



New Scholarship in Critical Quantitative Research - Part Two (New Populations, Approaches, and Challenges: New Directions for Institutional Research, Number 163)

Wells, Ryan S.; and Stage, Frances K., eds.
Wiley, 2015

Book Review

Tags: higher education | institutional development | quantitative research

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Date Reviewed: November 30, -0001

The *New Scholarship in Critical Quantitative Research - Part Two: New Populations, Approaches, and Challenges* provides readers with a timely and much needed expansion of the emerging paradigmatic approach of blending critical theories with quantitative methods. This volume substantially supplements the two prior *New Direction for Institutional Research* volumes that serve as the only other major publications on the employment of critical quantitative inquiry within higher education. Editors Wells and Stage garnered a multifarious group of authors to present diverse perspectives and methodological nuances within critical quantitative inquiry. The authors examine underserved and minoritized subpopulations of students, under-researched institutional types, and paradigmatic conflict within methodological techniques. The way Wells and Stage combine these chapters allows readers to preview the utility of employing critical quantitative inquiry by considering areas that are missing within the existing literature (minoritized student populations and community colleges).

In Chapter One, Faircloth, Alcantar, and Stage provide a blueprint for researchers to examine the experiences of American Indian and Alaska Native students who frequently are represented on national surveys in very small sample sizes. These authors not only provided tangible ways to use large-scale datasets to study minoritized groups, but also illustrated multiple ways to conceptualize how researchers operationalize identity variables as quantitative data. Chapter Two examines another minoritized group, students with disabilities. In this chapter, Vaccaro, Kimball, Wells, and Ostiguy propose the idea of critically analyzing

samples of students with disabilities to develop “policies and practices that liberate rather than exclude” (38). Chapter Three examines an under-researched institution type, the community college. Rios-Aguilar beautifully delivers a set of tangible possibilities for community college leaders and institutional researchers to collect, analyze, and utilize “big” data for commuter students at two-year institutions. In Chapter Four, Malcom-Piqueux details a study using latent class analysis to discover inequities in college financial aid. Canché and Rios-Aguilar again use the context of the community college, in Chapter Five, to highlight social network analysis. Through a completed research project, they outline basic concepts of critical social network analysis and implications for institutional researchers at community colleges. Hernández, in Chapter Six, diverges from empirical examples to examine the theoretical and paradigmatic tensions of critical quantitative inquiry. Finally, Wells and Stage provide Chapter Seven as an overview of the historical uses of critical quantitative inquiry and implications for the future.

This publication is well-organized and provides readers with a variety of perspectives and empirical examples. While there are several overlaps between the chapters, particularly as it relates to the implications (for example, need to oversample minoritized populations), this overlap in each chapter still diverges slightly from the other chapters. This publication is a bold counter-argument to using strictly positivist and postpositivist methods, which will allow researchers to highlight inequities and better study the experiences of minoritized students in higher education. This publication is worth purchasing if you research or assess the needs, experiences, and outcomes associated with the collegiate experience.

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