



Beyond Costs and Benefits: How Commitment Predicts Academic Achievement among Moroccan University Students

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Abstract

The concept of commitment has been extensively studied in workplace settings and consistently linked to positive employee outcomes; however, its relevance to higher education remains largely underexplored. The present study, therefore, examines the role of commitment in predicting academic achievement among Moroccan university students. Building on Allen and Meyer's (1990) three-component model of organizational commitment, the study adapts the affective, continuance, and normative commitment dimensions to the higher education context to examine their relationship with students' academic achievement. Using non-probability sampling, 281 third-year undergraduate and first- and second-year master's students enrolled at Mohammed V University completed a 22-item questionnaire consisting of demographic questions and items measured on a five-point Likert scale. Data were analyzed using Pearson correlation and regression analyses. Findings reveal that affective and normative commitment significantly predict academic achievement, whereas continuance commitment, though positively associated with the outcome variable, does not make a significant unique contribution when the three commitment dimensions are considered simultaneously. These results suggest that students' emotional attachment to their institution and their sense of moral obligation to persist in their studies are stronger predictors of academic achievement than commitment based on the perceived costs of leaving the university. Implications, study limitations, and recommendations for future research are discussed.

Keywords: Organizational Commitment, Affective Commitment, Continuance Commitment, Normative Commitment, Academic Achievement, Higher Education

Introduction

Higher education institutions worldwide face persistent challenges in ensuring student success and retention. Despite substantial investments in educational infrastructure and support services, student dropout rates remain alarmingly high across the globe. In Morocco, student attrition represents a major challenge within the higher education system,

particularly in open-access institutions. According to the Higher Council for Education, Training and Scientific Research (CSEFRS), open-access institutions accounted for more than 88% of university enrolment in 2014–2015 (CSEFRS, 2019). An earlier CSEFRS analysis of students enrolled in open-access bachelor's programs (*Licence des Études Fondamentales*) found that 64% left their studies without obtaining a degree. Student withdrawal was particularly concentrated during the early stages of the academic trajectory, with 25.2% of students leaving after their first year and 40.2% after two years (CSEFRS, 2014, p. 103). These figures highlight the substantial challenges surrounding student persistence and degree completion in Moroccan higher education.

Similarly, within OECD countries, approximately 20% of university students discontinue their studies before completing their first year, representing not only significant personal costs for students who fail to realize their educational aspirations but also substantial economic losses for institutions and societies (Borja-Gil et al., 2024; CRUE, 2019). These statistics underscore a pressing need to understand the factors that influence students' persistence and commitment to their educational journeys.

The consequences of student departure extend far beyond institutional financial concerns. Students who abandon their studies face diminished career prospects, reduced lifetime earning potential, and lower overall quality of life (Borja-Gil et al., 2024). For universities, high attrition rates damage institutional reputation, reduce alumni networks and potential future donations, and represent substantial misallocation of public and private educational resources. Consequently, educational researchers and practitioners have devoted considerable attention to identifying the determinants of student persistence, with a growing consensus that understanding the psychological mechanisms underlying students' commitment to their institutions is essential for developing effective retention strategies (Savage et al., 2017; Cownie, 2019). Hence, identifying the factors that strengthen student commitment has become a crucial priority for both researchers and higher education institutions that seek to improve retention and academic success.

Among the various theoretical frameworks applied to understand student persistence, organizational commitment theory offers a particularly promising lens. Originally developed within organizational psychology to explain employee attachment to workplaces, the three-component model of commitment proposed by Allen and Meyer (1990) has been increasingly recognized as applicable to the higher education context. This model distinguishes among three distinct psychological states, including affective commitment, characterized by emotional attachment to and identification with the organization; continuance commitment, based on the perceived costs associated with leaving; and normative commitment, reflecting a sense of moral obligation to remain. These three mindsets, namely desire, need, and obligation to continue a course of action, provide a comprehensive framework for understanding why students either persist in or withdraw from their educational pursuits.

