addition, the participants were asked to evaluate various resilience factors they deemed to have either resulted from their program involvement or the absence thereof. Additional questions were asked about the learning environment and social connections created within the program and outside the program.

The measures for the AVID participants were more program focused while the non-AVID measures were more focused on their general high school experiences. For example, the school satisfaction measure for the non-AVID participants survey asked about the skills learned and

support received at the high school they attended. The program satisfaction measure for the AVID participants' survey asked students about the skills and support received through the program. Non-AVID survey questions are about their high school experiences while the AVID survey questions are about the program itself.

School & Program Satisfaction. Program satisfaction refers to the student's overall satisfaction with the AVID program, including skills learned and support received. Meanwhile, school satisfaction refers to the student's overall satisfaction with their high school, also including skills learned and support received. Here, school support refers to the various ways in which students perceive supportive behaviors from different sources within the school environment, including teachers, staff, and peers. These supportive behaviors may take various forms, such as emotional, appraisal, instrumental, and informational support (Llamas et al., 2014). Some questions asked focused on their schools and the program's learning environment. A positive learning environment was defined as the student's ability to learn in a place where they feel safe and free to express themselves.

Skills. For the skills measure, non-AVID participants were asked whether or not their high school provided them with skills that affected their effectiveness as students in their classes. The skills measure for AVID participants looked into whether the program taught them skills that impacted their effectiveness as students in their classes. Throughout the AVID elective, students are systematically trained on how to take notes, stay organized, and study for exams. Other questions pertained to whether students used these specific AVID strategies learned in their current college courses. A question also asked if AVID or their high school encouraged them to take more initiative in their academics and do more for themselves. This sense of responsibility was defined as their ability to work independently and in groups, without relying on their

teachers, to find solutions. Overall, the skills measure focused on the development of social-emotional skills, which include interpersonal communication, self-efficacy, and support-seeking.

Personal Growth. Personal growth refers to the development of individual resilience factors including self-esteem and self-awareness. Participants will reflect on their high school or AVID program experiences and see if they were given opportunities to explore themselves, their identities, and their abilities. Personal growth also included self-discovery, which is exploring and finding one's sense of self in a safe environment (Llamas et al., 2014). A question was asked about whether students' high school academic experiences or their enrollment in AVID contributed to their motivation and drive to attend a college or university. The definition of motivation used in this context refers to a collaborative effort to inspire and encourage students to pursue both academic and personal goals.

High School & AVID Teacher Support. Questions about teacher support encourage participants to reflect on the amount of personal support they received from their high school and AVID teachers. Support refers to the relationships and connections formed with peers, teachers, and program staff, which helped students (Llamas et al., 2014). The concept of teacher motivation was defined as the ability of teachers to inspire and encourage students toward achieving their academic goals. Teacher support was defined as receiving encouragement and assistance from teachers both inside and outside the classroom. Survey questions also asked if teachers were willing to answer questions regarding colleges and universities and whether students feel comfortable seeking help from teachers when they do not understand something.

High School & AVID Tutor Support. Tutoring and AVID tutorials allow students to work together and collaboratively solve the challenges they are facing in their courses. Tutor

support pertains to students' perceptions of the level of guidance, academic assistance, and personal support they receive from the tutors provided by their high school or through the AVID program. A survey question asked whether tutors supported and facilitated student-centered discussions. Tutors' facilitation of discussion can be described as allowing students to make friends with other students within the AVID program or in their high school. Tutors not only provide academic support but also serve as role models, mentors, and advocates for the students, helping them with their social and emotional learning and inspiring them to overcome challenges. Participants were also asked to determine whether AVID tutors engaged them in conversations about preparing for college.

Post-Secondary Preparation & Discussion. Post-secondary preparation and discussion pertain to the extent to which high school and AVID teachers discussed with their students about post-secondary education. Participants were asked to report whether their teachers discussed the significance of course grades, course selection, test preparation, and college planning for success in higher education.

Planned Analyses

To address the first research question evaluating college readiness based on AVID participation, independent samples t-tests were conducted comparing AVID participants and non-AVID participants' reports of Post-secondary Preparation (i.e., college readiness). To address the second research question examining factors that contribute to the college achievement of Latinx students, a simple linear regression analysis using AVID participation (or lack of) as the predictor variable and participants reports of Post-secondary Preparation as the outcome variable. Regression analysis allowed an examination of the influence of AVID participation on college readiness. To address the last research question, reports of program (i.e.,

AVID, no AVID) satisfaction will be compared between groups of participants. Independent samples t-tests compared mean reports of program satisfaction as well as overall survey scores (i.e., Program Satisfaction, Skills, Personal Growth, Support, Post-secondary Preparation) for participants that were in the AVID program and those that were not.

Results

The study's first research question was to determine if early college readiness varies based on AVID participation. An independent samples t-test comparing reports of post-secondary preparation by that participated in AVID and those that did not. Results of this analysis indicated AVID participation is not a significant predictor and does not have a significant influence on reports of college readiness. There was not a significant difference in college readiness between AVID ($M = 20.33$, $SD = 3.74$) and non-AVID participants ($M = 18.31$, $SD = 5.793$); $t(20) = -.921$, $p = .368$.

The second research question was looking at what factors contribute to the early college achievement of Latinx students. To address this research question, a linear regression model was used to examine the influence of AVID participation on reported college readiness (i.e., post-secondary preparation). Regression analysis indicated AVID participation was not a significant predictor of reported college readiness ($\beta = 0.$, $p < .$).

