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REVISING TINTO'S INTERACTIONALIST THEORY OF STUDENT DEPARTURE THROUGH THEORY ELABORATION: Examining the Role of Organizational Attributes in the Persistence Process

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to estimate the effects of organizational attributes on social integration in particular, and more generally on the student withdrawal process. Theory elaboration (the application of new concepts borrowed from other theoretical perspectives to explain the focal phenomenon) is used to help with the revision of Tinto's interactionalist theory of individual student departure. The existence of empirical evidence supporting the importance of organizational attributes in the persistence process makes the addition of organizational characteristics a logical choice as a possible source of social integration in an elaboration of Tinto's theory. The results from this study provide strong support for elaborating the revised version of Tinto's theory through the inclusion of concepts from organizational theory. The

findings from this study also indicate that future research should use theory elaboration to look for other potential sources of social integration.

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