Growing evidence indicates that student commitment plays an important role in shaping educational outcomes. For instance, students who demonstrate strong commitment to their institutions are more likely to remain enrolled, achieve higher grades, and report greater satisfaction with their educational experiences (Davidson & Ewert, 2020; Wilkins et al., 2016). Conversely, low levels of commitment consistently predict dropout intentions and actual withdrawal (Savage et al., 2017). This relationship can be explained by the fact that committed students are more likely to invest more time and effort in their studies, engage more deeply with course materials, and make greater use of effective learning strategies, all of which contribute to improved academic Achievement (Cavanagh et al., 2018; Ejubović & Puška, 2019). Understanding the specific pathways through which different forms of commitment influence academic Achievement is therefore crucial for designing targeted interventions to support student success.

Previous research indicates that different forms of academic engagement, namely the behavioral, cognitive, and emotional investment that students make in their learning, mediate the relationship between commitment and academic achievement (Cao et al., 2026; Davidson & Ewert, 2020). Honicke and Broadbent (2016) also point out that students who are affectively committed to their institutions tend to adopt effective learning approaches, overcome challenges, and actively participate in academic activities, ultimately contributing to superior academic outcomes. Moreover, Sereno et al. (2020) found that students who combined strong commitment with self-affirmation participated more actively in classroom discussions than those in the comparison groups, regardless of their levels of self-esteem or self-efficacy. Their findings further suggest that commitment enhances behaviors such as oral participation, which are themselves associated with improved academic achievement.

However, the relationship between specific forms of commitment and academic achievement is more complex than initially presumed. Some studies suggest that the effect of different commitment dimensions may vary according to the educational context and student characteristics (e.g. Cinkir et al., 2022; Alshammari et al., 2017). Consequently, the literature reveals several important trends and inconsistencies regarding the relationship between student commitment and academic achievement.

First, affective commitment has emerged as the most consistently positive predictor of desirable educational outcomes, including academic achievement, satisfaction, and retention (Cownie, 2019; Wilkins et al., 2016). This form of commitment, characterized by genuine enjoyment of the educational experience and identification with institutional values, appears to foster intrinsic motivation that sustains students through challenges. Second, normative commitment, grounded in a sense of obligation to persist, has received less attention but appears to complement affective commitment in promoting positive outcomes, particularly in collectivist cultural contexts where social expectations regarding educational persistence are strong (Meyer & Parfyonova, 2010; Wilkins et al.,

2016). Third, and most controversially, continuance commitment presents a more complex picture. This form of commitment, which is based on the perceived costs of leaving, has traditionally been viewed as a less desirable kind of attachment because of its association with feelings of entrapment and lower performance (Taing et al., 2011; Fullerton, 2005). However, Taing et al. (2011) and Cinkir et al. (2022) suggest that certain dimensions of continuance commitment may actually predict positive outcomes. Specifically, continuance commitment based on perceptions of favorable economic exchanges with the institution appears to relate positively to achievement and organizational citizenship behaviors, whereas commitment based on a lack of alternatives tends to have neutral or negative effects.

These findings highlight the multidimensional nature of commitment and the importance of examining its components separately rather than treating commitment as a one-dimensional construct. They also raise important questions about the mechanisms through which different forms of commitment influence academic achievement. While the broad contours of the commitment- achievement relationship have been established, several critical gaps remain in the literature. First, much of the research on student commitment has focused on affective dimensions, with continuance and normative commitment receiving comparatively less empirical attention in educational contexts (Cownie, 2019; Wolowska, 2014). This represents a significant limitation given the theoretical arguments that these distinct forms of commitment may have different implications for student behavior and outcomes (Meyer & Allen, 1997). Second, the mechanisms linking commitment to academic achievement have been insufficiently explored, with most studies either examining direct effects or focusing on a limited range of mediating variables such as engagement or satisfaction (Cinkir et al., 2022; Yıldırım et al., 2024). Third, the generalizability of findings across different educational contexts remains unclear, since much of the existing research has been conducted in Western institutional settings or with limited sample sizes (Wilkins et al., 2016; Borja-Gil et al., 2024). Fourth, and most significantly for the present study, the relative contribution of each commitment component to academic achievement has not been adequately examined in a single comprehensive model, particularly in non-Western educational contexts where cultural values may influence the nature and consequences of commitment (Cownie, 2019; Borja-Gil et al., 2024). Addressing these gaps is essential for developing a more comprehensive understanding of how different dimensions of student commitment shape academic achievement.

