Minority Presence in Palo Alto High School Journalism

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INTRODUCTION

There is a lack of minority representation in journalism. Despite various organizations working to bring minorities into journalism, all minority groups combined account for approximately 22.4 percent of television journalists and 13.34 percent of journalists at daily newspapers (White, 2015).

This problem has negatively impacted the voice of minorities because they are not being represented within mainstream media. According to the Center for Media Literacy, "currently only about 40 percent of the nation's 1,600 daily newspapers employ any minorities in editorial staff positions" (Cort, 2017). The gap within this study is sufficient national research on the cause of this issue (Figure 1).
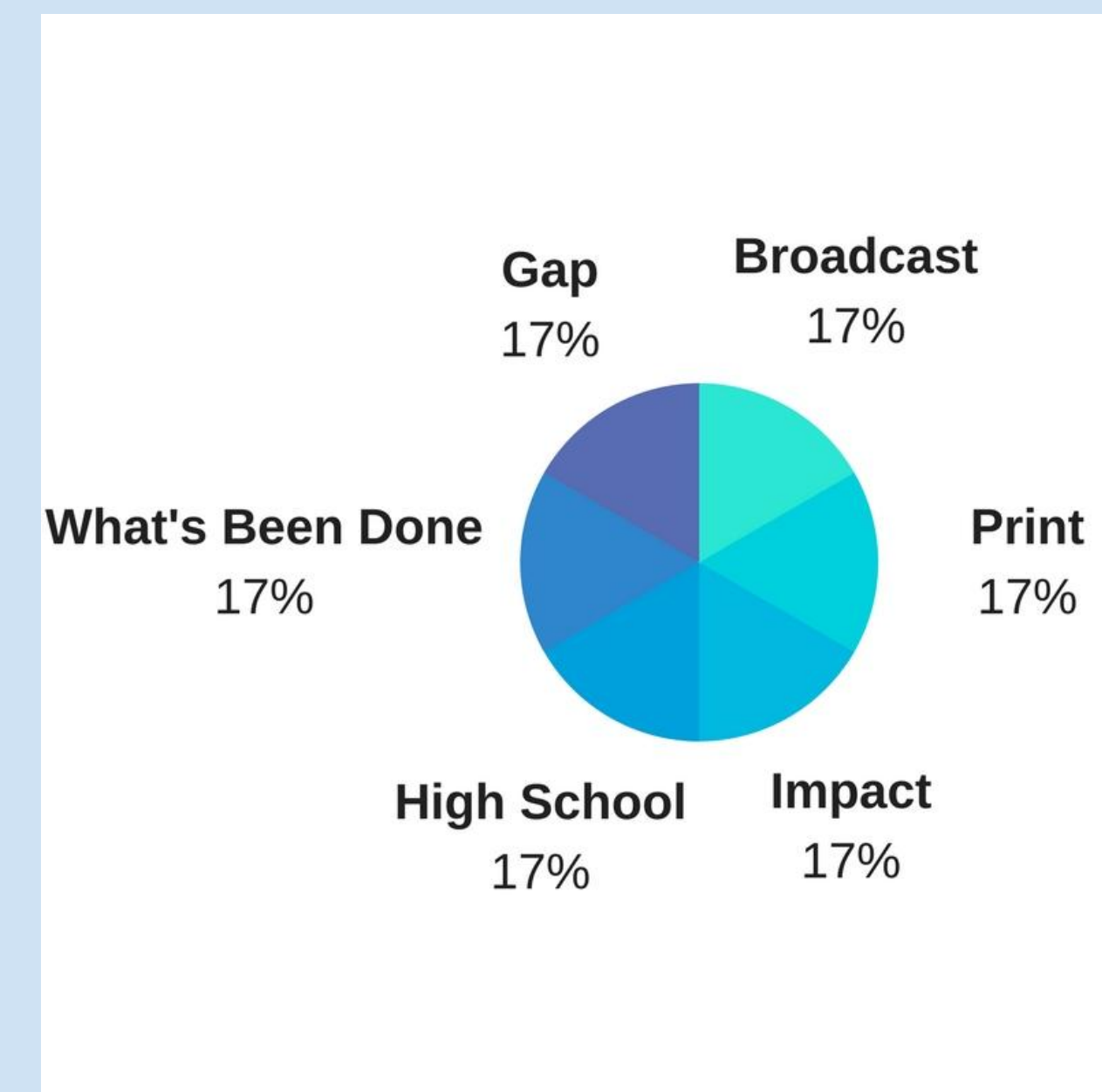
DATA AND FINDINGS

