

ADORE: Towards A Methodological Framework for Addressing Drop Out Rates in Higher Education

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Related tracks

1. Academic research.
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 - a. LA implementation
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1 Introduction

The labor market has expressed the need for graduates from different disciplines and for workers who keep themselves up to date, engaging in lifelong learning [1]. As international reports show [2-3], the educational community and policy makers are concerned with Higher Education (HE) success rates, and look for strategies to attract students to education and guide them to successfully acquiring their degrees. To support this goal, European countries consciously design plans to boost study success [4] while institutions have to develop their own strategies. Despite the potential of learning and institutional analytics, existing strategies for supporting student success are still in an early stage or piloting phase, and only a small number of stakeholders (mainly researchers) has access to them.

To enable institutions consolidate and scale these strategies, we formed a consortium consisting of three pairs of European academic institutions: two Estonian, two French, and two German HE institutions. This consortium aims to share, assess and refine ongoing institutional analytics solutions. To reinforce this process, we will share our expertise and the lessons learned from designing and applying analytical solutions. We argue that a participatory and collective approach - such as a “*knowledge alliance*” among European academic institutions - will help us: develop more robust, sustainable and transferable strategies; understand dropouts in relation to different socio-political contexts; move forward towards collecting systematic knowledge on dropout; and enable comparative studies across Europe.

2 Methodology

To refine the ongoing institutional analytics solutions, and to gain insights about dropout factors (at institutional, local, regional, national and global level) that affect student success, we will follow, respectively, design-oriented and analytical research approaches. As Figure 1 illustrates, our work will follow an iterative and participatory approach that engages the partners in six main actions (labelled from A-1 to A-6):

- Guiding institutions to iteratively design (A-1) and evaluate (A-6) their strategies, assessing and providing evidence about their added value.
- Define a solid basis for ethics and data privacy that allow the institutions guarantee the legal frameworks (such as the EU General Data Protection Regulation), and implement good practices and codes of conduct (A-2).
- Refining existing strategies by implementing good practices such as pedagogically grounding and user involvement (A-3);
- Sharing methods, tools and datasets to contribute to cross analysis and reuse solutions in other contexts (A-4 and A-5).

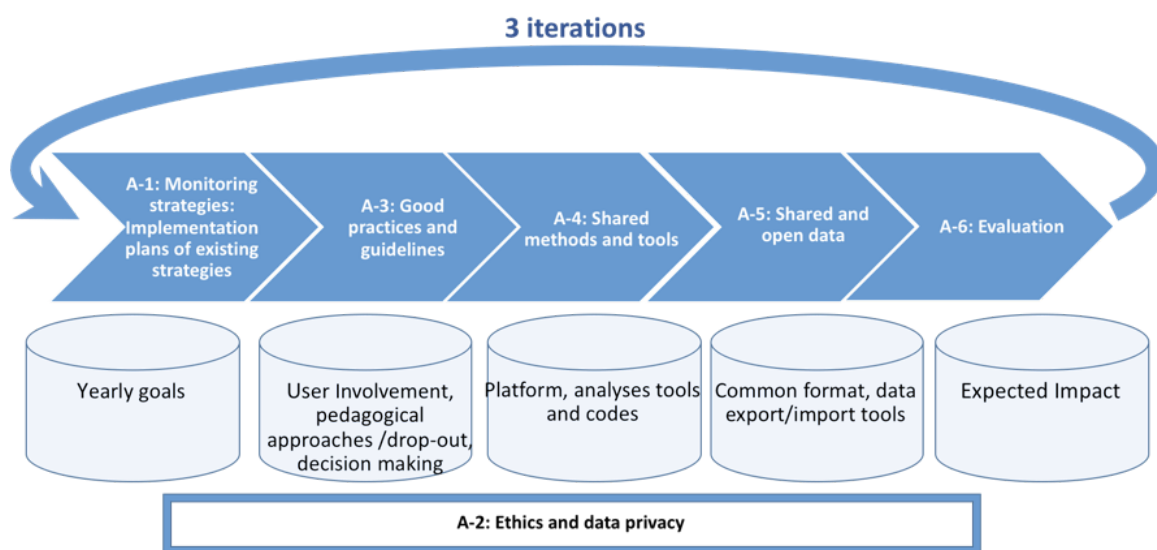


Figure 1. Methodological approach

3 Expected Results and Impact

The results can be classified into those specific to the ongoing institutional strategies to address dropout, and those relevant to the national and international level. The applied strategies to address dropout will be reviewed and refined and their added value will be evaluated under a common framework. Based on the evaluation and the existing needs, each institution will generate informed action plans showing how the strategies will be sustained. Beyond the individual interests, each partner will document, generalize and share their methods and tools to support transferability. The whole process will be documented and communicated to the research

and educational community so that others can understand the project dynamics, adopt similar strategies, and compare results. The lessons learnt during the process will contribute with resources that can be of help to other researchers and institutions, such as:

- an ethics and data privacy framework;
- a state-of-the-art in analytical strategies to identify and address dropouts and a conceptual framework to compare strategies in a systematic manner;
- a systematic review of theories and models for user-centered learning analytics;
- a sharing protocol (including processes and formats) for sharing methods, tools, datasets and associated metadata;
- an evaluation framework to monitor and assess institutional strategies for dropout;
- a cross-case analysis of the strategies, evidence, and dropout rates to enable comparison between institutions and their socio-political contexts.

4 References

- [1] UNESCO (2016). Education 2030: Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action for the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. Link: <https://goo.gl/xM5VW7>
- [2] Renewed EU agenda for higher education. European Commission (2017). Link: <https://goo.gl/yt14r6>
- [3] The New Media Consortium (2017). NMC Horizon Report: 2017 Higher Education Edition. Link: <https://goo.gl/gjBVgq>
- [4] European Commission (2018). Education and Training Monitor country analysis, volume 2. Link: <https://goo.gl/HAzgW2>