Moreover, these gaps matter both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, understanding the distinct pathways through which different forms of commitment influence academic achievement can enhance theoretical models of student persistence and inform the development of more nuanced interventions. Practically, institutions that aim to improve student retention and success can benefit from evidence-based guidance on which

aspects of commitment to target and how to strengthen them. Without a clear understanding of whether affective, continuance, or normative commitment most strongly predicts achievement, institutional resources may be misallocated toward less effective interventions. Furthermore, as demonstrated by Theron and Pelsier (2017), institutional characteristics play a significant role in fostering student commitment. Specifically, the quality of both the physical and virtual learning environments has been found to influence students' overall commitment, with virtual services and institutional communication emerging as stronger predictors than the social servicescape. The authors suggest that universities can enhance student commitment by investing in the quality of their educational environment and institutional support systems, rather than relying solely on interpersonal interactions.

The present study aims to address these gaps by examining the relationships among the three components of student commitment and academic achievement in the context of Moroccan higher education. Building on Allen and Meyer's (1990) three-component model, the study investigates the extent to which affective, continuance, and normative commitment independently predict students' academic achievement. By treating each commitment dimension as a distinct predictor rather than combining them into a single measure, the aim is to clarify the unique contribution of each form of commitment to academic achievement. This approach is consistent with recent calls in the literature for more nuanced examinations of the commitment-achievement relationship that recognize the potential for different commitment dimensions to have differential effects (Taing et al., 2011; Cownie, 2019). Therefore, based on the theoretical framework and empirical evidence reviewed above, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1: Affective commitment positively affects academic achievement.

H2: Continuance commitment positively affects academic achievement.

H3: Normative commitment positively affects academic achievement.

Methodology

Research Design

This study was conducted with a quantitative research design to examine the impact of the three dimensions of student commitment, viz. affective, continuance, and normative on academic achievement. Pearson product-moment correlation was initially deployed, followed by multiple linear regression analysis to determine whether academic achievement could be predicted by the three forms of student commitment. This analytical approach is appropriate for examining the relative contribution of multiple antecedents to an outcome variable while controlling for intercorrelations among predictors. The quantitative approach was determined to be suitable for testing the hypothesized relationships, as it enables the statistical examination of both bivariate associations and the

unique predictive power of each commitment component when considered simultaneously.

Participants

The target population for the current study comprised third-year undergraduate and master's students enrolled at Mohammed V University of Rabat, Morocco. This population was selected because upper-level undergraduate and graduate students have typically accumulated sufficient experience within their educational institutions to develop meaningful commitment orientations, yet remain at a stage where academic achievement continues to be a relevant and measurable outcome.

Using non-probability snowball sampling, a total of 281 students participated in the study by completing an online questionnaire distributed via university communication channels and social media platforms. Students were informed about the purpose of the study, assured of the confidentiality of their responses, and informed that participation was voluntary. The questionnaire included demographic questions (gender, age, and current university level) followed by the commitment and academic achievement items measured on a five-point Likert scale. Completion of the questionnaire was taken as implied consent to participate in the study. Non-probability snowball sampling was employed as it is particularly effective for reaching students across different departments and programs when a comprehensive sampling frame is unavailable. The final sample comprised 205 female students (73%) and 76 male students (27%). The mean age of participants was 22.03 years ($SD = 1.95$). Regarding university level, 143 students (51%) were enrolled in the third year of the undergraduate program, while 77 students (27%) and 61 students (22%) were in the first and second years of the master's program, respectively. This distribution across academic levels enabled examination of commitment and achievement relationships across different stages of higher education.

