

Transfer Student Engagement: How Post-Transfer Financial Aid Amounts Influence Post- Transfer Engagement

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Research Questions

- To what extent does type of post-transfer financial aid associate with post-transfer student engagement?
- To what extent does yearly post-transfer financial aid amount associate with post-transfer student engagement?

Review of Literature

- Net prices influence college choice and access (Avery & Hoxby, 2004; Paulsen & St. John, 2002; Perna, 2006)
- Research linking financial aid to access (Baum, Little, & Payea, 2011; Bergerson, 2009; Dynarski, 2000; 2002; 2004 Heller, 1999; Perna, 2010)
- Research linking financial aid to persistence (Hossler, Ziskin, Gross, Kim, & Cekic, 2009; McKinney & Burrige, 2015; Miller, 2013; Perna, 1998)
- Limited literature looking at the relationship between financial aid and engagement (La Nasa & Rogers, 2009; Nora, Barlow, & Crisp, 2006)

Conceptual Framework

- What we know about transfer students
 - Academic challenges
 - Social barriers
 - Financial struggles
- What we know about engagement
 - Astin's (1984) theory of student involvement
 - Tinto's (1975) student integration model
 - Bean and Metzner's (1985) conceptual theory on non-traditional student attrition
 - Kuh's (2008) high-impact educational practices

Methods

Sample

- 2012 Cohort of transfer students (n = 471) longitudinal dataset from a large, ethnically diverse, urban university in Texas; students entering the Business school
- Tracked from Fall 2012 - Spring 2016

Outcome Variables

- Engagement level-determined by cumulative count
- Engagement level- none (0 activities), passive (1-5 activities), active (6-13 activities)

Predictors

- Amounts of aid from yearly scholarships, loans, and grants
- Cumulative yearly aid level- no aid (\$0), low aid (\$1-\$4,999), moderate aid (\$5,000-\$9,999), and high aid (\$10,000+)

Limitations

- The data set is limited to informing only on whether a participant engaged in an activity at any point during their enrollment, not intensity of participation
- For this study, all co-curricular activities are treated as equally high impact
- The data set did not provide information on financial aid other than amount and type

Descriptive Results

Individual Activity Count					
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	
0	36	7.6	7.6	7.6	7.6
1	37	7.9	7.9	15.5	15.5
2	34	7.2	7.2	22.7	22.7
3	52	11.0	11.0	33.8	33.8
4	82	17.4	17.4	51.2	51.2
5	71	15.1	15.1	66.2	66.2
6	60	12.7	12.7	79.0	79.0
7	51	10.8	10.8	89.8	89.8
8	25	5.3	5.3	95.1	95.1
9	13	2.8	2.8	97.9	97.9
10	5	1.1	1.1	98.9	98.9
11	4	.8	.8	99.8	99.8
13	1	.2	.2	100.0	100.0
Total	471	100.0	100.0		