The study's third research question sought to evaluate if AVID perceived as a more valuable view than other (or no specific) programs to facilitate college aspiration, readiness, and success. To address this research question, independent samples t-tests were conducted to compare AVID and non-AVID participants' reported satisfaction and overall reports across their experiences (i.e., Program Satisfaction, Skills, Personal Growth, Support, Post-secondary Preparation combined). A significant difference in reported experience (i.e., AVID, non-AVID) satisfaction was not noted between AVID ($M = 16.70$, $SD = 2.95$) and non-AVID participants ($M = 14.23$, $SD = 3.42$); $t(21) = -1.820$, $p = .083$. Similarly a significant difference in reported overall experience (i.e., AVID, non-AVID) was not noted between AVID ($M = 20.33$, $SD = 3.74$) and non-AVID participants ($M = 18.31$, $SD = 5.793$); $t(20) = -.921$, $p = .368$.

Discussion

This study examined whether college readiness varied based on AVID participation, what factors contributed to the early college achievement of Latinx students, and if former AVID participants view the program as valuable. As supported by previous research and this study, future research should continue to determine the impact of college outreach programs, like AVID, on students' early college readiness. Previous research has found that the AVID program is effective at increasing high school graduation and college enrollment rates (Todhunter-Reid et al., 2020). Students who take AVID for three to four electives (year-long) during high school experience far greater benefits than students who take one to two electives in terms of college enrollment (Todhunter-Reid et al., 2020). Other studies have indicated that the interventions students receive during their middle school and high school years can contribute significantly to their path to achieving success in college (Huerta et al., 2013). Schools that implement AVID should highlight the advantages of AVID strategies and skills for not only their AVID students but also for non-AVID students. Although AVID is seen as a program to help high school students with college preparedness, this study found no significant differences between AVID participation, college readiness, and program satisfaction.

The first research question for this study targeted participants' reports of post-secondary preparedness. Contrary to anticipated findings, results comparing reports of college readiness for AVID students and their non-AVID peers indicated no significant difference. Although on average AVID participants reported slightly higher levels of college readiness, this difference was not significantly significant. In contrast, prior research suggests that AVID graduates who enrolled in universities were more likely to achieve both the operational and alternative definitions of college success and were less likely to require remedial coursework, compared to

non-AVID graduates (Huerta et al., 2013). One possible explanation for these findings may be related to the small sample size used in this analysis. A larger sample size may have yielded results more consistent with prior literature. Additionally, these findings may be explained by

A second aim of this study was to evaluate the influence of AVID participation of college readiness. Again, results of an analysis using simple linear regression indicated AVID participation was not a significant predictor of college readiness. These findings suggest that AVID participation does not significantly influence students' perceptions of the preparation for post-secondary education. These findings appear to contradict prior research which found that consistent experiences offered by the AVID program is an important factor in promoting the positive outcomes associated with AVID participation (Llamas et al., 2014). A possible explanation for this inconsistency is the limited sample size and university affiliation. Our sample did include more students who did not participate in AVID compared to those who did participate in AVID. A direct measure of actual early college performance with more participants may have yielded results more consistent with prior research on this topic.

Lastly, this study sought to compare program satisfaction for AVID participation and general, non-AVID or other program experiences. Again, study results suggest no significant differences in reported satisfaction or overall experience, a combination of perceived satisfaction and skills acquired, personal growth, support, and college preparation. Although AVID participants reported slightly higher satisfaction and overall scores generally, these values did not vary significantly from reports from their peers that did not participate in AVID. These findings may be explained by the limitations of the assessment methods for satisfaction and related topics. Such constructs (e.g., satisfaction) typically involve the use of self-report measures, which are inherently prone to subjective bias. Satisfaction and related concepts are evaluated based on

subjectively determined needs and expectations. If experiences, AVID or non-AVID, met or exceeded these needs and expectations, this would be reflected in self-report data. This information may not be consistent with more objective evaluations of program quality or effectiveness. Additionally, as with previous findings, these results may have been influenced by the limited sample size used in the study. A larger, more robust sample may have yielded results consistent with the originally anticipated finding that AVID participants would report higher satisfaction with their program than non-AVID participants.

Limitations

Limitations of this study include a small sample size and a disproportionate number of students based on gender and race/ethnicity. From our sample, 17 participants were females and 5 were males. 13 participants identified “Education” as their major, which is usually a female-dominated major. When looking at ethnicity most of our participants identified as Hispanic/Latino, while only two identified as non-Hispanic/Latino. UCR is a Hispanic Serving Institute, which would be a reason as to why most participants in the study identified as Hispanic/Latino. The survey was only open to current UCR students, which made it a very limited sample size with limited generalizability. Drawing generalizable conclusions may be challenging due to the unrepresentative data, which may not accurately reflect the broader population. Another limitation besides the small sample size and the sample’s lack of diversity, would be the limited survey items. Other factors and variables not surveyed or included, may better predict college readiness and satisfaction with the AVID program.

Although this study examined only a small sample of Latinx students enrolled at a selected university, it offers insight and recommendations for additional research on AVID. One way to improve the assessment of AVID's impact on college readiness in comparison to other college outreach programs is to conduct a more extensive study with a larger and more diverse sample of students. Sampling additional universities, rather than just one university campus would help to increase sample size and represent other racial and ethnic groups of students. The results may vary for different subgroups, and future research should explore potential differences among ethnic and racial groups. Additionally, this study had a disproportionate number of girls, with more girls than boys, highlighting the importance of future research with a more equitable representation of both genders. Adding different questions to the survey may also improve this

study. Future survey questions could ask for indicators of actual college performance rather than reports of college preparedness, since only high school GPAs were collected through the survey. More research is needed to understand whether college preparation programs are providing the necessary support to assist low-income, minority, and first-generation students with the transition from high school to college and university.

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