Variables and Measures

Student Commitment

Allen and Meyer's (1990) Organizational Commitment Scale was adapted to measure student commitment to their educational institution and studies. The original scale measures three distinct components of commitment, including affective, continuance, and normative. In adapting the scale for the educational context, items were modified to reference students' relationships with their university and academic pursuits rather than employment relationships.

Affective commitment was assessed using four items measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Affective commitment refers to students' emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in their

university. Example items included: *"I feel like I am part of this university"* and *"I feel emotionally attached to my studies at this university."*

Continuance commitment was measured using five items on a five-point Likert scale. Continuance commitment reflects students' awareness of the costs associated with leaving their educational institution such as the loss of investments and the scarcity of alternatives. A sample of items included: *"I have invested too much time and effort in my studies, so I cannot quit"* and *"Continuing my studies feels like my only option."*

Normative commitment was also evaluated using five items on a five-point Likert scale. Normative commitment reflects students' feelings of obligation to remain in their educational program, rooted in internalized norms and a sense of moral duty. A sample of items included: *"I feel a sense of obligation to complete my studies"* and *"I owe it to my family to complete my education."*

Academic Achievement

Academic achievement was assessed using five items developed specifically for this study to evaluate students' perceptions of their academic achievement. Examples items included: *"I achieve good grades in most of my courses"* and *"I consider myself a successful student academically."* All items were coded on a five-point Likert scale where 1 indicated complete disagreement and 5 showed complete agreement. Self-reported academic achievement measures have been widely used in educational research as valid indicators of actual achievement, with studies demonstrating strong correlations between self-reported and objectively measured grades.

Reliability Analysis

To ensure the internal consistency of the adapted measures, Cronbach's alpha coefficients were calculated for each scale. As presented in Table 1, the reliability coefficients for all scales exceeded the commonly accepted threshold of .70. The continuance commitment scale demonstrated acceptable internal consistency with a Cronbach's alpha of .72, indicating that the five items reliably measure the construct of continuance commitment. The academic achievement scale exhibited strong internal consistency with a Cronbach's alpha of .87, suggesting that the five items consistently capture students' perceptions of their academic achievement.

Table 1: Reliability coefficients of the scales

Names of scales	Number of items	Cronbach's alpha
Affective Commitment	4	0.9
Continuance Commitment	5	0.72
Normative Commitment	5	0.79
Academic Achievement	5	0.87

These reliability coefficients are particularly noteworthy given that the commitment items were adapted from Allen and Meyer's (1990) original Organizational Commitment Scale, which was developed for workplace contexts. The successful adaptation of these items to the educational setting, as evidenced by acceptable Cronbach's alpha values, supports the validity of using this instrument with student populations. The strong reliability of the academic achievement scale further confirms the coherence of the items developed for this study.

Results

Prior to conducting the linear regression analyses, a Pearson product-moment correlation was carried out to investigate the association between student commitment dimensions, namely affective, continuance, and normative and academic achievement. The significance level was set at 0.05. The correlation findings are summarized in Table 2 below.

Table 2: The Correlation results of student commitment dimensions and academic achievement

		Affective Commitment	Normative Commitment	Continuance Commitment
Academic Achievement	Pearson Correlation	0.519**	0.321**	0.250**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000
	N	281	281	281

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The results indicate that affective commitment exhibited the strongest positive correlation with academic achievement ($r = 0.51$, $p < 0.001$), suggesting that students who

reported greater emotional attachment to and identification with their university tended to achieve higher academic achievement. Normative commitment also demonstrated a moderate positive relationship with academic achievement ($r = 0.32, p < 0.001$), indicating that students who felt a sense of moral obligation to persist in their studies were more likely to perform better academically. Continuance commitment, on the other hand, showed a weaker but still significant positive correlation with academic achievement ($r = 0.25, p < 0.001$), demonstrating that students who perceived greater costs associated with leaving their educational institution also reported slightly higher academic achievement.

