

Higher Education: Student Success and Supplemented Educational Participation

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ABSTRACT

- ▶ Support and inclusion are both foundational parts of a student's experience at community college campuses, inside and outside of the classroom (Zamani, 2016). *Academic* supplemented programs such as McNair Trio, honor societies and *non-academic* supplemental programs such as racial affinity groups purport to provide support and inclusion. The structure of supplemented programs/clubs within the community college setting is the fundamental ideology behind my research. How does the student's participation in supplemented programs both academically and non-academically such as clubs and student organizations affect their academic success? After researching the topic of supplemented educational programs (Nelson-Brown, 2005), I found an underrepresented collection of research. The intended use of the term supplemented educational programs is to use the term to identify student clubs, organizations, memberships, and classes that do not accumulate credit towards a degree path. Identifiable programs are TRIO McNair, LGTBQ+ clubs and organizations, diversity club, Honors societies, etc. For the remainder of this literature review supplemented educational clubs both academic and non-academic will be referred to as supplemented student programs. Current research does identify a need for the student with specific relation to gender, race, or wealth (Zamani, 2016). My intended goal is to identify any correlations between supplemented student programs, groups, or clubs and the students' success. My demographic will be community college students, I will investigate the experiences of community college students from 4 different community college campuses exclusive to Washington State. Through structured interviews, I will sample the experiences of community college students in supplemented student programs. Administrators in supplemented student programs will also be interviewed regarding their perceptions of student experience. These interactions will be measured through interviews analyzed following generic qualitative analysis and reported student success rate through graduation. I acknowledge that all participating campuses will have varying degrees of club participation.

Does participation in clubs help students be more successful?



Research surrounding supplemented student programs at the community college level is nearly non-existent, especially for the general community college population which “enroll about 35% of the nation's college students” (Snyder et al., 2009).

Mental illness can affect students' motivation, concentration, and social interactions-crucial factors for students to succeed in higher education” (Son, 2020).

It is underestimated how many boundaries may exist for the student learner regardless of age, race, or wealth status, and without support these students may not succeed.

METHODS

- ▶ This study will take a closer look at the student programs and clubs at four different Washington state community colleges. A directory of each school's active supplemented non-educational programs and clubs will be obtained via a web-search of the colleges, the term *student organizations* will be entered into the search bar once at each school's site. The four schools included in the study are, Seattle Central College, Wenatchee Valley College, Spokane Community College (only to include students who are actively enrolled on this campus and not the sister campus of Spokane Falls Community College), and Walla Walla Community College. Each school's list of identified supplemented non-educational programs will receive a provided email script. The first five programs that respond from each of the community colleges will be asked to participate in an interview completed via Zoom video conferencing technology. At any time if a club or administrator does not express interest in participating being interviewed a next club or organizations will be contacted in their place. All personal narratives to be collected from the interviews will be done so and stored in a way to maintain and assure confidentiality. Personal narratives will be coded by the type of response to a series of particular-interview questions, patterns of programed benefits and gaps will be explored as they are presented in qualitative data. Interviews will be coded independently under the supervision of a research supervisor and bias will be identified through research journaling. Future participants to be interviewed should be students, faculty members, and /or staff members belonging to the supplemented student programs. Included in the interview are five questions that will serve as prompts through the interview.

WHAT AM I
LOOKING TO
CHANGE?



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CONCLUSION

- ▶ Many different programs/clubs exist for community college students, but the comprehensive social-emotional benefits of these programs compared to general community college participation remains unexplored. Judith A. Beck (2020) ponders her own problematic concerns with the mental state of students regardless of their “professional training, age, institution or degree” (p.1). Although programs survey their students for their current stress levels, pre and post to program participation; it is not identified how they follow up with the students after leaving undergraduate education. Institutions can identify a need for certain populations to be mentored or aided but they do not clearly identify if participation is ideal for all students’ success. An identifiable gap in community college research makes it harder to identify a specific trend in data. Research is plentiful in the minority and underrepresented lens of inclusion. My concerns are that it is underestimated how many boundaries may exist for the student learner regardless of age, race, or wealth status, and without support these students may not succeed.

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