



Title of Project

English Language Teaching Programs at Historically Black Colleges and Universities: A Mutually Beneficial Initiative for Students and Institutions

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TIRF Research Topic Investigated

Plurilingualism in Business, Industry, the Professions, and Educational Contexts

Project Summary

Historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) have long filled an important role as educational sites for African American students who have been, and continue to be, marginalized due to race-based inequity while sharing a common institutional mission. One core component of this mission is the presence of a supportive familial atmosphere among students, staff, administration, and faculty. Further defining features of the HBCU mission are engagement between the institutions and their surrounding communities and curricula focused on social justice and racial equality. HBCUs, however, have suffered from declining enrollment, a situation that compounds the problems commonly experienced at these institutions due to financial shortfalls.

Considering these difficulties, it is surprising that there exists a dearth of research on the diversification of HBCU student bodies, while virtually no studies look into the experiences of English language learners at HBCUs. It is from this gap that research emanating from the field of applied linguistics can be beneficial to addressing the needs of HBCUs through the creation of English language teaching (ELT) programs. Using a corpus-driven investigation of student recruitment material available on HBCU websites and a qualitative case study of two HBCU ELT programs, this study endeavors to discover how ELT programs can be mutually beneficial to both international and domestic students at HBCUs, as well as to the institutions themselves. From there, policy initiatives will be discussed, with a particular focus on ways in which ELT programs can function at HBCUs while adhering to the unique, shared HBCU mission.