

Defining and Measuring Student Success in Higher Education: An Analysis of Institutional and Student Factors

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Abstract:

There are countless definitions of student success. Of the many articles that discuss student success within the higher educational arena, very few capture students' own definition of success, thereby suggesting a need for further research in this area. Thompson and Jensen-Ryan (2018) found that undergraduate students' expressed definitions of success include academic outcomes including graduation, as well as emotional outcomes such as self-confidence. Measuring student success at the institutional level most often includes outcome variables such as retention, attrition, course grades, exam scores, and completion rates. The measurement of success as defined by students, however, may be more difficult to achieve. The present research seeks to explore definitions of student success as defined at the institutional and student levels. Emphasis will be placed on the measurement of student success with the goal of developing a model for student success within the higher educational arena.