In order to further investigate these associations, a series of linear regression analyses were conducted to determine whether academic achievement could be predicted by student commitment. Prior to the analyses, the assumptions underlying linear regression were assessed to ensure the validity of the findings. Specifically, the assumptions of normality, autocorrelation, and multicollinearity were examined. The results indicated that these assumptions were satisfied, confirming that the data were suitable for linear regression analysis.

Hypothesis 1 proposed that affective commitment positively influences academic achievement. The results of the simple linear regression analysis indicated that affective commitment was a significant positive predictor of academic achievement ($\beta = 0.394, p < 0.001$). The model accounted for approximately 26% of the variance in academic achievement ($R^2 = 0.269$). These findings provide strong support for Hypothesis 1, suggesting that students with higher levels of affective commitment are more likely to demonstrate better academic achievement.

Hypothesis 2 proposed that continuance commitment positively influences academic achievement. The results of the simple linear regression analysis indicated that continuance commitment was a significant positive predictor of academic achievement ($\beta = 0.259, p < 0.001$). However, the model accounted for only 6% of the variance in academic achievement ($R^2 = 0.062$), indicating a relatively weak explanatory effect. Although these findings confirm Hypothesis 2, continuance commitment contributes relatively little to the prediction of academic achievement.

Hypothesis 3 proposed that normative commitment positively influences academic achievement. The results of the simple linear regression analysis indicated that normative commitment was a significant positive predictor of academic achievement ($\beta = 0.315, p < 0.001$). The model accounted for 10% of the variance in academic achievement ($R^2 = 0.103$), indicating greater explanatory power than continuance commitment but less than affective commitment. Therefore, Hypothesis 3 was confirmed, suggesting that students who feel a stronger sense of moral obligation to complete their studies tend to achieve better academic achievement.

In addition, to determine the unique contribution of each commitment dimension while controlling for the other commitment components, a multiple regression analysis was

conducted with all three commitment variables entered simultaneously as predictors of academic achievement. This analysis enabled examination of the relative predictive power of each commitment dimension and addressed the potential issue of shared variance among the predictors.

Table 3: Results of the multiple regression analysis predicting academic achievement

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficient		Standardized Coefficient	t	Sig
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.842	0.281	—	6.55	.001
	Affective commitment	0.353	0.049	0.430	7.20	.001
	Continuance commitment	-0.007	0.063	-0.008	-0.11	.916
	Normative commitment	0.175	0.064	0.192	2.74	.007

a. Dependent Variable: Academic Achievement

As presented in Table 3, the multiple regression model was statistically significant ($F = 36.91$, $p < 0.001$) and explained 29% of the variance in academic achievement ($R^2 = 0.296$). When all three dimensions of student commitment were entered simultaneously into the model, affective commitment emerged as the strongest unique predictor ($\beta = 0.353$, $p < 0.001$). Normative commitment also made a significant unique contribution ($\beta = 0.175$, $p = 0.007$). In contrast, continuance commitment was not a significant predictor after controlling for the other commitment dimensions ($\beta = -0.007$, $p = 0.916$).

These findings indicate that the significant relationship between continuance commitment and academic achievement observed in the simple regression analysis was largely attributable to variance shared with the other commitment dimensions. By contrast, affective commitment retained its significant predictive effect even after controlling for the other dimensions, while normative commitment also made a significant unique contribution to the model.