- Mean=4.43
- Std. Deviation=2.511

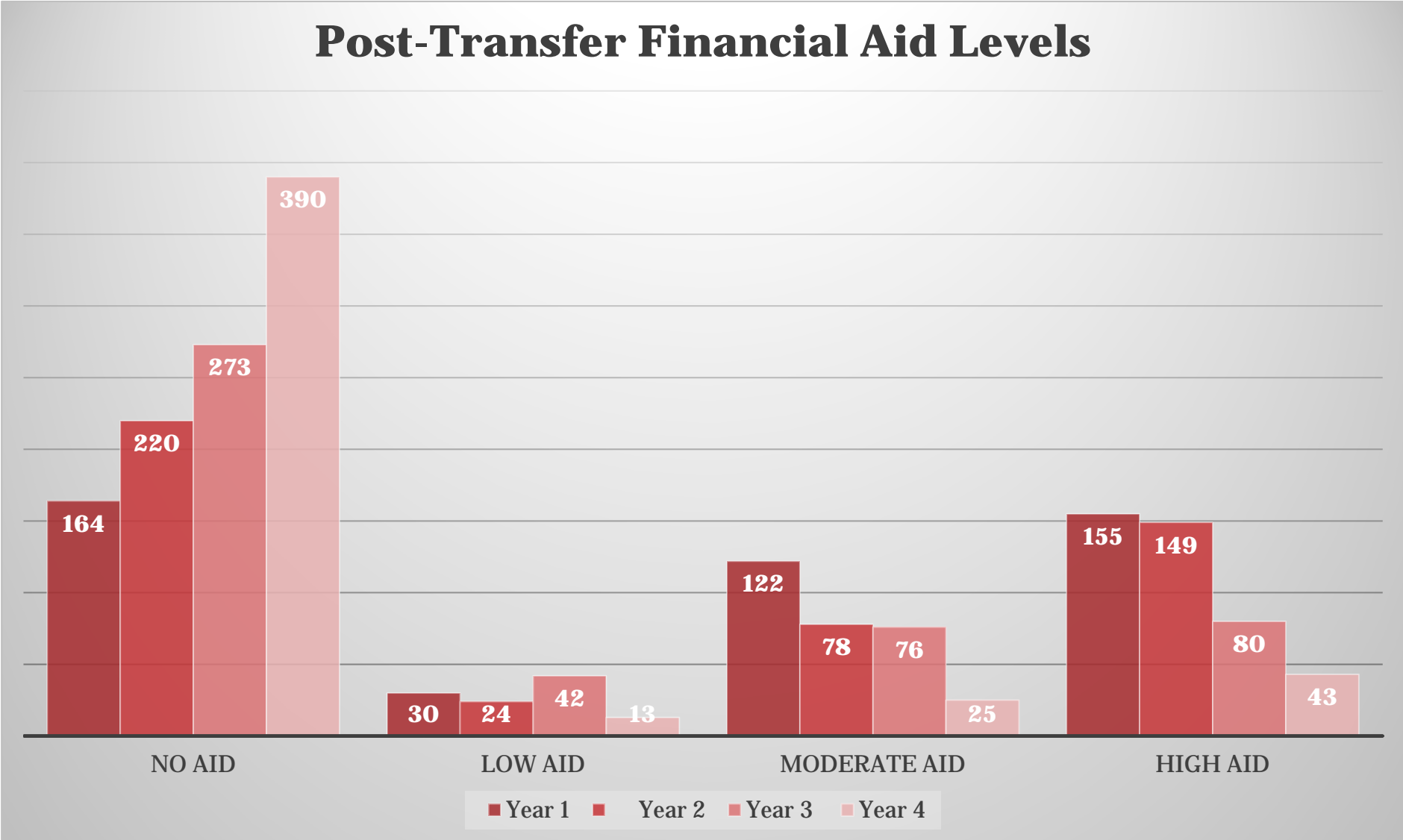
RQ 1 Multiple Regression Results

Variable	β
Intercept	
Loan Aid 2012-2013	-.133*
Grant Aid 2012-2013	-.098
Scholarship Aid 2012-2013	-.105
Loan Aid 2013-2014	.070
Grant Aid 2013-2014	.266**
Scholarship Aid 2013-2014	.072
Loan Aid 2014-2015	.086
Grant Aid 2014-2015	.027
Scholarship Aid 2014-2015	.004
Loan Aid 2015-2016	.104
Grant Aid 2015-2016	.134*
Scholarship Aid 2015-2016	.014

ANOVA						
Full Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
	Regression	513.253	21	24.441	4.596	.000 ^d
	Residual	2052.771	386	5.318		
	Total	2566.025	407			

Model Summary										
Model	R	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change	Durbin-Watson	
	.447 ^c	.200	2.306	.158	6.354	12	386	.000	1.853	

RQ 2 Descriptive Results



RQ 2 Multinomial Logistic Regression Results

	Variable	β
Passive engagement	Intercept	2.870
	[AID_YEAR_1=0]	.495
	[AID_YEAR_1=1]	-.157
	[AID_YEAR_1=2]	.519
	[AID_YEAR_2=0]	-2.426**
	[AID_YEAR_2=1]	16.121***
	[AID_YEAR_2=2]	-1.896
	[AID_YEAR_3=0]	-.214
	[AID_YEAR_3=1]	.318
	[AID_YEAR_3=2]	1.260
	[AID_YEAR_4=0]	.871
	[AID_YEAR_4=1]	17.282***
	[AID_YEAR_4=2]	.625

	Variable	β
Active engagement	Intercept	3.185
	[AID_YEAR_1=0]	1.102
	[AID_YEAR_1=1]	.270
	[AID_YEAR_1=2]	.639
	[AID_YEAR_2=0]	-2.465**
	[AID_YEAR_2=1]	16.959***
	[AID_YEAR_2=2]	-1.613
	[AID_YEAR_3=0]	-.890
	[AID_YEAR_3=1]	.962
	[AID_YEAR_3=2]	1.125
	[AID_YEAR_4=0]	-.214
	[AID_YEAR_4=1]	18.106***
	[AID_YEAR_4=2]	-.088

Discussion

Timing and type of financial aid

- Loan aid in the first year post-transfer had a negative influence on post-transfer engagement (Dynarski & Scott-Clayton, 2013; McKinney & Burridge, 2015)
- Grant aid in the second and fourth years post-transfer had a positive influence on post-transfer engagement (Dynarski & Scott-Clayton, 2013)

Discussion

Amount of financial aid

- Students who received no aid in their second year were less likely to fall into either the passive or active engagement category
 - Many transfer students miss out on opportunities to file for financial aid in their first year post-transfer (Miller, 2013)
- Low aid was the most significant predictor of passive and active engagement
 - As transfer students are often from low income backgrounds (Astin, 2005; McCormick, Sarraf, BrckaLorenz, & Haywood, 2009; Pike, Kuh, and Massa-McKinley, 2008), they may be more likely to receive some level of Pell grant aid that would fall into this category

Implications

- Transfer students need to be aware of what financial aid options are available, but they also need support in navigating the application process
- More access to grant aid has the potential to allow more students to get engaged, which could impact persistence levels
- Practitioners working in engagement programs need to be aware of institutional financial aid policies and national deadlines

Q & A