

**An Exploratory Comparison of Participation in U.S. Higher Education  
and Participation in the U.S. Labor Force**

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The research is in the initial phases of exploring potential parallels that exist between traditional students attending places of higher education and employees working in the workforce. A basic premise is that attending college is a “job” for the students and it is their responsibility to manage the “duties” of their “job.” When they choose to drop-out or stop-out, it may be similar to leaving an employment situation. If the student chooses not to pursue higher education further, is it similar to leaving the workforce.

Retention rates at colleges and universities have become more important as a gauge of the effectiveness of the institutions. It is suggested here that there may be a natural rate of attrition of students, similar to the national labor force participation rate.