Discussion

The present study was an attempt to investigate the effect of the three components of student commitment, namely affective, continuance, and normative on academic achievement among upper-level undergraduate and master's students in Morocco. By adapting Allen and Meyer's (1990) three-component model of organizational commitment to the educational context, this research sought to determine the extent to which each

commitment dimension independently predicts students' academic achievement. In past research (e.g., Wilkins et al., 2016; Cownie, 2019; Cinkir et al., 2022; Borja-Gil et al., 2024), the main emphasis has been on examining commitment as an antecedent of various organizational and educational outcomes, including satisfaction, retention, and loyalty. However, very little research has concentrated on the effect of each of the three commitment components on academic achievement, particularly within the Moroccan higher education context. Moreover, to the author's best knowledge, the associations amongst these variables within the context of North Africa have not been comprehensively explored. Therefore, the current research endeavored to make a contribution to the educational psychology and higher education literature by empirically examining the predictive role of affective, continuance, and normative commitment in influencing Moroccan university students' academic achievement.

To begin with, affective commitment was hypothesized to have a significant positive effect on academic achievement. The Pearson product-moment correlation and linear regression strongly support this hypothesis (H1). Consequently, it is possible to infer that Moroccan university students who experience emotional attachment to their university, identification with their academic program, and a sense of belonging tend to achieve higher academic outcomes. Furthermore, it was hypothesized that continuance commitment would be a significant predictor of academic achievement. The simple regression analysis confirmed this association in that continuance commitment was positively and significantly related to academic achievement. However, when examined alongside the other commitment dimensions in the multiple regression analysis, this effect disappeared. This suggests that the bivariate relationship between continuance commitment and achievement is largely attributable to shared variance with the other commitment components, particularly normative commitment, with which continuance commitment showed a substantial correlation. This finding highlights the importance of examining commitment dimensions simultaneously rather than in isolation and suggests that while students may feel compelled to persist due to high costs or lack of viable options, these feelings do not necessarily translate into improved academic outcomes when more positive forms of commitment are present. Within the same frame, hypothesis 3 proposed that normative commitment could positively predict Moroccan students' academic achievement. The correlation and regression results lent full support to this hypothesis. This indicates that students who feel a moral obligation to complete their studies, rooted in internalized norms and a sense of duty to family and society, tend to perform better academically. However, the effect of normative commitment was weaker than that of affective commitment when both were considered together in the multiple regression model.

Additionally, the findings of the present study are consistent with recent studies in the literature. For instance, Wilkins et al. (2016) demonstrated that organizational

identification, which shares conceptual overlap with affective commitment, was a strong predictor of student commitment, achievement, and satisfaction among business school students. Similarly, Cownie (2019) indicated that affective commitment towards academics was a significant driver of students' affective commitment towards their institution, ultimately influencing positive word-of-mouth and retention. Furthermore, Cinkir et al. (2022) found that student satisfaction with service quality, which is closely related to affective commitment, was a more important determinant of student commitment than purely calculative considerations. The current study extends these findings by demonstrating that affective commitment accounts for approximately twenty-seven percent of the variance in academic achievement when examined alone, and continues to be the strongest unique predictor even when other commitment dimensions are controlled for. The superiority of affective commitment is not surprising given that it reflects students' genuine enjoyment of their educational experience and identification with institutional values, which likely fosters intrinsic motivation that sustains students through academic challenges. The present findings are also consistent with those of Shayo et al. (2025), who identified affective commitment as a product of both social and personal resources. Specifically, the authors found that collective trust strengthens affective commitment both directly and indirectly through academic self-efficacy, with these factors jointly explaining nearly half of the variance in students' affective commitment. Taken together, these findings suggest that fostering supportive learning environments and strengthening students' confidence in their academic abilities may indirectly improve academic achievement by enhancing affective commitment.