Figure 1
This chart depicts the topics within my literature review. Each topic supports my research and helped with analysis.

Gap 17%
Broadcast 17%
Print 17%
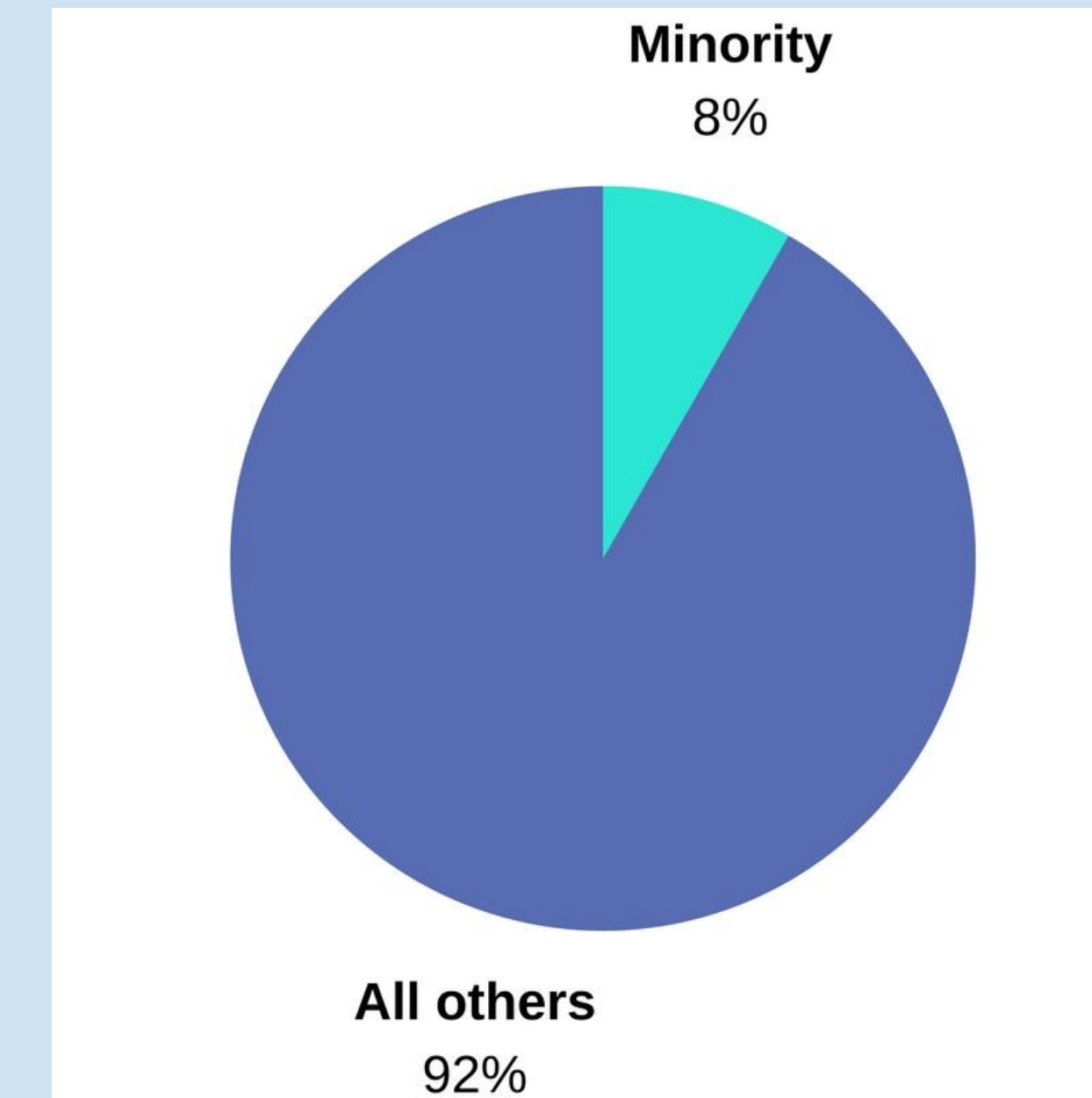Impact 17%
High School 17%
What's Been Done 17%

