Exploring the Effects of Ability to Pay on Persistence in College
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Abstract
This study examines the effects of economic and noneconomic variables on college persistence, building both economic theory and Tinto’s Student Integration Model. The authors tested their predictive research design’s hypotheses by means of logistic regression models with a national sample of 1,375 college students attending public four-year institutions. Findings indicate that financial variables moderate the effect of goal commitment on persistence. They explore implications both for theory and for student financial aid policy.
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During the last twenty years, a wide variety of federal, state, and institutional student aid programs have evolved, all with the expectation that they will enhance access to college, widen choice among institutions, and increase student persistence (Stampen 1980). The cost of these programs was approximately $20 billion.

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