Nevertheless, the mixed findings for continuance commitment are consistent with the nuanced results reported by Taing et al. (2011), who demonstrated that continuance commitment comprises two distinct dimensions, including commitment based on favorable economic exchanges and commitment based on a lack of alternatives. Furthermore, the positive relationship observed between normative commitment and academic achievement aligns with the arguments of Meyer and Parfyonova (2010), who proposed that normative commitment has a "dual nature" and can manifest either as a moral duty or as an indebted obligation. In collectivist cultural contexts such as Morocco, where family expectations and social norms strongly influence educational persistence, normative commitment may more frequently take the form of moral duty, hence contributing positively to academic achievement. This interpretation is supported by cross-cultural research which demonstrate that normative commitment is more strongly related to organizational outcomes in collectivist compared to individualist cultures (Fischer & Mansell, 2009; Wasti, 2005). The finding that normative commitment remained a significant predictor of academic achievement even when affective commitment was controlled for implies that emotional attachment and moral obligation operate through partially distinct mechanisms to influence student outcomes. While affectively committed students may perform well because they

genuinely enjoy their studies and derive satisfaction from learning, normatively committed students may perform well because they perceive it as their duty to do so. Such students, therefore, feel obligated to invest time and effort in their academic pursuits as a consequence of their normative commitment.

Within the same frame, seeking out additional learning opportunities, completing assignments diligently, and preparing thoroughly for examinations are ways in which individuals manifest their favorable normative commitment. This interpretation aligns with Ejubovic and Puška's (2019) findings which indicated that students who demonstrate stronger metacognitive skills, effective learning environments, higher computer self-efficacy, and greater social engagement tend to achieve superior academic performance and report higher levels of academic satisfaction. It is, therefore, plausible that affective and normative commitment encourage students to adopt these productive learning behaviors, which, in turn, contribute to improved academic outcomes.

The results of the present study carry important ramifications for university administrators and faculty members in Moroccan higher education institutions. In particular, it is of paramount importance not to overlook the role of affective commitment in fostering academic success. According to Cownie (2019), students who are affectively committed to their institution tend to speak positively about their university, engage in supportive behaviors, and remain enrolled until graduation. In fact, students are to be considered strategically vital partners in the educational process, since their emotional attachment and identification with the university can significantly influence their academic outcomes and persistence decisions. Furthermore, by encouraging normative commitment, Moroccan universities can leverage students' sense of moral obligation to enhance their engagement with academic activities and improve their achievement. This does not imply, however, that institutions should ignore other factors that contribute to academic success, such as teaching quality, learning resources, and academic support services. Instead of replacing systematic efforts to improve educational quality, universities should see the fostering of affective and normative commitment as a supplement to existing student support strategies. Since each student has unique motivations and experiences, institutions should develop tailored approaches to strengthen different forms of commitment, eventually leading to improved academic outcomes and reduced dropout rates. Therefore, it is necessary for university administrators to make student commitment top priority in order to fully benefit from the advantages of committed students' enhanced academic achievement.

Conclusion

The current study contributes to the growing body of literature on student commitment in higher education by examining the relationships between affective,

continuance, and normative commitment and academic achievement among university students in Morocco. The findings underscore the importance of affective commitment as the strongest predictor of academic achievement, while also highlighting the meaningful contribution of normative commitment. The limited predictive power of continuance commitment when other commitment dimensions are controlled for suggests that institutional efforts to enhance student outcomes should focus on fostering positive emotional connections and moral commitment rather than relying on the perceived costs of leaving. As higher education institutions worldwide grapple with challenges of student retention and success, understanding the psychological mechanisms that drive academic achievement becomes increasingly important. This study provides evidence that Allen and Meyer's (1990) three-component model offers a valuable framework for understanding these dynamics in educational contexts and suggests directions for both future research and institutional practice.

Finally, several important limitations of this study should be acknowledged, along with directions for future research. First, the study was conducted primarily within the context of Mohammed V University of Rabat, Morocco, which limits how broadly the findings can be applied. Future research should therefore examine the relationship between student commitment and academic achievement across other universities, both within Morocco and internationally. Second, this study relied on a quantitative approach. Future work may complement these findings with qualitative interviews to develop a richer, more nuanced understanding of the research problem. Furthermore, the use of non-probability snowball sampling may further limit the generalizability of the results. Future researchers are hence encouraged to adopt probability sampling methods, which would strengthen the extent to which findings can be generalized to the broader student population.

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