Figure 2
The percent of African American and Latino students who have requested a journalism course next year is 8% and the percent who have not is 92%.

Minority 8%
All others 92%

Figure 4
The percentage of students who are not Latino or African American and have have at least one course request in Infinite Campus is much greater than the percentage of students who are African American or Latino
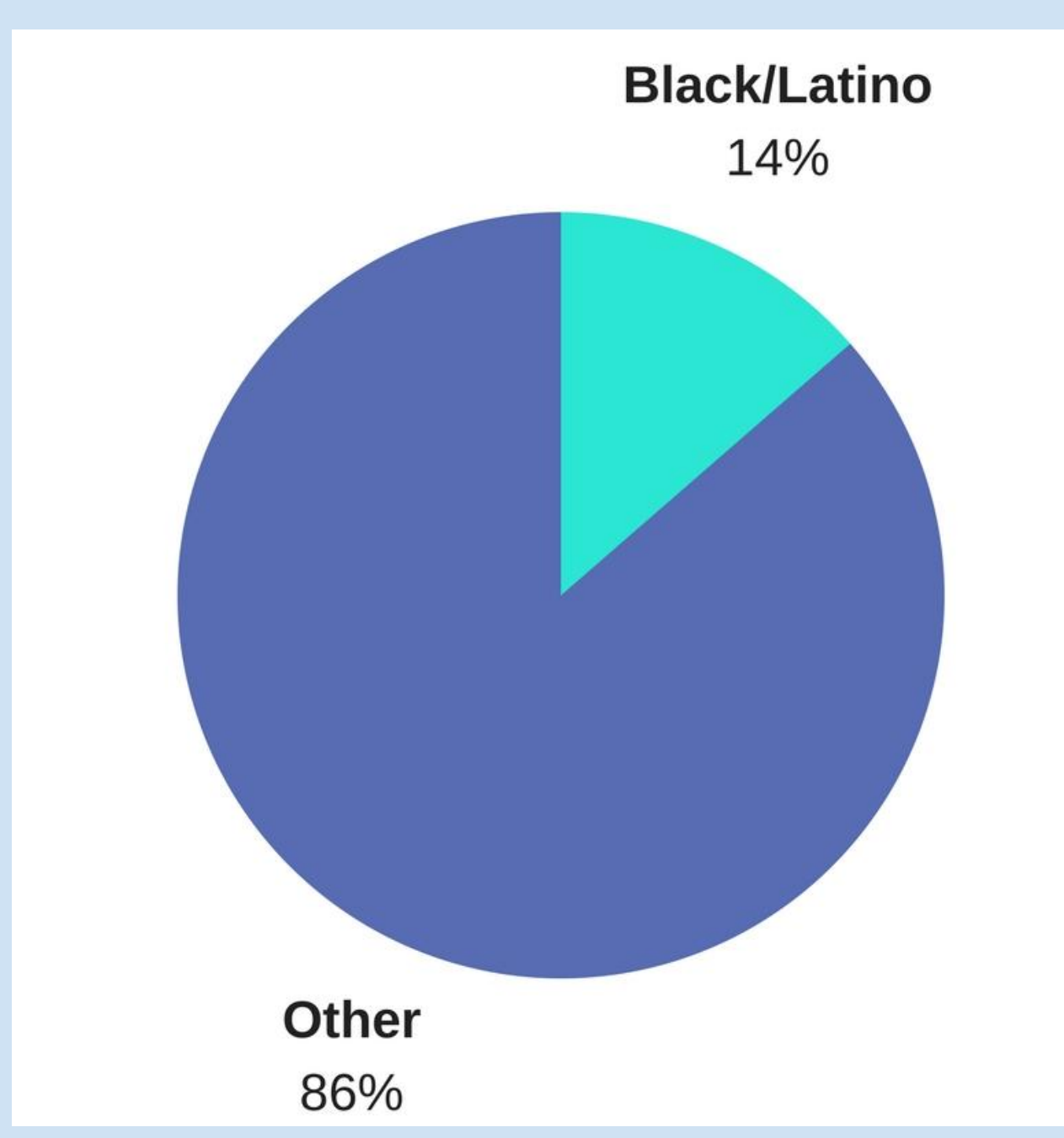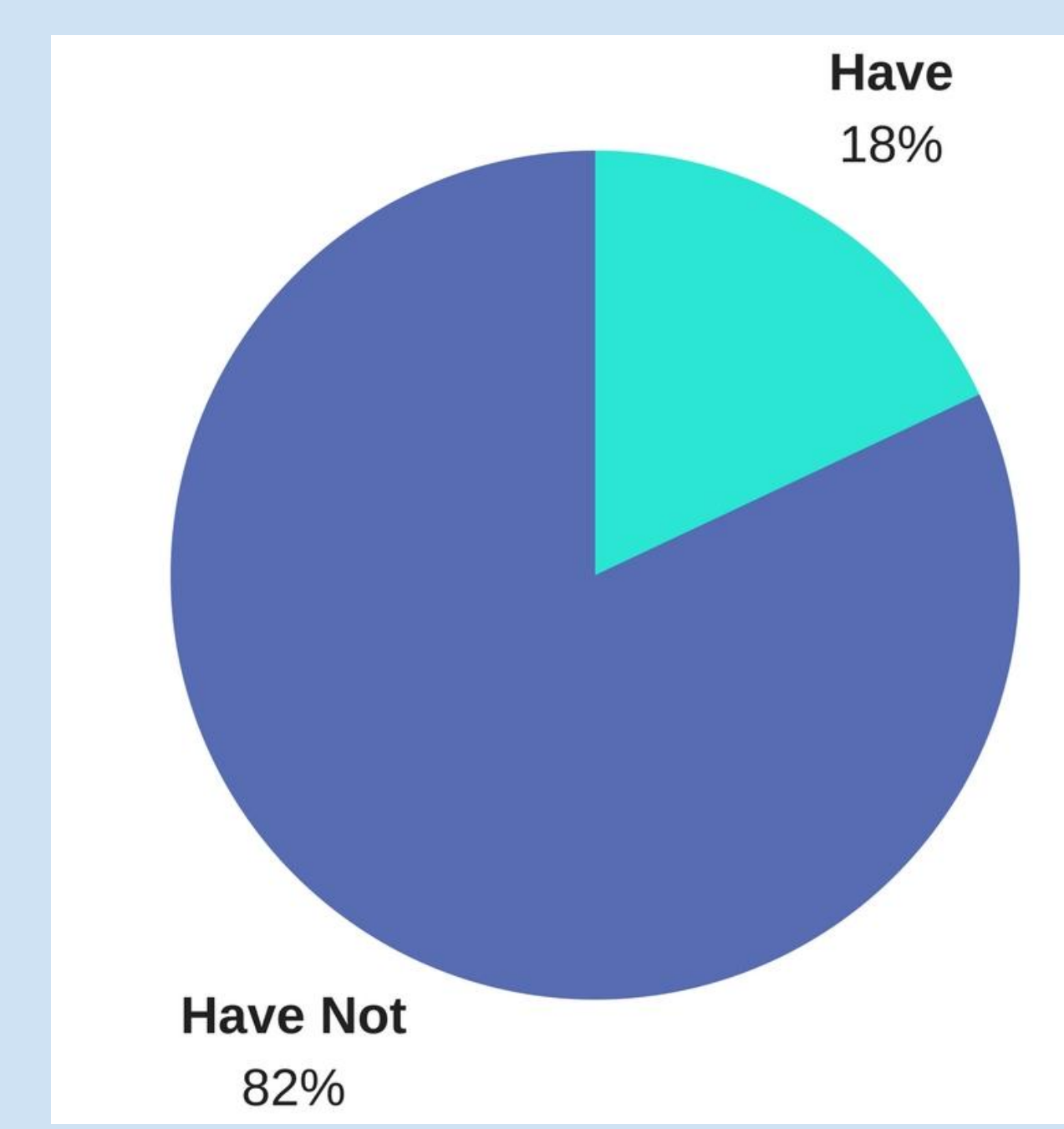
Black/Latino 14%
Other 86%

