

Investigating Military Students' Mattering: Academic Performance and the Mattering Experience in College

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Abstract

Mattering is the perception of others depending on us, being interested in us, and being concerned with our fate. The mattering experience has been explored in fields such as psychology, counseling, and education. Such research has sought to understand the transitions and sense of belonging of college students. However, there has been a lack of studies on perceived mattering within a unique college student population—military students. In this study, Schlossberg's theory of college students' mattering to others was revisited. The purpose of this study was twofold. First, it attempted to develop a measurement scale so that the perceived mattering would be applied to military students. Second, it examined the construct of perceived mattering, identified as the individual perception of being important for others, and its relationship with military students' academic performance. A total of 129 participants completed a survey aimed at assessing the variables. This study found that four dimensions of mattering could be used to measure military students' sense of mattering: peers, faculty, advising, and administration. Peers and administration were found to be predictors of positive academic performance. Research-informed implications for enhancing military students' academic performance and experiences of mattering were discussed.

Key words: military students, mattering, academic performance, college.