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Title

From 'financial considerations' to 'poverty': towards a reconceptualisation of the role of finances in higher education student drop out

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Abstract

While the role of financial considerations in higher education student dropout is being recognized increasingly, the dominant international literature fails to reflect the extent of socio-economic deprivation among students in countries where many people live below the poverty datum line. This article draws on a study of student retention and graduate destination at seven HE institutions in South Africa, focusing on the University of the Western Cape which caters for a large proportion of impoverished students. The study found many students left before completing a qualification because they were too poor to stay. A model of student departure is presented which draws on the very influential work of Vincent Tinto but also allows for greater emphasis than he did on students' ability to pay (real or perceptual) and demarcates the times in the academic calendar when finances present their greatest challenge to retention. The model also invites consideration of the national and international factors which impact on the social/economic/political milieu in which students'

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persist-or-depart decisions are made. (HRK / Abstract übernommen) Breier, Mignonne, E-Mail:
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