

Public Abstract

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Title:IDENTIFICATION OF NATIONAL SURVEY OF STUDENT ENGAGEMENT (NSSE) SOCIALIZATION VARIABLE CLUSTERS THAT PREDICT PRIVATE MIDWESTERN COLLEGE PERSISTENCE

The college under study has concerns about increasing student persistence through understanding engagement activities. This study addressed the lack of information regarding identification of National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) socialization clusters that predict private Midwestern college persistence within two NSSE Benchmarks; 1) Student-Faculty Interaction and 2) Supportive Campus Environment.

The conceptual underpinning is engagement in context of social constructivism. Supportive literature highlights relationships among engagement, persistence, and demographic variables. This study utilized a quantitative, pre-experimental, post-post comparison methodology. Archival data were retrieved, with permission, from the college under study's database. The dependent variable is engagement measured by two NSSE Benchmarks from the NSSE instrument (NSSE, 2007). The independent variables are persistence, gender, athletic status, and legacy status. Covariates for the study are ACT or SAT standardized test scores and high school grade point averages.

Data were analyzed by using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences v. 14 for descriptive summary analysis, four-way analysis of covariance (ANCOVA), and discriminant analysis. The study found main and interaction effects of engagement and NSSE variable clusters within four independent variables. Student interaction with faculty was found to be an indicator of persistence. The college under study must provide opportunities for faculty to be more socially involved with students.