Figure 3
The percentage of non African American or Latino students who have requested a course in journalism last year is less than the percentage of students who have not.

Have 18%
Have Not 82%

CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND NEXT STEPS

The results of this study display that the information I distributed to AVID students positively impacted the percent of African Americans and Latino students who are involved with journalism. As a result, a space has been opened up within the journalism program at Paly for a new perspective and voice.

After meeting with an AVID teacher, I learned that he is teaming with a journalism advisor to implement an introductory journalism unit into AVID classes. In the future, I have high hopes that this will be successful and that more minorities will be involved with Paly journalism.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES

1/24/18

Reached out to Head of AVID
The head of AVID was emailed to reach out about sharing information on the benefits of journalism to AVID students. I hoped to provide her with information to hand out to AVID students informing them on the positive impact of taking part in journalism and the publications that are offered at Paly.

2/12/18

Emailed Handout
On February 12, I sent the head of AVID an email with the finished handout attached and included how I should handle distributing the information.

2/26/18

Reached out to AVID Teacher
After no response from the head of AVID, I reached out to an AVID teacher to see if I could come to his class to distribute my handout to his students. On March 1, I gave the teacher 25 copies of the handout during second period which he passed on to his students.

2/27/18

Collected Data from Database
On Tuesday, February 27, I emailed the person involved with technology at Paly to discuss how I could receive the percent of African American and Latino students who have signed up for journalism next year. On March 14 I received an email with the data from the Infinite Campus database.

DISCUSSION, ANALYSIS, AND EVALUATION

Before implementing my project, I determined that African American and Latino students make up 7.2% of journalism participants on campus. After distributing a handout on the benefits of journalism to freshman AVID students, a group which is made up of 73.8% African Americans and Latinos, it was found that 8% of African American and Latino students have requested a journalism course next year, as shown in Figure 2. Although the percent of African American and Latino students who have requested a journalism course is greater than the percent of African American and Latino students who are currently enrolled in a journalism course, it is likely that not all minority students have turned in their course selections

Additionally, as a result of the fact that the percentage African American and Latino students who have at least one course request in Infinite Campus is much less than the percent of students who are not a minority (see Figure 4), this data may not be as reliable as some students may not have submitted their course selections. Based on this data, the percentage of African American and Latino students who are scheduled to enroll in a journalism class next year is greater than the amount enrolled now, but the percent of non-African Americans and Latinos is still much higher at 18%, as shown in Figure 3.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS / REFERENCES

I would like to give special thanks to Mona Siegel and Richard Kim for helping to make this project possible!

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